

STAGED TO SELL

Your Home Staging Guide



DISTINCTIVE
PROPERTIES®

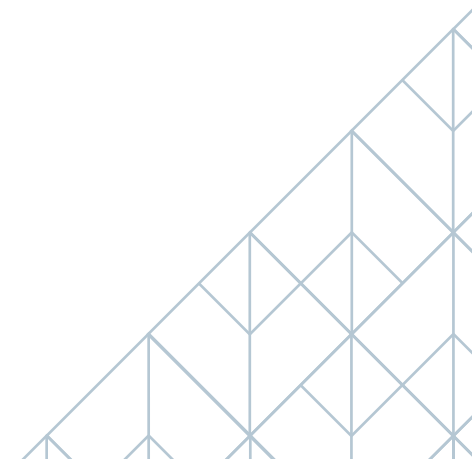


WELCOME

When you highlight the features your home offers, it becomes what a buyer will love about your property. You can achieve this through solid planning based on proven staging principles. We're about to show you how.

What is *home staging*?

When you put your property on the market, it becomes a product that's for sale. Luxury buyers are buying a lifestyle. Effective staging helps neutralize the property's surroundings so buyers can envision the home as their own, as well as play up a property's strengths and downplay any weaknesses.



WHY STAGE?

Home staging will help you sell your home faster.
And at a higher price.*

Before you start

- Look at your property through a buyer's eyes. Decide what's appealing and what's distracting. Your sales associate can help you be more objective.
- Make the positive aspects of each room stand out.
- Remove most personal possessions. Buyers don't want to feel like they're intruding. They want to visualize the space as if it were their own.



*2021 Profile of Home Staging, National Association of Realtors® Research Group.

SETTING THE STAGE

Staging your home systematically allows you to plan and prepare your property for sale. We suggest going room by room and that you do not stage the entire house at once. Follow these 14 steps and you'll be done before you know it.

1. Assess *the room*

How is it used and can it be used for any other purpose?

2. Take *inventory*

What stands out about the room?
Pick a focal point and draw attention to it.

3. Remove clutter

Do one room at a time, going from small spaces to larger ones. Box up all non-essentials, including closet clutter.

4. Depersonalize

Remove personal collections and most pictures. Make your property appealing to the largest pool of buyers.

5. Renew, repair, replace

Fix the little things that make buyers wonder, "What else is wrong?" Before doing renovations, check in with your sales associate.

6. Rearrange *furniture*

Minimize furniture in dining rooms, bedrooms and living rooms. Whatever you remove can go into storage or in other rooms.

7. Re - *accessorize*

Highlight the focal point of each room. You may need to go back to items you removed from one room to add to another.

8. Fine - *tune your work*

Concentrate on details and revisit your focal points. If the focal point still isn't clear, revisit steps 1 through 7.



9. Clean, clean, clean

Straighten closets and clean inside kitchen and medicine cabinets. Assume buyers will look in every nook and cranny.

10. Add *life*

Use potted plants or a bowl of fruit. A touch of nature always livens up a home.

11. Target *high - impact rooms*

Concentrate on the rooms buyers value most. In order of importance, they are: the living room, kitchen, primary bedroom, dining room, bathroom, children's bedroom and guest bedroom.

12. Borrow *design concepts*

Generate new ideas from magazines, real estate TV shows, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube as well as from researching homes for sale, both physically and online.

13. Prepare *to show*

Get in the routine of preparing your home for a showing. Follow our showtime strategy, to help present your house at its best.

14. Ask for *help*

Your sales associate can recommend storage facilities and assist with discounts on repairs and supplies.

FRESHEN UP YOUR HOUSE

To help the next owners envision their new life in their new home, here are some easy tips:

Paint

- Paint is a low-cost investment with a high rate of return.
- Keep the color palette neutral and subdued.
- Paint an accent wall with a bolder color.

Atmosphere

- Stage accent items in groups of three that form a visual triangle with a high, medium and a low level.
- Create an inviting mood with warm lighting and neutral colors.
- Make all outdoor areas inviting and prime for entertaining.

