

HOW TO

Prepare for the Photoshoot

With the majority of buyers shopping for homes online, high-resolution slide shows and video tours are a must. Here's how to make your home shine on camera.

Understand the camera's perspective.

The camera's eye is different from the human eye. It magnifies clutter and poor furniture arrangement so that even a home that feels comfortable in person can look jumbled online.

Make it spotless.

Cameras also tend to magnify grime. Don't forget floor coverings and walls; a spot on a rug might be overlooked during a regular home showing, but it could become a focal point online.

Know what to leave.

You want to avoid clutter, but try to have three items of varying heights on each surface. On an end table you can place a tall lamp (high), a small plant (medium), and a book (low).

Snap practice pictures with your own camera.

This will give you an idea of what the home will look like on camera before the photographer shows up. Examine the photos and make changes to improve each room's appearance, such as opening blinds to let in natural light, removing magnets from the refrigerator, or taking down distracting art.

Pare down.

Removing one or two pieces of furniture from each room, even if just for the shoot, can make your space appear larger on screen.

Rearrange.

Spotlight the flow of your space by creating a focal point on the furthest wall from the doorway and arranging the other pieces of furniture to make a triangle shape. The focal point may be a bed in a bedroom or a china cabinet in a dining room.

Accessorize.

Include a healthy plant in every room; the camera loves greenery. Energize bland decor by placing a bright vase on a mantle or draping an afghan over a couch.

Keep the home in shape.

Buyers who liked what they saw online expect to encounter the same home in person.

HOW TO

Prepare for the Photoshoot (continued)

The Home Exterior

Remove all vehicles from driveways and do not park directly in front of the house. Move garbage cans out of sight. Remove all garden tools including hoses and sprinklers. Remove all children's toys, bikes, etc. If you have a pool, remove the pool sweep, pool cleaning equipment and any pool toys. Mow and rake yard. Sweep driveways, sidewalks and patios.

The Livingroom and Family Room

Remove piles of newspaper and magazines. Hide all TV/Stereo remotes. Conceal all exposed cables as best possible. Remove clutter, personal photos, etc. from bookshelves, tables and cabinets. Tuck trash cans out of view in a closet or cupboard.

The Bedrooms

Make all beds and tidy bedrooms. Clothes hung, or folded and put away. Remove items from bedside tables – books, magazines, pictures, clock radios, etc.

The Kitchen

Clear off counter tops and remove any appliances, ie. toasters, coffee pots, knife blocks. Remove photos, notes and papers from the refrigerator. Clean the major appliances – refrigerator, oven, range hood, and wipe down all countertops.

The Dining Room

Set the table with your best China and dinnerware. Add a colorful centerpiece such as candles or flowers. Conceal any exposed electrical cords.

The Bathrooms

Clear off the countertops – toothbrushes, shavers, soap dishes, tissue and lotion dispensers, makeup mirrors, etc. should all be cleared away. Remove shampoo and other products from the shower/tub area. All toilet seats should be down and lid closed. Mirrors should be clean.

The Final Touches

Contain pets in the garage or out of sight. Turn on all interior lights. Turn ceiling fans and televisions off.