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## WHAT THE PROFESSIONAL REAL ESTATE PHOTOGRAPHER DOES AND DOESN'T DO

- 1. Photographers are not pet wranglers. They're there to do an important job. Please remove or leash pets if possible to give photographer free access to do what they do best.
- 2. Be there or allow access to the home.
- 3. If it's raining out, ask your photographer if they can come back to shoot the exterior once the rain stops - you want the outside photos to be taken on a nice, sunny day if at all possible.
- 4. Drone photos should be shot in the air at varying altitudes to get a good feel of the property space and even the immediate neighborhood, especially if your home borders a park, lake or pond. Try to include a shot of that.
- 5. Photographers typically DO NOT shoot closets unless it's a closet that adds value - like a huge walk-in closet that may be desirable.
- 6. The photographer WILL NOT clean your home and move items around. If your home is cluttered, you will get photos of a cluttered home. If a simple item was left out of place, a photographer will likely move it out of his shot then place it back where it was but he or she will not do this in every room. The photographer is not a mover or a maid - it's up to you to have to home photo-shoot ready.
- 7. Photographers are PROMPT. If your appointment is at 11 am on Monday, have the home FLAWLESS, SPOTLESS and READY the night before the shoot. The photographer will not wait for you to clean up to start shooting.



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## HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR THE PHOTOSHOOT (USE THIS AS A CHECKLIST)

- 1. Make sure the home is SPOTLESS! Dust, clean and wax everything and anything that needs dusting. Dust will show up in the photos and it will turn off potential buyers.
- 2. Put all the kids toys and things away. We all understand you still need to live without being too displaced from your own home but we cannot emphasize how important these photos are in helping to get your home sold and generating interest.
- 3. Clean the backyard up. Put away and random stuff that doesn't need to be in the photos.
- 4. Cut the lawn - make sure the grass looks as good as it can. Check that mulch is where it's supposed to be, pavers are in place, rock gardens are in their beds, flowers and landscaping looks good. Trim trees, if needed.
- 5. Move cars out of the driveway.
- 6. If possible, wait until the photographer has shot the exterior of the home before having a real estate for sale sign and post put up. Exterior photos look nicer without signs in the way and there are some MLS rules against showing signs in photos.
- 7. Close windows and make sure curtains/blinds are straight and dust-free.
- 8. Sweep/Pressure wash all walkways leading up to the home.
- 9. Remove personal items/decor from walls - family photos, animal taxidermy, trophies, religious items, very large decorative items. The idea is we want a neutral canvas to allow a potential buyer to paint the home in the vision they see in their head, not the vision you provide them. Anything that might offend a potential buyer should be removed - guns, furs, animal skins, interest group paraphernalia, religious, hobby, etc. It might be really cool to you but it could offend a buyer and it should be put away, especially in today's society where people seem to get offended over a lot of different things - things you might think are completely harmless.
- 10. Put away/reel up or remove hoses.

- 11. Put away any seasonal decor - Christmas decorations, flags, college football banners, decorative signs
- 12. Straighten up any deck or patio furniture. If you need to clean mold or moss or dust off it or make it look good, do it.
- 13. Clean the pool! You want it to be inviting and sparkling blue. This isn't something you can do overnight so if you are planning on having professional real estate photos taken, plan to have the pool perfect well in advance then keep it clean until the photo shoot.
- 14. Remove guns, jewelry, cash, valuable things from photos. The photos will be used to market your home. The photos will be disseminated all over the internet. You don't want potential strangers or criminals to know you've got wads of cash, jewelry of guns laying around the home.
- 15. Remove the kids photos from the walls for privacy - again, the photos will be marketed online and family photos should be removed to protect your privacy as they will end up showing up in your photos of the room.
- 16. Vacuum all carpets and sweep and mop all floors. Bona is a great spray to use to shine up your floors. You can find it in most grocery stores in the cleanser aisles. They have a version for hardwood floors as well as tile and laminate. You want your floors to sparkle.
- 17. Clean toilet bowl basins, rims, floors around the toilet. Remove stains.
- 18. Clean sinks and sink counters.
- 19. Turn off televisions for the shoot.
- 20. Display large, colorful books, if and where possible, to add interest to the photos. Make sure the subject of the book is neutral and not controversial.
- 21. Remove all newspapers, mail, keys, little knick-knacks. You want the home to appear as large and uncluttered as possible. LESS IS MORE!!! If you are not sure if it should go or not, get rid of it. This is probably a good time to purge all the stuff you've been meaning to purge but haven't gotten around to doing it.
- 22. Turn on the lights - including patio/pool lights.
- 23. Dust ceiling fans - we do not want dust-bunnies showing up in our photos.
- 24. Hide pet stuff - remove litter boxes, food dishes, bags of food, pet toys, pet beds, leashes hanging on the door, etc.
- 25. Remove all items from the fridge - yes, even those little magnets and the kids schools certificates. Nothing on the fridge if possible.
- 26. Put all the food, snacks, pudding cups away in the pantry.

- 27. Clean your dishes out of the sink - they can be "hidden" in the dishwasher. Hide towels, sponges, soap bottles.
- 28. Put away the toaster and other small appliances - again, we want to portray the image of open space. Clean, clutter-free counters are a must!
- 29. Put away the dish drain rack. No one needs to see that in your photos. They'd rather see an empty counter top.
- 30. DO place a colorful fruit bowl on the counter. It's pleasant to look at.
- 31. DO add a bottle of wine and some wine glasses strategically placed to paint an image of relaxation and sophistication.
- 32. DO set the main dining table as if you were having a special dinner - use a nice, colorful centerpiece, dishes, bowls, silverware and glasses.
- 33. Make all the beds in the bedrooms. If a certain room has a certain purpose that will help sell the home, add attention to that but only if it has broad appeal. A little girls' "Princess Room" might look great to the parents of a 4 year old girl, but you might rule out 70% of your potential buyers. Make it neutral unless it's a selling point.
- 34. Clean all the mirrors.
- 35. Dust all light bulbs and fixtures.
- 36. Close all toilet lids after cleaning.
- 37. Remove all items from tubs and showers - shower caddies, soaps, shampoos, hair products, shaving gear, towels (except clean, strategically placed decorative towels).
- 38. MAKE THE BATHROOMS SPARKLE. BATHROOMS AND KITCHENS SELL HOMES!!! CONCENTRATE AN EXTRA EFFORT IN THESE PLACES.