Furniture

- Group furniture away from walls to create balance.
- Arrange furniture to emphasize the room, not the furniture.
- Place bold or dramatic furniture in storage.
- Keep high-end and durable furniture, area rugs and upholstery to create a more relaxing and inviting environment.

Light

- Add tons of light – preferably natural light. Place a reading lamp behind a chair, in the corner, to create a cozy nook.
- Place mirrors across from windows to add natural light and give the impression of more space.
- Eliminate dark, heavy drapery and replace with materials that let light filter through.

Technology

- Install a smart thermostat.
- Replace smoke detectors with smart smoke/CO detectors.
- Add security with a doorbell camera.
- Secure front door with a smart lock.
- Swap out old lightbulbs with smart LED bulbs.



CREATING CURB APPEAL

Make your property look good from the outside in by focusing on these five key exterior areas. Make sure to maximize the livable parts of your outdoor space.



Landscaping

Essentials

- Prune bushes, trees and shrubs, in spring and summer.
- Mow and edge the lawn. Seed, if needed.
- Weed and maintain flower beds, lawns and planters.

Distinctive Touch

- Create a focal point in the yard. Add a bench to areas that curve inward. Add a tree, water feature or decorative brick to flower beds.
- Lay fresh mulch in flower and tree beds.
- Add lighting on walkways, shine lights on trees, keep lights in working condition and remove cobwebs, dirt, etc.



House exterior

Essentials

- Clear roof and gutters of all debris.
- Inspect the paint or siding. Touch up paint where needed and consider power washing.
- Wash all windows and remove screens.

Distinctive Touch

- Make sure the house number is visible.
- Check the mailbox for chips and dents. Replace, if needed.
- Paint front door for a fresh accent.

Front porch

Essentials

- Keep your entryway and porch swept and clean. Put away all toys, bikes, scooters, etc.
- Polish all exterior metal. Replace door hardware, if necessary.
- Make sure doorbell and exterior lights are working properly.

Distinctive Touch

- Create an inviting focal point in your entryway by adding a chair or bench.
- Use large planters filled with flowers or evergreens to welcome visitors.
- Get a new welcome mat that matches the style of the house.

Rear deck / Outdoor spaces

Essentials

- Clean or power wash concrete steps, patios, siding and decks.
- Clean and repaint wood and wicker furniture. Clean or replace cushions.
- Clean and rinse umbrellas. Eliminate mildew.

Distinctive Touch

- Create a separate and inviting outdoor dining and entertainment space.
- Create a warm environment with an outdoor sofa and accent cushions, arranged similar to indoor living rooms.
- Add sealer to decks to make them look almost new.
- Keep open electronically controlled glass doors or screens that fold, slide or drop down to show how indoor and outdoor spaces flow together.

Driveway

Essentials

- Fix pavement/driveway cracks.
- Remove visible oil stains.
- Seal driveway for a fresh look.

Distinctive Touch

- Keep cars off the driveway and away from the front of the house.
- Keep garage doors down during Open Houses, or when the house is shown.
- Power wash garage doors and clean windows.



STAGING ROOM BY ROOM

Take the following steps to give each room in your home the greatest appeal possible. Focus on one area at a time, moving through the house and experiencing it as a potential buyer would.



Foyer

Essentials

- Repaint, if necessary.
- Clean interior entry of all clutter.
- Clear and clean out front hall closet.

Distinctive Touch

- Add a large throw rug to a foyer with hardwood or tile floors.
- Upgrade flooring, if needed.
- Add a table or bench with a place for keys. Add a vase of fresh flowers.

Dining room

Essentials

- Repaint walls, if needed.
- Clean light fixtures.
- Clean and refinish flooring.

Distinctive Touch

- Remove tablecloth and add fresh fruit as a decorative touch.
- Remove extra leaf from table to make the room appear larger.
- Keep four chairs and put others in storage.

Living room / Family room

Essentials

- Repaint or touch up walls and ceilings.
- Clean fireplace, mantel and shelving, and minimize knickknacks.
- Shampoo carpets and/or wax wood floors.
- Clean upholstery and drapes and replace or cover worn furniture.
- Clear off all coffee tables and end tables to just two or three books.

