



Home Photo Preparation List

Maximizing your home's value. In today's market, that first impression starts with the photos that are seen on line. Although your furnishings and decor are great for your lifestyle, it's important to optimize your home for the future buyer. While you are preparing to sell your home, you must criticize it from a buyer's perspective. The lens of a camera, especially professionals will see everything. Proper planning and preparation are the key to making your home's first impression a dynamic one.

By using this suggested checklist, your homes first impression will be a great one. You will see that most of the items on the checklist are no or very minimal cost to you. It is your time and effort that will increase your return. There are a few items that you will have to weigh the cost, versus return. A professional realtor can certainly help with evaluation. If there is one word that describes the most significant denominator to getting ready for the photo shoot, then showing the home, it is **"DECLUTTER."** If there is doubt whether to hide or get rid of it, then you should hide it or get rid of it.

General

- Add a splash of color in each room
- Clean all windows
- Clean and polish all furniture, and anything with a natural wooden finish.
- Clean and wax all vinyl flooring
- Clean and wax hardwood floors
- Cleanup or paint any areas that appear there has been a leak.
- Consider your garage for storage during a photo shoot
- Get rid of all dust bunnies
- Get rid of carpet dents
- If you are not going to paint, then make sure you touch up or clean off all scuff marks
- Make all beds.
- Make sure all switch plates are cleaned or replace
- Open window treatments and raise all window blinds to let in natural light
- Paint interior walls with neutral colors, like beige, cream or light pastels.
- Place all shoes, jackets, outer garments in closets
- Remove all festive lights and decorations
- Remove all small appliances, toys, magazines and pet items (especially litter boxes)
- Remove enough out of closets to show empty space
- Remove excess and oversized furniture
- Remove family photos and personal collections
- Remove pets
- Remove small floor rugs to reveal actual flooring, (unless strategic oriental rugs)
- Remove the majority or all personal photographs
- Repair and/or replace torn wallpaper
- Repair cracks, holes, nail pops in walls.
- Repair or replace any damaged screens
- Repair or replace broken window blinds
- Replace all burned out light bulbs and replace with the same bulb
- Don't leave any light sockets empty
- Secure valuable items, including cash and jewelry
- Steam clean carpets, drapes and selective upholstered furniture.
- Swap dim lights with higher wattage light bulbs
- Thoroughly clean home (vacuum carpet, mop hard floors, clean countertops, clean windows)
- Turn **OFF** all ceiling fans
- Turn **OFF** all computer screens
- Turn **OFF** all TVs
- Turn **ON** all overhead lights and lamps

Exterior Appeal

- Check front door, doorbell, address number and the welcome mat
- Clean pool and make sure the water is clear and sparkly
- Clean porch, tidy up outdoor tables/chairs/cushions
- Clean up all pet droppings
- Clean up landscaping (mow, trim shrubs, clear leaves)
- Clear, hide or unplug all cables and cords
- Close garage doors
- Dress up imperfect planting areas with mulch or pine straw
- Hide all trash cans, recycle bins, bikes, etc.



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- Hide pool cleaning supplies
- Make certain children's play yard is clean and free of all broken parts
- If you have an asphalt driveway, consider sealing it to give a fresh look
- If you have brown spots in the lawn, fertilize and plant a seed, also consider sodding
- If you have great porches, decks or patio areas, accent them with furniture and potted plants
- If you have mulch, wet it down, so it appears dark and rich
- Is mailbox clean, plumb and attractive – if not, consider getting a new one
- Large attractive house numbers
- Mend all fences, repair all gates and consider a coat of paint/stain for wooden fences.
- Minimize or eliminate any obstructions to the front view of your home. (Bushes, trees, etc.)
- Paint the front door
- Consider painting the home's exterior (if it hasn't been painted in previous 24-36 months)
- Plant colorful flowers at the entrance, preferably with yellow blooms
- Power wash all concrete areas including curbs in front of the home.
- Power wash home if you are not going to paint
- Remove all mold and mildew from outside finishes
- Remove all screens
- Remove cars from driveway and front of the home
- Remove empty planters
- Remove toys, sports balls, portable soccer goals, etc.
- Remove visible water hoses
- Repair cracks in the driveway and sidewalks
- Sweep or blow off all entryways and walkways
- Use a broom to remove cobwebs from eaves and door frames

Kitchen

- Clean all appliances and fixtures
- Clean and organize the pantry
- Clean or replace caulking
- Clear the countertops except for 1 or 2 small appliances
- Clear the refrigerator of magnets, papers, photos, etc.

- Hide garbage cans
- Remove dishes from the sink
- Replace outdated hardware

Dining Room

- Clear table, dust, and polish the table top
- Feature one centerpiece such as a bouquet of flowers
- Remove child seats/booster chairs
- Straighten all chairs and space them evenly

Living Room/Family Room/Entertainment Room

- Clean interior of fireplace and re-paint if needed
- De-clutter fireplace mantel/hearth (no more than 3 or 4 items, including art)
- Fluff and arrange furniture pillows
- Remove stacks of magazines, papers, mail, etc.
- Remove toys, games, hobbies, etc.

Master Bedroom

- Clean under the bed, removing items that may show in the photos
- Clear nightstands of all personal items
- Make bed, including decorative pillows
- Press bed linens and bed skirts
- Remove all clutter from top of dressers
- Remove family photos from walls
- Store away phone/tablet charging cables
- Close closet doors

Kids / Guest Bedrooms

- Clean under the bed, removing items that may show in the photos
- Neatly display or remove toys, baby cleansing materials, diaper genies
- Remove personalized names from walls
- Remove wall stickers/posters
- Close closet doors

Bathrooms

- Clean all mirrors
- Clean or replace caulking



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- Clear the countertops completely. No toothbrushes, cosmetics, medications, deodorant, etc.
- Close closet doors
- Consider new shower curtain – “white” or minimal design complimenting paint scheme
- Create a luxury spa look with fancy soap dispenser, decorative baskets, candles, plants
- Hang fresh towels (preferable a set with a little color)
- Put toilet seats down
- Remove floor mats
- Remove shampoo, soap, loofahs, etc. from showers and tubs
- Remove stains from sinks, toilets, and bathtubs
- Scrub tile and grout, bleach it if necessary

Home Office

- Clear paperwork from desks
- Hide all computer and electrical cords
- Hide all electronic devices
- Minimize personal materials from shelves
- Turn off computer screens

Pets – Minimize Presence

- Clear the backyard of pet waste/toys
- Contain pets during a photo shoot
- Place food and water bowls in pantry or closet
- Place pet beds/toys in pantry or closet
- Use a lint roller on furniture to remove pet hair

Garage / Work Shop / Basement / Utility Rooms

- All items neatly hung or organized on shelving units
- Cars removed
- Clean all oil spills. If this can't be done, consider applying a concrete paint.
- If the basement is dark and damp, consider adding lighting to make it appear totally functional
- If the basement is functional but not finished – makes sure it is at least broom cleaned
- Remove cobwebs