

Preparing Your Home for It's Professional Photo Session

General Guidelines

As soon your photographer arrives, he will begin work, so everything should be ready to go. He will be photographing both the interior and exterior of the home. It is important that the photographer work quickly so please try to have everything ready to photograph. You can make a big difference on how well your home will look in the photos by following these guidelines.

Online - It's Where Buyers Start

Most home buyers begin their search online, so it is important to make the first impression count! Follow these tips to prepare your home for the best real estate photos possible.

- Thoroughly clean whole house and de-clutter (vacuum carpet, mop hard floors, clean countertops, clean windows).
- Turn all overhead lights and lamps ON.
- Replace all burned out light bulbs.
- Use bulbs of the same color temperature (all warm white, cool white or all daylight).
- Turn all ceiling fans OFF.
- De-clutter fireplace mantel and any other that attract clutter.
- Turn all TVs OFF.
- Turn all computer screens OFF.
- Open blinds/window treatments to let in outside light. In most homes, blinds slanted slightly up produces a good balance of indoor and outdoor light.
- Remove personal photographs (or replace with general landscape/object photographs).
- Make all beds.
- Remove small floor rugs to reveal actual flooring.
- Place all shoes/jackets in closets.

The Home Exterior

Online "curb appeal" - the front exterior is usually the first photo buyers see.

- Remove all vehicles from driveways and do not park directly in front of the house. If you need to, park in front of you home to prevent others from parking there, then move when the photographer arrives.
- Move garbage cans out of sight.
- Remove all garden tools including hoses.
- Remove all children's toys, bikes, balls, etc.
- If you have a pool, remove the Kid Fence around the pool, toys, pool cleaning equipment and store out of site.
- Turn on all pool waterfalls and fountain features.
- Mow and rake yard, spread new mulch around in the flower beds.
- Sweep driveways, sidewalks and patios.
- Open patio umbrellas and set out cushions.
- Uncover barbecues, pools, spas, and hide the covers

The Living & Family Room

- Remove newspapers and most magazines.
- Hide all TV/Stereo remotes.
- Arrange the throw pillows.
- Consider removing some furniture to give space.
- Conceal all exposed cables as best possible.
- Remove any clutter, personal photos, from bookshelves, tables and cabinets.

The Kitchen

- Counter space is prized so clear off counter tops of most but not all appliances. Wipe clean.
- Remove photos, notes and papers from the refrigerator and anything on top.
- Clean and polish the major appliances refrigerator, oven and range hood
- Remove any garbage containers and pet food dishes.

The Dining Room

- Set the table as if you were giving a diner party.
- Set a colorful centerpiece of flowers or candles.
- Consider taking away a couple of the chairs to give more room around the table.

The Bedrooms

- Make all beds and tidy bedrooms.
- No clothes visible, put away and clean closets.
- Remove items from bedside tables - books, magazines, pictures, water bottles, etc.

The Bathrooms

- Clear off the counter tops - toothbrushes, shavers, soap dishes, tissue and lotion dispensers, makeup mirrors, etc. should all be cleared away.
- Remove shampoo and other products from the shower/tub area. Get a plastic shoe box to store the items when you are away.
- All toilet seats should be down and lid closed.
- Mirrors should be clean. No trash cans.

Backyard

- Clean porch, tidy up outdoor tables/chairs/cushions.
- Pillows/cushions should be fresh, not faded.
- Clear out kid's toys, balls, frisbees, etc.
- Clean pool.
- Remove pool vacuum/cleaner hose.
- Hide pool cleaning supplies.
- Turn on pool fountains/water features.
- Remove visible water hoses.
- Remove trash cans.

Other Considerations

- Contain pets in the garage or out of sight.
- The photographer should not be expected to:
 - Move or re-arrange furniture
 - Make beds, clean, dust or de-clutter
 - Pick up toys or yard items.
 - Touch personal bathroom supplies (shampoo, toothbrushes, deodorant, towels).

Making the home as attractive as possible to potential buyers is the ultimate goal of the photography. Permanent items such as power lines, defects in walls or other parts of the property cannot be “photoshopped” away, but images will be made from the most attractive angles and to minimize any defects as much as possible.

Thank you for letting me “*Put Your Home in the Best Light*”. I hope you are pleased with the result.