

General Notes

First Impressions Matter

The first view that a person will get from any room is when they are standing in the doorway, so keep that perspective in mind when arranging furniture. You want to create a lasting impression from the moment that they walk in the room. Prospective buyers will spend more time viewing the room from the side where the door is located, so you want to create a lasting impression from that point of view.

It's important for prospective buyers to make an emotional connection with the home being listed by being able to "see" themselves living there.

From a photo standpoint, I will take photos mainly from the doorway area, and will also make use of the windows and natural light in the room. So always consider the way the furniture is placed as it corresponds with the windows and doorways.

Less Is More

A clean space is more appealing, so get rid of anything that is cluttering the room, and when you think you are done... continue working to get rid of a few more items in the room. If you include too many personal effects, such as photos and knickknacks, then it makes it more difficult for the buyer to imagine their own things in the room. Buyers want to see themselves living in your home.

Get Rid of the Grime

A quick wipe down to "clean" the house isn't enough to get rid of the grime. Seems like common sense, but it's surprising how much can show up in a photo. Make sure that the windows are spotless!

A Little Preparation Goes a Long Way

It is very important that you spend the time that is needed to make sure that your home is prepared so that the photographer has something to work with. A prepared home makes it much easier for the photographer to present the home with photos that will entice a prospective buyer to set up a showing.

Exterior Preparation

Curb appeal matters, because buyers want their new home to look good on both the outside and inside. The exterior of the home is one of the first things that a person will look at when they are viewing the listing, so it is important that you cleanup around the outside of the house to make it look good.

The front yard is the most important, but don't neglect the back yard. It won't look natural to have front yard photos of a beautifully manicured lawn and flower beds, with a back yard that is in disarray.

Exterior tasks should include:

- Get rid of weeds
- Trim trees and overgrown shrubs. Lots of front view photos aren't as good as they can be because overgrown trees and shrubs block the view
- Mow the lawn and rake the leaves
- Wrap up garden hoses and put them away in the garage or shed
- Pick up any items that may be laying around the yard, such as garden tools, garbage cans, toys, empty pots or pots with dead plants
- Cover dirt with mulch to make it look more attractive
- Move cars out of the driveway
- Sweep the porch and sidewalks
- Remove covers from well-maintained grills and smokers; cover neglected ones
- Open any outdoor umbrellas
- If you have outdoor furniture, wipe it down and make sure that the cushions look clean and nice



Interior Preparation

You want to create a stylish, generic home in which the buyer can picture themselves living in.

All Rooms

- Replace any burned out light bulbs in fixtures and lamps
- Vacuum, dust, mop the floors, etc.
- Conceal all exposed cables and power cords as much as possible
- Turn OFF all ceiling fans
- Turn OFF all TVs and monitors
- Turn ON overhead lights and lamps
- Draperies and blinds should be open and uniform for all windows

Kitchen

- Make sure that the counters are as open as possible. Get rid of extra small appliances that are sitting around, as well as stacks of paper or dishes
- Clear the school notices, crayon drawings, and magnets off of the fridge
- Clear away dish racks, cutting boards, tea towels, hand and dish soap bottles, cleaning products, mops, brooms and garbage cans
- Add a little decoration with a nice bowl of fresh fruit or a vase of flowers
- Turn on any under-counter lighting and the stove light



Dining Room

- Make sure the dining table is clean and the chairs are arranged neatly around the table
- Consider adding a nice centerpiece on the table, such as bowl of fresh fruit or a floral arrangement
- Remove clutter from china cabinet and buffet
- If the china cabinet has a light, turn it on
- Be sure the table is centered under the chandelier if possible
- Optional: Set the table with nice dinnerware using decorative place settings

Living Room / Family Room

- Make sure that the furniture is arranged to create a beautiful and comfortable space
- If you have a nice coffee table book, set it out as decor on the table. However, you should remove any magazines, because they often look cluttered
- If bookshelves are in the room, take out half of the books and arrange the remaining books in a nice pattern. Keep the nice, hardback and colorful books on the shelf, and remove the older books.
- Store the TV remotes, video game systems, DVDs, or any other cluttered electronic items.
- Try to arrange the electric cords so that they are out of sight as much as possible



Bedrooms

- Move clutter and anything extra out of the room so that the space is as open as possible
- Sometimes there are unique or usual decorations to match the personality of the child, particularly with teenager bedrooms. You want the buyer to imagine themselves as if they were in the room, and unusual themes in the bedrooms can be somewhat distracting, so these decorations may need to be eliminated
- Make the bed using a nice bedspread and big, fluffy pillows that are neatly arranged at the head of the bed
- Clear the nightstand of phone chargers, tissue boxes, lip balm, a glass of water, jewelry, or anything else that is kept at your bedside
- If the closet is to be photographed, be sure it's neatly organized and cleaned
- For kid's rooms, organize small toys into baskets or wicker bins; put away larger toys



Bathrooms

- Everything should be moved off the counter, including makeup, razors, soap, toothbrushes, and any other beauty products
- Remove the shampoo, soaps, washcloths, and baby toys from the showers and tubs
- Trash cans, bathmats, laundry baskets, extra toilet paper, the toilet brush, and scales should also be moved out of the room
- Finish it off by closing the toilet, and hang fresh towels on the towel rails