



## **Real Estate Photography Staging and Preparation**

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**Do your real estate photos make viewers say, "I've got to see *this house!*" or do they say, "eh, let's see the next one?"**

When potential buyers see the first photo of your home, that photo should entice them to see the rest. If after having seen all of the photos they are interested in a showing, then the photography has served its purpose. However, no matter how good the *quality* of the photography, if the *subject* of the photography is not up to par, then instead of convincing your viewer(s) to continue looking, they may be more likely to move on to see the next house. If this happens, then the presentation failed. This can easily be avoided by either professional staging or basic home preparation.

If professional staging is not an option, to ensure the best possible photography there are still some simple preparations that can easily be accomplished to ensure that the home is presented as a showcase and will greatly enhance the quality of your photography. When I arrive in the home I may move small items and furniture to obtain the best "staged" appearance. I may also unplug electrical appliances so the power cords don't show. There are, however many things that can be done in advance of my arrival that can really help. You'd be surprised how quickly your eye is drawn to burnt out lights, and that is not what you want people to remember when they look at your photos. Based on my experience I have compiled a list of things that should be done to assure that your home photography is as good as you expect.

Below are some tips and recommendations to help dress your home for success and present it as best as possible... for photography and for showing.

### **Exterior Front**

- Close Garage Doors
- Ensure that trash cans are out of sight
- Cars should not be parked in the driveway
- Switch on porch lights (but not flood lights), especially for twilight photography
- Blinds or curtains should be tilted up 45 degrees
- Remove fallen tree limbs and branches from lawn and driveway
- Ensure that missing shutters are replaced

## **All Interior**

- Open all blinds and drapes to let the light in
- Stow away personal items such as iPads, books, magazines, toys, etc.
- Remove items such as dog/pet beds
- Switch off ceiling fans (and lights)
- Hide power cords for any electrical items
- Replace all burnt-out light bulbs in all light fixtures
  - Bulbs should all be of the same type and color temperature
- Tilt horizontal blinds up about 45 degrees

## **Family Room**

- If there is a fireplace, light it
- Set candles in appropriate areas
- Stow away television remote controls and personal items
- Place several books or magazines on the coffee table or end table
- Arrange pillows on the sofa and other seating areas

## **Bathrooms**

- Remove trash cans
- Remove cleaning instruments
- Lower the toilet seat lid
- Remove personal items such as soaps, toothbrushes, brushes and combs, etc.
- Remove all floor mats
- Ensure that towels are fresh and presented properly

## **Bedrooms**

- Make sure the beds are neatly made
- Items under the bed should be out of view
- Laundry baskets should not be visible
- Remove all personal items from view, especially on the dresser and nightstand
- Light the fireplace

## **Dining Room**

- Set the table or place a centerpiece on the table
- If equipped, switch on the light in the china cabinet
- Straighten the chairs
- Open the curtains and let the light in
- Make it look as if you were having guests over for dinner

## **Kitchen**

- Remove the trash can from view
- Remove all loose items from countertops
- Remove everything from the refrigerator door
- Set or place a centerpiece on the kitchen table
- Make sure that the sink is clean and free of any dishes, sponges, etc.
- Switch on the stove light

## **Yard, Deck Porch, etc.**

- Arrange furniture, including cushions, pillows, etc.
- If there is an umbrella, open it
- Remove grill covers; hide propane tanks
- Blow away or rake leaves, cut the lawn, prune and trim shrubbery
- Stow away toys, etc.

## **Laundry Room**

- Ensure that it is clear of all dirty laundry and laundry baskets
- Close all cabinets
- Remove all items from counters (if possible)
- Clean the appliances to ensure they are free of fingerprints and soaps, etc.

For a downloadable version of this list (including photos), please click on this link:

[www.jmaurophoto.com/real-estate-photo-preparation.pdf](http://www.jmaurophoto.com/real-estate-photo-preparation.pdf)

I hope these tips help you to prepare your home for success. Keep up to date by visiting our blog at

[www.jmaurophoto.com/blog](http://www.jmaurophoto.com/blog).

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