

Residential Pre-Shoot Checklist

May 27, 2016

The goal is for your home to appear decorated but not lived in. This will help potential buyers to imagine the home as theirs. The following tasks should be completed by the time of the photo shoot. We recognize that this can require a lot of hard work, and we greatly appreciate your assistance. Thank you! Your efforts will help us to produce great photos that show your property at its best.

If the property is ready for photography, homes up to 3000 sq ft will typically require only 30-60 minutes, while larger homes and acreage properties will usually require more time. The photographer can get started immediately if the home has been completely prepared before the appointment.

General

- Eliminate clutter where possible.
- Decoration is important, but should not overwhelm the space.
- Vacuum carpets and clean hard floors.
- Hide all charging cords, cell phones, tablet computers, tissue boxes, reading glasses, etc.
- Turn off TVs and computer monitors and hide remote controls.
- Remove toys and portable fans.
- Books and magazines should be on shelves or in other appropriate storage, unless used as decoration.
- Clean tile floors and countertops.
- Hide personal photos, particularly those in freestanding frames.
- Clothing should be hidden or neatly stored in closets. This includes bathrobes.
- Items that prevent doors from opening all the way, e.g., clothing hanging on doors, should be removed where practical.

Lighting

- Turn on all lights**, including table and floor lamps, range hood lights, stair lights, overhead lights, and exterior lights.
- Turn on ceiling fan lights, but leave fans turned off.
- Check all light fixtures for burned-out bulbs and replace if needed. This is very important.
- Ensure that all light bulbs or fluorescent tubes in a room are the same color. **Do not mix warm white and "daylight" bulbs in the same room.**
- Avoid using low-quality or worn-out fluorescent tubes. These have a poor color spectrum and will have a negative effect on the quality of the photos.

Windows

- All blinds should be lowered with the slats horizontal, with the exception of fabric shades. Those should be raised all the way up.
- Curtains or drapes should be opened all the way, where possible, making certain that the sections are arranged symmetrically.
- Windows should be clean and free of smudges and streaks.

Kitchen and Dining Area

- Remove wastebaskets.
- Remove all throw rugs, hanging towels, paper towels, and knife racks.
- Remove dish cloths, detergents, dish rack, and drain plugs.
- Remove small appliances such as toasters, coffee makers, and mixers.
- Remove everything from the refrigerator front, sides, and top.
- Remove all dishes, except for (optional) place settings on the dining table.
- Hide any food and food containers, including fruit not used as decoration.
- Fruit used as decoration should be in excellent condition, without labels.
- Keep plants to a minimum. Plants that are large or in poor condition should be removed.

Bathroom

- Arrange towels on holders in a neat and orderly fashion. Do not use towels that are stained or very worn.
- Close toilet lids.
- Ensure that toilet paper rolls are full.
- Clean glass and mirrors.
- Remove wastebaskets, toilet brushes, and plungers.
- Remove soap bars, hand soaps, tissue boxes, tooth brushes, razors, tooth brush holders, cosmetics, and most other items, leaving only décor on the counters. Decorative soap dispensers and tastefully arranged hand towels are acceptable.
- Hide bathrobes.
- Remove all items from the shower unless curtain or door is opaque.
- Shower curtains should be completely closed and hanging outside the bathtub.

Bedroom

- Make beds.
- Hide any personal use items.
- Bedding should hide the mattress. In small bedrooms, the photo is usually taken from the doorway, so only that side and the end of the bed will show.

Pets

You want your home to appeal to as many people as possible, and some prospective buyers are not pet lovers.

- Hide pet-related items: toys, food and water bowls, bedding, food bags, etc.
- Pets should not be roaming the home, but contained in a comfortable area that will not be photographed.
- Aquariums are acceptable if clean and in use.

Exterior

- Remove vehicles from driveway and the front of the property.
- Remove bicycles.
- Move trash, recycling, and yard debris cans and totes to a location that will not be visible in the front shot of the house, such as the garage or along the side of the house.
- Mow the lawn and trim hedges and shrubs.
- Remove leaves and sticks from ground.
- Tidy garden and pull weeds.
- Optional: If there is an indoor or outdoor wood-burning fireplace, it makes a great photo by burning a small mound of wadded-up newspapers just before the photo is taken.
- Arrange outdoor furniture to highlight the outside living area.
- Clean outdoor furniture and install cushions if you have them.
- Open umbrellas.
- Clean leaves and other debris from driveway, sidewalks, decks, and patios.
- Hide garden hoses when possible.
- Clean pools and hot tubs. Remove pool toys and cleaning equipment. Be prepared to turn jets on for the photo.
- Again, turn on all exterior lights. Low-voltage lighting is an exception if it is not bright enough to show at the time of the shoot.

Thanks again for all your help!