5 affordable home staging tips to get your home sold, fast.



Professional home stagers get paid to turn ordinary homes into hot properties. But if you can't afford a professional, don't worry. There are plenty of affordable ways to make your home more appealing to buyers.

Follow these five home staging tips to help your home stand out from the rest.

1. **Get rid of things.** Clutter not only makes your house look smaller, it makes it less relaxing to be in. Store your extra items at a loved one's house or temporarily invest in a small storage unit. Items to pare back can include:
    - **Clothing.** Staging experts recommend you leave around a third of your closet space unused to give the impression of ample storage.
    - **Toys.** Brightly colored or worn-down toys aren't appealing to buyers. Tuck your kids' most loved toys away somewhere inconspicuous, like in a basket with a lid or bins on shelves. Then, pack the rest away.
    - **Countertop clutter.** Consider putting things like bulky countertop appliances, cookbooks, mail, and other clutter into cabinets or storage. Instead, leave minimal, designed items, like a simple fruit bowl with fresh lemons, a small coffee station vignette, or a vase of flowers on the counter.
    - **Private information.** Lock away bills, mail, bank statements, and anything with personal or

account information on it. Additionally, store jewelry and other valuables in a locked safe or take them with you.

2. **Clean, clean, clean.** Your house shouldn't just look clean, it should smell clean, too. If you have pets, shampoo your carpets and deodorize any furniture they're especially fond of. And make sure to take your furry friends with you when you're vacating the house for prospective buyers.
   Start with the outside. Power wash your siding, sidewalks, porch, and patio/deck. Check for loose pavers, electrical cords, and other tripping hazards and remedy those to protect people walking through. Make the windows sparkle. Get a cheery new welcome mat to use only when someone's touring your house (so it's always nice and clean). Then, move indoors and clean up your appliances, floors, blinds, and closets.

3. **Go neutral.** When you're decorating your house, you want it to say, "This is so me." When you're selling your house, you want it to say, "This could be you." Neutral colors on the walls make it easy for buyers to picture their furniture in your rooms. Painting the walls also makes rooms look cleaner. Remember: Even though neutral is good, boring is not. Add pops of color with pillows and a few accessories.

4. **Rearrange and repurpose.** Though your first instinct may be to shove the couch against the wall, experts say that moving it further into the room to create conversation areas makes the room seem bigger. If one room has lots of space and another is too cluttered, switch up furniture, artwork, and accessories between them.

5. **Give every room a purpose.** Don't make buyers puzzle over what a room is supposed to be. Put a desk in it and make it an office or add a daybed and make it a guest room. Giving buyers an idea of what they could do with a given space makes it easier to picture themselves enjoying it.

With a little creativity and our home staging tips, you'll have buyers fighting over your home in no time. Once you're ready to move, don't forget that a new home means a new home insurance policy. Talk to a local, independent agent to ensure you have adequate coverage for your home and everything in it.

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