

Preparing Your Home For Sale

19 Affordable Styling Tips

First impressions make a significant impact on a buyer's decision making process!

Once your home goes on the market, it becomes a product. Home Styling or Staging simply allows you to highlight the best of your home and de-emphasize its flaws. It's not about decorating, but actually turning your home into a model, to appeal to the broadest range of prospective buyers. The goal is to make people feel like they could live there, and the best way to do this is to "neutralize" the surroundings.

Try out these helpful styling tips taken from *Setting the Stage - REALTOR® Magazine Online*. They've compiled the best tips from professional stagers and real estate pros - things you can do for little or no expense - to put a home in prime showing shape.

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- 1** Clear out closets and clutter—sellers can give away or pack up toys, linens, and small kitchen appliances to store offsite. Buyers are also forgiving of storage boxes neatly tucked away in a garage or basement.
- 2** Focus most on the most visible areas—the foyer, kitchen, living room, master bedroom, and family room.
- 3** De-personalize the home by removing photos, mementos, and dated items.
- 4** Use plants in colorful pots or inexpensive wicker baskets to fill in empty spaces.
- 5** Look to home catalogs for little details on beautifying the home. For instance, group books, pictures, and objets d’art appealingly on bookcases.
- 6** Try angling one or two pieces of furniture slightly and move furniture 4 inches to 6 inches from the wall to create more interesting room spaces.
- 7** Put away large collections—porcelains, plates, and so on.
- 8** Remove valuables, prescription medicine, collectibles, and breakables.
- 9** Trim trees, prune shrubs, and make sure the lawn is mowed and watered regularly.
- 10** In summer, turn on the sprinklers for five minutes, 30 minutes before the open house. It makes the lawn and driveway sparkle.
- 11** Refrain from cooking anything that leaves a distinctive odor, such as fish, garlic, or cabbage.
- 12** Hire a professional service to clean the home, including the carpets and the windows.
- 13** Set the dining room table with attractive linens, dishes, and stemware.
- 14** Arrange fresh or silk flowers throughout the home to add bursts of color and pleasing aromas.
- 15** Light a fire in the fireplace in fall and winter to ensure that your home feels warm and inviting.
- 16** A mirror in a pretty frame can make a small room feel more open.
- 17** Use as much natural light as possible. Add extra lamps in dark rooms or corners.
- 18** Make functional repairs—fix dripping faucets, sticking doors, and broken fences.
- 19** Bring in another pair of eyes—even if it’s not a professional stylist. The person may see problems you and have missed.