

Top 10 House Staging Tips*

Keep it clean

Look at your home as though you're seeing it for the first time. Is every room neat, spotlessly clean, dusted and uncluttered? Steam clean carpets and wax floors. Wash walls, heating and A/C vents and light fixtures. Pay special attention to your bathroom and kitchen – make sure that tile grout is mildew free and baseboards scrubbed. Clean the refrigerator and stove as well as the washer and dryer (inside and out).

Lose the clutter

Have a yard sale or take old furniture, clothing and knick-knacks to Goodwill. Organize shelves, put away items and purge your home of unnecessary items. Make sure that your kitchen and bathroom counters are free of small appliances and personal effects.

De-personalize your home

Make your home "anonymous," so that buyers can envision it as their potential home. Put away any family photos, sports trophies, collectibles, knick-knacks, and souvenirs. This will also help to remove clutter and create more space.

Freshen-up

Adding a fresh coat of paint and laying new carpet will clean and brighten up your home. Choose neutral colours and make it consistent throughout the home. If you choose to wallpaper, make sure that the paper is properly applied, your colour choice is neutral and patterns are kept to a minimum.

First impression count

Like a first date or job interview, the first impression of your home is the most important. Walking into a home with fingerprinted screen door windows or cluttered entrances, can influence the potential homebuyer's decisions. Likewise, strong odours can ruin a sale, so pay close attention to pet, cooking and cigarette smells in your home. Light delicately scented candles or have cookies baking when showing.

Curb appeal

Homebuyers decide whether or not to look inside a house by the appearance of your home's exterior. Paint or wash the outside of your home. Check your gutters and chimney and make necessary repairs. Keep your lawns trimmed and flower beds weeded. Use urns to define walk spaces and ensure that window boxes are full of healthy all-season plants.

Create the illusion of space

To make your home seem more spacious, it is key to de-clutter and re-organize. Start by removing excess furniture to make rooms feel more open and replacing any items that are not appropriately sized for the room. Clean and organize your closets and remove excess clutter from all areas of your home. Strategically placed mirrors can also help to create the illusion of more space.

Modern choices

Ensure that the décor of your home is modern and tasteful. Use neutral tones on your walls and floors and add colour with removable items such as throw pillows or bedding. Steer away from too many personal touches to create a minimalist and contemporary space.

Doggie don'ts

"Love me, love my pets," doesn't apply when selling your home. Take your pets with you when your house is being shown, or at least keep them outside. Pets under foot will quickly put a damper on an otherwise positive showing. While making sure that your house is odour-free and spotless applies to everyone, pet owners need to take special care.

Beautify your backyard

Don't forget about your backyard. A house showing doesn't always end at the backdoor. Beyond size and layout, potential buyers can also be influenced by the state of your yard. Keep the lawn, hedges and flowerbeds manicured. Buy exterior storage containers to hide gardening tools, kids toys and pool supplies. Lastly, interested buyers may decide to look inside your shed, so make sure that it is organized and clean.

* Provided by Timothy Badgley, Interior Designer and owner of Acanthus Interiors