



So, if you own a home – or have fallen in love with one that you would like to purchase – that butts up a little close to a busy road, there are options to help make the traffic less noticeable. Depending on the location of the home, one of the biggest challenges homeowners may face is trying to reduce street noise.

Tony Sola, founder of Acoustics.com, cautions homeowners and buyers about too-high expectations when it comes to reducing traffic noise. “Too many times I have seen homeowners try to do something about the noise by adding another layer of drywall, or something to the wall itself. It’s not minimal return, it’s zero return,” Sola says. “Unless you control the weak point, that does nothing.” Sola says there are some cases where the wall might be the weak point – but that’s just 1 percent of the time. The windows are generally the weakest noise link. “If you’re looking at an STC 30 window versus an STC 33 window, you’re not going to notice a huge difference in that – but it might be worth it to you, if they’re about the same price,” Sola says.

Windows Are The Key Quieting The Backyard

Getting creative is the key. Working with an acoustics/noise-control expert and landscaper can result in a beautifully designed outdoor area that doesn’t reveal any sign of the chaotic hustle and bustle of the nearby road.

A solid wall that doesn’t have gaps in it will help a little, he says. “Auto noise comes from the tires. So to control auto noise, the wall will work pretty well because the source is really low – it’s at ground level – but truck noise comes from about eight feet off the ground, so even if you build a six-, seven-, or eight-foot wall, that won’t help much,” Sola says. However, if you couple a barrier wall with a noise-masking system such as a water feature, you can virtually wash away the traffic sounds.



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