

Seller Prep Checklist for Real Estate Photos

Fifteen minutes of preparation is the difference between a listing that looks staged and one that looks lived in. Work through this list the day before the shoot. Anything left in frame can be removed in retouching at \$25 per image, but it is faster and cheaper to move it.

WHOLE HOUSE, THE DAY BEFORE

- ☐ Turn on every light, including lamps, under-cabinet and closet lights. Replace burnt-out bulbs and match bulb colors where possible.
- ☐ Turn off all ceiling fans. They blur in long exposures.
- ☐ Open blinds and curtains fully. Clean the inside of windows on the view side.
- ☐ Clear floors of rugs that do not lie flat, shoes, toys, pet beds and cords.
- ☐ Hide trash cans, laundry baskets, cleaning supplies and pet bowls.
- ☐ Take down refrigerator magnets, personal photos and calendars.
- ☐ Set the thermostat so windows do not fog and the house is comfortable.
- ☐ Put pets in a crate or with a neighbor for the shoot window.

KITCHEN

- ☐ Clear counters completely: small appliances, dish racks, soap, sponges, paper towels.
- ☐ Leave one or two decorative items at most, such as a bowl of fruit or a plant.
- ☐ Empty the sink and hide dish towels.
- ☐ Wipe stainless steel and glass; fingerprints show at high resolution.
- ☐ Push in chairs and bar stools evenly.

BATHROOMS

- ☐ Clear the counter and shower: toothbrushes, razors, bottles, loofahs.
- ☐ Close toilet lids. Put down fresh, matching towels or none at all.
- ☐ Hide bath mats, scales, plungers and trash cans.
- ☐ Wipe mirrors and glass shower doors.

BEDROOMS

- ☐ Make beds neatly with the duvet pulled tight and pillows squared.
- ☐ Clear nightstands to a lamp and one item.
- ☐ Close closet doors. Hide anything under the bed that shows.
- ☐ Remove personal items from dressers.

LIVING AND DINING

- ☐ Remove remotes, magazines, blankets and throw pillows that are past their best.
- ☐ Straighten art and books. Hide cable boxes and cords where possible.
- ☐ Set the dining table simply or leave it clear.
- ☐ Vacuum lines show; vacuum toward the door as the last step.

EXTERIOR AND POOL

- ☐ Move all cars out of the driveway and off the street in front of the house.
- ☐ Hide trash and recycling bins, hoses, tools and pool toys.
- ☐ Mow, edge and blow the driveway and patio. Trim anything covering windows.
- ☐ Sweep the pool deck and skim the pool. Remove the pool cleaner and its hose.
- ☐ Set patio furniture and open umbrellas. Turn on pool and landscape lights for twilight shots.
- ☐ Close the garage door and remove signs or stickers from doors and windows.

FOR THE AGENT

- ☐ Confirm the photographer has gate codes, lockbox access and parking instructions.
- ☐ Tell the photographer which features matter most: water view, new kitchen, primary suite.
- ☐ Decide on add-ons in advance: drone, twilight conversion, virtual staging, floor plan.
- ☐ Ask the seller to be out of the house, or in one room, during the shoot.