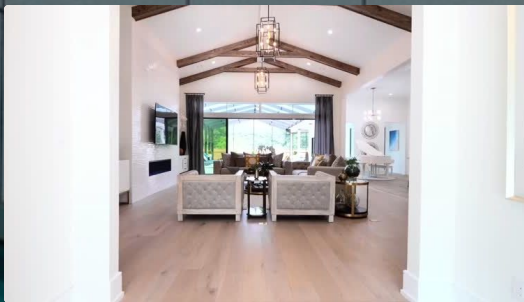


ULTIMATE HOME STAGING GUIDE

Prepare your home to sell faster and for more

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Why Staging Works

Staged homes sell faster and often for more money.

Buyers make emotional decisions first and rationalize them later. They rarely decide based on numbers alone — they decide when they can picture their life in the home. Staging creates the emotional setting that helps make that connection.

The science of first impressions: Most buyers form an opinion within the first 7–30 seconds of entering a home. That first impression shapes everything that follows. Staging helps ensure the home feels clean, spacious, bright, and inviting.



What staging is not

- Buying expensive furniture
- Spending thousands on décor
- Making the home look like a showroom
- Hiding problems

What staging is

- Removing distractions
- Arranging the space to improve flow and perceived size
- Cleaning to a high standard
- Creating an emotional connection



Room-by-Room Staging Guide

Entryway / Foyer

The entryway sets the tone for the entire home. Buyers form their first impression here.

Goal: Welcoming, open, and clean.

Do:

- Clear the floor completely
- Add a simple mirror to reflect light and open the space
- Use one piece of art or a small table with a single flower arrangement
- Keep the entry light on and bright

Don't:

- Leave coats, mail, or personal items visible
- Use strong scents such as candles or air fresheners
- Leave shoes or boots by the door



Living Room

Goal: Spacious, conversational, and inviting. Buyers should picture their furniture here.

Furniture Placement Tips

- Float furniture 2–6 inches from walls for a more intentional feel
- Create a conversation grouping around a focal point: fireplace, TV wall, or architectural feature
- Remove 30–40% of furniture if the room feels crowded to increase perceived space
- Make sure every seating area has proper lighting

Buyer Psychology Buyers imagine hosting here. Help them picture holidays, movie nights, and gatherings by showing scale, opening the blinds to highlight natural light, and adding a simple throw with two neutral pillows.

Checklist

- ☐ Removed excess furniture
- ☐ No personal photos visible
- ☐ Pillows and throws in neutral tones, neatly placed
- ☐ Coffee table styled with one or two items max
- ☐ All surfaces clear except simple staging accessories
- ☐ Rug clean and in good condition, or removed if worn

Notes:

Kitchen

The kitchen sells homes. Buyers spend more emotional energy here than in any other room.

Goal: Clean, spacious, and functional. Buyers should instantly picture themselves cooking here.

Golden Rule: Clear the counters. Leaving only 1–2 intentional pieces makes the kitchen feel dramatically larger.

Counter Items That Can Stay (choose 1–2 max):

- Small coffee station, if neat and tidy
- Fresh herbs in a simple pot
- Small fruit bowl with 3–5 pieces of fruit
- Nothing else

Cabinet Presentation: Buyers will open cabinets. Organize and thin them out by at least 30% so the space feels abundant and well planned. Overstuffed cabinets suggest limited storage.



Checklist

- ☐ All counters completely clear except 1-2 items
- ☐ Small appliances put away, or kept only if new and stylish
- ☐ Inside cabinets organized and thinned
- ☐ Pantry organized and not overfull
- ☐ Sink shining, with no spots or dishes
- ☐ Appliances spotless inside and out
- ☐ Floor freshly mopped
- ☐ Fresh, neutral kitchen towel on oven handle

Notes:



Master Bedroom

Goal: A calm retreat where buyers immediately feel rest and sanctuary.

The Hotel Bed Effect: A properly made bed can transform the space. Use:

- Crisp white or light neutral bedding
- Matching shams
- 2–4 decorative pillows layered in front
- A folded throw at the foot of the bed

Furniture Placement:

- The bed should be the focal point — frame it with matching nightstands if possible
- Keep dresser and chest tops completely clear
- A single piece of simple wall art above the bed works best

Checklist

- ☐ Bed made to hotel standard
- ☐ Nightstands cleared — lamp only
- ☐ Dresser and all surfaces empty
- ☐ Closet organized: max 60% full, color-coordinated if possible
- ☐ Nothing visible under the bed
- ☐ Window treatments open for light
- ☐ No personal items visible anywhere

Notes:

Bathrooms

Small rooms, big impact. A spotless bathroom strongly signals overall home maintenance.

Goal: Spa-like cleanliness. No personal items.
No clutter.



Checklist

- ☐ Every surface spotless — no soap scum or water spots
- ☐ Mirror polished and streak-free
- ☐ Toilet scrubbed inside and out; lid down
- ☐ Two matching towels hung neatly in white or a light neutral
- ☐ Counter clear — soap dispenser only
- ☐ Optional: small plant or single candle
- ☐ Shower and tub fully clean — no product bottles visible
- ☐ Exhaust fan clean
- ☐ Grout cleaned or whitened if discolored

Notes:



Budget-Friendly Staging Upgrades

You don't need a large budget to stage effectively. Use these high-impact updates to elevate the home affordably:

Upgrade	Approx. Cost	Impact
Fresh paint	\$200-\$800	Very High
New cabinet hardware	\$50-\$200	High
Updated light fixtures	\$100-\$300	High
White or neutral bedding	\$50-\$150	High
Matching towels	\$30-\$60	Medium-High
Fresh mulch	\$50-\$150	High
Seasonal flowers at the entrance	\$20-\$50	High
New welcome mat	\$20-\$40	Medium
New shower curtain and rings	\$30-\$80	Medium
Simple throw pillows	\$20-\$60	Medium

Budget Staging Total: \$500-\$1,500 for transformative results



Actual Staging Upgrades

Add your planned budget with its actual cost:

Upgrade	Cost	Impact

Budget Staging Total: \$_____

Notes:



Common Staging Mistakes

- ✗ **Personal photos left in view** — Buyers should imagine their own lives, not yours.
- ✗ **Too many accessories** — More decor can create visual noise instead of appeal.
- ✗ **Strong scents** — Heavy candles, plug-ins, or cooking odors can raise concerns.
- ✗ **Ignoring the garage** — Buyers open it; a cluttered garage suggests limited storage.
- ✗ **Overlooking pet presence** — Pet odors, beds, toys, and bowls should be removed before showings.
- ✗ **Forgetting the exterior** — Buyers see the outside first, and curb appeal drives showings.
- ✗ **Leaving repairs undone** — Visible cracks, stains, or broken fixtures can undermine the staging.



Photography Preparation Checklist

Photography day is one of the most important moments in the selling process. Everything should be in perfect order.

- ☐ All lights on and working
- ☐ Blinds and curtains fully open
- ☐ Toilet lids down
- ☐ Vehicles out of the driveway
- ☐ Pet items removed from view
- ☐ Counters cleared to a staged standard
- ☐ Beds made neatly
- ☐ Outdoor areas cleaned and set up
- ☐ Garage door closed for exterior shots unless it is a selling feature
- ☐ Trash cans out of sight



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