Distinctive Touch

- Make a window with a spectacular view, or a fireplace, the focal point of the room.
- Rearrange furniture to showcase the room's best feature and create additional space.
- Use lamps to create light in darker corners of the room.



Kitchen

Essentials

- Repaint walls. Combine neutral colors with small color highlights for a warmer feel.
- Clean and polish everything inside and out. Make appliances, faucets and fixtures sparkle.
- Clean around tiles and grout with bleach.
- Keep soaps, towels, sponges and cleaning products under the sink, and empty the garbage regularly.
- Remove magnets, photos, etc. from the front of your refrigerator.
- Create more counter space by storing appliances in the cabinets.

Distinctive Touch

- Place an open cookbook next to fresh herbs.
- Turn the lights on and open the curtains. Consider adding recessed lighting around the perimeter.
- Highlight charging stations and places to use smartphones and tablets.

Bathroom

Essentials

- Repaint walls, if needed. Consider removing any wallpaper.
- Clean tile and grout and re-grout, if necessary.
- Reduce toiletries to a few decorative pieces and minimize shower accessories.
- Clean or replace shower curtain, preferably with a solid color.
- Remove toilet seat covers and throw rugs.

Distinctive Touch

- Consider updating bathroom fixtures.
- Keep toilet lid down at all times.
- Consider adding new, fluffy towels and coordinate them using two colors, at most. They can suggest luxury for little cost.





Bedroom

Essentials

- Repaint walls, if necessary. Use neutral colors.
- Remove most personal mementos and clear off bedside table, except for a small lamp and one book.
- Streamline closets by removing off- season clothes and organizing contents.
- Consolidate toys in children’s rooms.

Distinctive Touch

- Consider investing in new bedding.
- Make beds every day.
- Remove all but essential furniture: bed, nightstand and dresser.

Basement

Essentials

- Paint walls, as needed.
- Be aware of smells. Use odor absorbers, if necessary.
- Repair cracks in the ceiling or walls and clear any drains.
- Organize storage items in bins or boxes.
- Replace light bulbs and/or add lighting, if needed.

Distinctive Touch

- Use a throw rug and couch to create a living space.
- Add a craft table or workbench and tools.
- Make laundry area pleasant and functional. Organize with cabinets and shelving.



Garage interior

Essentials

- Touch up paint in finished garages.
- Remove oil stains from the floor.
- Clean and replace light fixtures.

Distinctive Touch

- Organize tools on a pegboard.
- Add a workbench.
- Group like-items together on shelving units.





Gym and Wellness Suites

Essentials

- Paint walls as needed in a neutral color.
- Clean equipment after each use.
- Be aware of smells. Use odor absorbers, or introduce a fragrance like candles or air fresheners if necessary.
- Clean and replace light fixtures.

Distinctive Touch

- Arrange equipment in a nice way that creates an easy traffic flow.
- Add shelving to organize weights.
- Add an area rug or artwork to the walls to soften up the space.

Home Office

Essentials

- Paint walls as needed in a neutral color.
- Clear off desks and tables of personal items, except for computer, desk lamp or notepad.
- Organize storage items in bins or boxes.

Distinctive Touch

- Hang artwork and curtains to make the space feel more inviting.
- Bring in a plant and place near a window.





IT'S SHOWTIME!

The final preparation is to have a strategy every time the property is being shown, so it always looks its best.

If you have any questions at any time during your staging process, don't hesitate to call your sales associate.

Clean

- Put away pet food bowls.
- Clear the kitchen sink.
- Pick up all children's toys.
- Close garage door.

Brighten

- Open shades and curtains.
- Turn on lights.

Create *atmosphere*

- Play soft music.
- Give the house a subtle, pleasant aroma with fresh cookies, a lit fireplace, fresh flowers, etc.
- Set the thermostat to a comfortable temperature.

Share *information*

Display house and community information prominently:

- Consider providing paid utility bills and current property tax receipts.
- Provide real estate listing sheet and floor plan, if available.
- Make a list of home upgrades and include dates, if available.
- Create a map and/or list of community features and points of interest.
- Make copies of warranty information on appliances.



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