



Top 10 Staging Tips

Curb Appeal – The buyer’s first impression of a home is critical. What is the first impression as they drive up to your house? Minor details can make a big difference. As a Realtor is fumbling with the lockbox, the potential buyer is noticing the little details; fresh paint on door, the condition of the hardware and the decorative touches on the mailbox. Fresh mulch, clean edging and proper lawn maintenance are important details that will provide a positive first impression. To a potential buyer, the exterior of the house is a sneak preview of what is inside.

Repairs – Now is the time to take care of the long-neglected “honey do” list. Your home should shine with pride of ownership. The impression of a well-maintained home will bring a better offer. Overlooking small repairs may lead buyers to assume you haven’t taken care of the big items and this is when a buyer will begin looking for problems that they might otherwise not notice. A home inspector recently confessed that he will spend more time in homes that have obvious neglect. How will your home fare under that sort of additional scrutiny?

Paint – Step away from the paint brush! If your painting skills aren’t top-notch, call a professional. The quality of the job is just as important as the colors you pick. Don’t waste your effort and money if you haven’t the time—or skill—to do the job right. A home Stager can help improve the visual flow of your space by recommending colors that transition gracefully from one room to the next. The right color can also create an environment neutral enough to appeal to a broad range of buyers. Bold colors can be dramatic...or they can be a deal breaker. Why take that chance?

Wallpaper – Just say “NO!” Ditto with bold colors and “theme” rooms. Your personal style, however tasteful, will most likely not be the taste of the prospective buyer. Decor needs to be neutral enough that it can accommodate any furnishing style without major changes.

Furniture – Tasteful furniture doesn’t have to cost a lot. If you need new furniture for your new home, buy it now. Furniture mismatches and hand-me-downs make for poor flow and often occupy valuable square footage – both physically and visually. It’s time to “hand-me-up” to your favorite charity and get a tax deduction. When it comes to furnishings, keep the best- get rid of the rest.

Clutter – You CAN take it with you...for a price. Think about the ‘real’ dollars associated with boxes, storage and the time, energy and cost of moving all that “stuff”. Do you really NEED it? Maybe it is time to redefine “need”. Getting rid of unused or tired items will allow you to move with ease into your new space. Most importantly, your current house feels more spacious and is easier to maintain while on the market.

Style –Does your home have multiple personalities? Too many design styles leave a room confusing and lacking drama. It can be difficult to make pieces of varying scale and color work together in the same room. “Eclectic” is a great look when done tastefully – pulling it off can be challenging, even for the pros.

Your home's architecture should determine the style of the furnishings. Stagers and decorators often choose "transitional" pieces because they will work with almost any architectural style or period and equally well with existing pieces.

Carpet in Kitchens and Baths – Yuck! Need I say more?

Odors – You can't sell it if you can smell it! Common sources of unpleasant odors are cooking methods (frying and spices), pets, damp basements, smoking, and infants. If you detect a problem, identify the source, and let a Stager help you choose the best strategy to eradicate the odor.

Hire it done! – It is important to be informed and realistic about your skill level. Your best bet is to get help from friends and family or "hire it out." Keep your expectations reasonable and use your time for the things you're confident doing or that only you can do.

More Advice...

Today's real estate market means sellers need to hit the ground running with the 'best possible product.' If it takes six months to get a house ready for market, a seller might lose an additional 5% to 10% (depending on community) in value. It pays to make a plan and get the job done as quickly as possible. A professional Stager can help sellers save money and time by identifying the priorities, determining what should stay or go, and assisting with finding contractors or other professionals.

Remember, the cost of staging is always less than your first price reduction.