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## Preparing Your Home for Real Estate Photography

Residential real estate photography of a standard sized home (up to about 3,500 square feet) should take about an hour depending on the number of photos. Larger homes will of course take more time.

When you have your house photographed for a real estate listing both the exterior and interior of the home, including all major rooms, will be photographed. Homeowners and agents can help make the photography process go smoothly and make the home look its best in the photographs by doing some preparation before the photographer arrives.

Keep these things in mind as you prepare the home for photography:

- This list looks daunting, but the better the home shows in photographs to potential buyers the more likely they will want to view it and buy it.
- You are trying to show off the home's best features; a lot of "stuff" can distract from those features.
- We are not photographing *your* home; we are photographing the potential new home of prospective buyers or renters. Do not take the process personally.... it is part of the business of selling and renting a house.
- High quality photography will show the home exactly as it is. Some minor flaws and dirt can be corrected in post-processing, but if you can see it with your eye the camera will pick it up in the photographs.

### If You Do Nothing Else, Do These Things:

- Replace all burned out light bulbs both inside and outside the house. Try to keep all the bulbs the within a room the same type, LED, incandescent, etc. Good lighting is key.
- Hide the clutter.

## General Prep Work:

- Remove excess furnishings and knick-knacks from rooms. Large amounts of furniture and decorations do not generally photograph well and can distract from the homes features and can potentially make a room look smaller in photos.
- Pick up throw rugs and runners in entryways, kitchens, and bathrooms so that the floor can be clearly seen.
- Wash the windows (or have them washed).
- Vacuum and/or mop the floors.

## Home Exterior:

- Remove all cars, boats, RVs, motorcycles etc. from the driveways and do not park directly in front of the house.
- Move garbage and recycling cans out of sight.
- Remove all garden tools, hoses, and clutter.
- Pick up after your pets.
- Mow the grass, rake up leaves and debris, pull weeds and remove any dead vegetation.
- If you are feeling ambitious, plant some fresh flowers in empty planters and pots.
- Sweep driveways, sidewalks and patios.

## Swimming Pools and Spas:

- Make sure they are clean. Sweep dirt off the bottom and skim off the debris floating on top.
- Remove the cover, pool sweep, floating chlorine dispenser and pool toys.
- Straighten lounge chairs, put away cleaning tools, and set up the patio umbrella if you have one.
- Turn on pool light(s), waterfalls and spa bubbles. Verify several days prior to your shoot that these are working in case you need to schedule repairs.
- If you want to add that extra touch, roll up some colorful pool towels and place them on the chairs and set up a pitcher of lemonade with some glasses on a table.

## Living & Family Room:

- Remove newspapers and magazines and put away books.
- Tuck the remote controls in a draw to get them out of sight.
- Conceal exposed cables and cords as best that you can.
- Remove clutter, personal photos, the kids toys, etc. from bookshelves, tables and the floor.
- Dust and vacuum. Dust can show in a photograph.
- Wash any glass surfaces including tabletops, cabinet doors and windows. Smudges and dirt on glass will be noticeable in the photographs.

## **Bedrooms:**

- Make the beds neatly; straighten the bedspread and pillows.
- Tidy up, dust and vacuum.
- Pick up and put away clothes and shoes.
- Remove items from bedside tables; books, magazines, pictures, clock radios, etc.
- In the kids rooms put excess toys out of sight, take posters and drawings off the walls, and straighten up overall.

## **Kitchen:**

- Put small appliances, knife blocks paper towels and kitchen gadgets away and off the counters
- Remove photos, notes, papers and magnets from the refrigerator.
- Clean the major appliances; refrigerator, oven, stove top, range hood, and dishwasher.
- Wipe down the counter tops.
- Don't leave any dirty dishes in the sink or sponges, dishtowels, dish soap, etc. near the sink.
- Move trashcans out of site.

## **Dining Room:**

- Dust the furniture and vacuum the floors.
- Setting the table with nice dinnerware, napkins and a centerpiece can give a homey feel.
- If you have a China cabinet make sure things are straight and tidy inside.

## **Bathrooms:**

- Clear off the counter tops; toiletries, tissues, hair products, just about everything should be put away.
- Remove personal care products and children's bath toys from the shower and tub.
- Make sure towels are folded neatly and are straight on the towel bars.
- Close the lid on the toilets.
- Mirrors and shower doors should be clean.
- Hide away the toilet brush and plunger.

## **Odds and Ends:**

- Turn on all the lights, inside and out.
- Turn off the ceiling fans.
- Open the blinds, shades and curtains.