



Essential Real Estate Photos Client Prep Checklist

Introduction

The environment will be photographed as-is, so please be prepared by referring to the checklist below prior to the appointment. We will balance lighting and composition to give you the best display of your property. Meticulously preparing per the checklist will have a tangible impact on the perceived value of your property.

Be sure to tell your listing agent about any “home quirks” – light switches that don’t work, debated property lines, features that aren’t intuitive to the property but you’d like highlighted or left out of the shoot. It’s important to remember that photo stills are the teaser to your home listing. Every nook should be prepared to be displayed.

Lighting

Be sure to check all of the lights, from ceiling to floor, as well as exterior lights, to make sure that they all work. **All bulbs in each area must be the same color temperature.**

Turn on all the lights and **open all window treatments** before scheduled arrival. They may be adjusted during shooting for the best balanced shots.

Be Prepared to Leave for a Few Hours

Shoots for real estate listings include every part of the house, yard and garage. If you have pets or kids in the house during a photo shoot, they’re likely to appear in the photos somewhere. It’s best to plan to leave the house and give the photographer a non-occupied space to work with.

Also, our photographers may need to leave exterior doors open for a few minutes at a time and **will not be able to monitor your pets**, so be sure they are **kenneled** if you don’t take them with you.

Leave Instructions to Lock Up

When your shoot is finished, we will message your listing agent, preferred contact, or client who scheduled the photo shoot to let them know the appointment has concluded. If your home doesn’t have an agent-provided lockbox, please leave a key and/or instructions as to your preferred method of locking up.

Exterior Front and Back

- Remove cars from driveway
- Remove all personal items from exterior including patios, porches, and garages
- Close all windows
- Sweep or blow walkways, driveways, porches, patios
- Pick up leaves, sticks, branches
- Put toys, bicycles away
- Store seasonal décor



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- Stow garden tools, supplies
- Remove all hoses
- Straighten and arrange deck furniture
- Clean pool area
- Mow, attend to landscape
- Clean patio furniture, open umbrellas
- Clean and remove covers from all pools, ponds and water features
- **Turn on all exterior lights**

Tip: If you're friends with your neighbors and feel comfortable doing so, ask them to move their cars from the road to make the street look quiet and inviting in your completed photos.

Interior: Main Areas

- Remove personal items/photos
- Remove all visible clutter from the floor and horizontal surfaces
- Place fresh towels on the towel bars
- **Open shades/blinds, window/door coverings**
- **Replace burned out light bulbs using bulbs with matching color temperature**
- Tidy up or put away all children's toys
- Empty waste baskets
- Put out of sight all trashcans, cleaning supplies, magazines, books, power cords, and political items
- Hide pet dishes/toys/beds
- Turn off all ceiling fans, computer screens and televisions— anything that moves
- Vacuum carpets
- Sweep hard floors
- Remove old or tattered newspapers, mail, magazines
- Display attractive books, if you must
- **Turn on all lights**

This is probably the most difficult request for sellers, but it's one of the most important items on the list. Removing and storing excess or large bulky furniture can be challenging, but it opens up the floor space and makes the home look much larger. Make sure to roll up and remove all of the floor mats in the bathrooms, kitchen, and laundry areas. If you have any decorative rugs, consult a stager to determine whether or not they should stay. This is truly one of those situations where "less is more".

Interior: Kitchen

- Clear all appliance surfaces of magnets, calendars, and personal items
- Store food in cabinets
- De-clutter counters, stove, etc...
- Stow small appliances
- **Hide soaps, cleaning items**



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- Hide dish towels, sponges
- Clear sink of dishes
- Put away draining rack
- Organize items out in the open
- Clean and organize pantry shelves

When the kitchen counters are completely cleared off, it makes the kitchen look bigger, and buyers can imagine how they might use the space. Coffee makers, mixers, and decorations only distract buyers, and often make the kitchen feel cluttered. Remove everything but perhaps a few decorative items from the countertops and clean all surface areas, including the appliances, kitchen sink and back splash.

Interior: Dining Room

- Straighten/push in dining chairs
- Add centerpiece, candles or a vase of flowers
- Dust corners and furniture

Interior: Bedrooms

- Make the beds
- Arrange decorative pillows
- Put away clothing, shoes, jackets
- **Clean under the bed**
- Clear surfaces of clutter including nightstands and dressers
- Tidy closets
- Remove decorative rugs

Interior: Bathrooms

- Make the bathrooms sparkle with clean windows, glass and counters
- **Hang fresh, matching towels**
- Clear counters of toiletries
- Clean mirrors
- Clean toilet and close lid
- **Remove all items from tub and shower**

Place all of the shampoo bottles, soaps, shaving razors, and other items into a bin that can fit underneath the bathroom sink. Take everything off of the bathroom counter as well. You want the bathrooms to appear vacant. Clean, matching, neatly folded towels on towel racks are fine.