

Home Decorating Hints

Improving Curb Appeal

(NAPSA)—The journey to a great looking home can begin with a single step—along a new walk or stairway. Here are some stylish ideas for sprucing up the paths around your place.

If your walkway seems more like an obstacle course or labyrinth it might be time to replace it. First choose a style that suits both your house and your own sensitivities.

Owners of older homes may opt for a more traditional and muted design while those in newer developments may desire a more contemporary look. Your walkway should also reflect your personality and creativity so it's important to select building materials well-suited to that purpose.

One of the most versatile and customizable options is interlocking concrete pavers. Made with high-strength, durable concrete, each unit locks together to form a surface that's not only visually attractive but also withstands the elements. Homeowners may be glad to know pavers resist deterioration from deicing salts and harsh climatic changes better than other pavement.

For many homeowners, however, it's the vast array of colors, shapes, sizes and textures that make concrete pavers a popular option for any project that demands character and personality. You can get rustic stone-like pavers, or others that look like clay brick. Light-colored pavers can provide a cooler surface around patios and pool decks.

One of the newest styles offers the high-end look of stone for a surprisingly modest price. These "tumbled" or "antiqued" pavers as



Put your best foot forward with an upgrade for the path to your door.

they're called can create a refined and stately walkway.

When considering walkway materials it's a good idea to look for those that:

- Don't crack. Unlike asphalt or poured-in-place concrete, each interlocking paver unit has joints that allow for a small amount of movement without cracking.
- Are easy to repair. You can remove and reinstate the same pavers with no ugly patches after repairs to the base or underground utilities. Asphalt, concrete, and stamped concrete can't make this claim.
- Present no problems with snow removal. With pavers, you can plow, shovel or use a snow blower.
- Come in many shapes, colors and textures.
- Are easy to install. Most concrete paver suppliers provide printed step-by-step instructions as well as help do-it-yourselfers find the tools for the job. For large projects over 300 square feet, you may prefer to hire a contractor.

You can learn more about concrete pavers and find a certified installer to install them from the Interlocking Concrete Pavement Institute Web site, www.icpi.org.