

Staging Checklist

Stages of staging:

- Declutter/eliminate
- Clean everything
- Repair/replace items
- Paint
- Replace flooring
- Stage
- Photograph

Key areas to stage:

- Front of house
- Living room
- Kitchen
- Master bedroom/bath
- Patio/deck or other outdoor space for relaxing or entertaining
- Then work all other rooms

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General rules for staging:

- If you purchase things to stage your old home, take them to the new house.
- Fresh soap, empty trash in all baths, bedrooms, offices, and kitchen
- Paint a picture of what life could be like in this house.
- Staging is about showcasing your homes best features
- Just like fashion or makeup, staging is about accentuating the positive features in a home and de-emphasizing the not-so-great
- Avoid empty tables, desks, or counters using a few small items or flowers
- Cast a wide neutral net to appeal to as many potential buyers as possible
- If it looks like work, it will be a subconscious turnoff to buyers
- Help buyers see their future - not your past
- Assume people will look in every drawer, every closet, and every cabinet
- Get rid of all "fun colors" and quirky decor. Put that energy in the new house.
- Lighting: 100W of light for every 50 square feet of space
- All bulbs should match - led 100W soft white or tasteful Edison bulbs
- Turning on all lights helps make the house look bigger and brighter and keeps buyers from fumbling around looking for switches - confusion is bad
- Each room should look homey and inviting, not cluttered and personal
- You can accent any room with one or two items. Bright throw pillows, a bowl of fruit, vase with fresh colorful flowers
- Every room must have a defined purpose, but preferably not multiple uses unless they are clearly defined and easy to visually separate.
- If you have an odd space, find a creative use for it - Google, YouTube, or Pinterest are great places to get ideas for these nooks and crannies
- Having a purpose for every room and every available space in the house increases the perceived value per square foot
- Help buyers see their future - not your past

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Rule of 3 to create stories or scenes:

- 3 vases of different sizes or color
- 3 different sizes or colors of pillows
- 3 paintings together that are themed
- 3 piles of books
- 3 jars or themed candles
- 3 shades of the same color
- 3 like items in different sizes

Space for walkways:

- Don't block doorways and leave walkways so people can naturally flow through the house
- 30-48" in heavy main paths
- 24" in areas of lighter traffic
- 14-18" between couch and coffee table

Pets:

- Must remove or significantly reduce all evidence of pets for photos and showings
- Even pet lovers hate pet hair, pet prints and pet smells so keep all evidence to a minimum

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Exterior:

- Start at the curb
- Most people drive by the home first to see if it's worth their time to schedule a showing
- Create an image of a relaxed life where you can enjoy quiet and "get away from it all"
- For larger yards, create a space that would be ideal for entertaining.
- Small outdoor area can be staged with a cafe table, 2 chairs, tray with coffee cup, and newspaper folded - perfect scene. Imagine a little cafe for breakfast
- Relaxing outdoors - swing, fire pit, cafe table, hammock
- Edison bulbs and specialty lighting outside are wow at night and for night photos
- Create a "grill station"
- Keep outside lights on at night so anyone driving by can see the house lit up

Kitchen:

- Keep counters nearly empty except for a few newer appliances like toaster and coffee maker
- Fresh flowers in a vase
- Basket of fruit, etc for some minimal decor
- Cookie jars, flowers in vase, bowl of real fruit, new soap, new clean spice rack, butcher block with
- Create a coffee station
- Show how part of the kitchen can easily be a small work contained area to bounce between working, homework, and cooking

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Bathrooms:

- Towel and Hand towel for each bathroom (for fancy bonus points, hang a smaller towel over a matching larger towel)
- Only essentials in the shower/tub. Needs to look like a hotel shower/bath when you walk in—nice, clean and basic items only
- Consider an apothecary look: clear jars of items like cotton balls, q-tips, etc.
- Laundry pods look nice in jars

Bedrooms:

- Lay one folded blanket at the end of a made bed if it matches or compliments
- Gender neutral master (cast a wide net)
- If you use bins to organize, use opaque or colored bins. Clear bins look cluttered and messy

Living room/Family room:

- Set up a “conversation area” by arranging furniture in groups like a furniture store—only smaller and without the price tags
- Get furniture pulled away from the walls - this is called “floating furniture”
- Incorporate a separate and definite work area for kids or parents since so many are working remotely
- Put away all DVD, video games, equipment
- Furniture can be rented by the week. Rental centers will deliver and pick up as well.

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Office:

- If you have a temporary or permanent office in a room that makes sense—accentuate it with a “zoom” friendly look
- So many people and kids are working from home - show potential buyers how you solved it for them
- Home offices and school work spaces are absolutely huge right now - show that you have that space (not both together)
- If you have weird space and can't find a use, just paint it with chalkboard paint and use it for a family message center

Vacant homes:

- Rent furniture if you need to show a vacant home or your furniture is unattractive—even if it's just for the photography
- Furniture can be rented by the week. Rental centers will deliver and pick up as well.
- Look for “pop up furniture” (Google it) if you can't find anything suitable
- Focus on condition of the house and only need to stage the Front, LR, Kitchen, master bed/bath
- Vacant homes take longer to sell and sell for less - study after study
- Throw in a small item here and there to break up a large empty area
 - Bowl of fruit on the counter
 - Chair and a small table in a room
 - Cafe table on a deck or patio
- Try some wine or beer "slushies". Our friends at White Shutter Winery sell this stuff and it's amazing!