



ENGEL & VÖLKERS®



Home Staging Guide



## Home Staging Guide

**A**midst the excitement of selling a home, staging can seem to be another inconvenience on a growing to-do list. Yet, it is important to remember that it can be an invaluable tool in increasing a home's value and decreasing the time it spends on the market.

Furthermore, years of significance lie within the walls of your home. Staging thus becomes a logical and sensible way of honoring personal belongings and memories while simultaneously creating a space that is highly enticing to the imaginations of prospective buyers.

The soaring popularity of real estate and home design television shows has created a new standard for buyers. According to the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) 2021 Home Staging Report, 61% of participants reported having higher expectations of how homes should look and 71% reported having unrealistic or higher expectations of the buying process at large because of media perceptions. However, these numbers do

not reflect the further influence of social media on the homebuyer journey.

More than ever before, homebuyers have unfettered access to more information, more inspiration and more properties—all increasing what they expect to find on a walkthrough. At the end of the day, homebuyers are looking for beautiful homes and are willing to pay more for them. Staging your home will help it stand out both aesthetically and psychologically, because, yes, everyone notices those small details. A thoughtfully selected faucet here and a paint color there can establish the positive psychological reaction from prospective buyers that will ensure they leave your house determined to call it 'home'. Investments in staging can make a big difference—even when the smallest things are swapped out and touched up.

The following is a home staging guide to help prepare you for bringing your home to market with an Engel & Völkers advisor by your side.



## **FIRST IMPRESSIONS**

Keeping up appearances with your exterior spaces can elevate the entire experience for your viewers before they ever step foot through the front door. Try to keep any green areas freshly manicured and give walkways and stoops a good powerwash.



A few simple, healthy potted plants and a fresh doormat can be the perfect welcome to any prospective buyer. Remember that this is not only important for visitors, but for those viewing listing photos as well. Remove décor that could make photos appear dated.

## **RUN A TIGHT SHIP**

Whether it's the countertops, the corner of the bath, or the spot you deemed out of sight, out of mind, cleaning from floor to ceiling is a must. Make the effort to have appliances and rooms appear as new as possible, as this indicates a well-cared-for property.

Further, depersonalize the spaces by removing photographs and keeping clothes and excess items as hidden as possible. Use staging as an excuse to declutter—this way, a buyer's focus will be on the space itself, and you can prepare for an easier, lighter move.

## **BRIGHTEN THINGS UP**

Colors and lighting are essential to creating welcoming environments. Paint colors and wallpaper, in particular, can be deeply personal. Replacing unique wallpapers and giving fresh coats of neutral-toned paint can help a staged home have the perfect backdrop. When choosing a palette, consider opting for warm neutrals rather than a stark white, which may feel too sterile to buyers.





## **IDENTIFY KEY SELLING POINTS**

When it comes to staging rooms, they do not all have to be staged to the same degree. Prioritize your budget to the rooms that have the most pull with buyers: the living room, the primary bedroom and the kitchen. According to the NAR report, these are the rooms that buyers (46%, 43%, and 35% respectively) are most eager to see updated and most frequently referenced as pivotal rooms when making final purchasing decisions.

## **ESTABLISH PURPOSE**

More than ever before, maximizing square footage is of the utmost importance. Even if buyers won't use the same rooms for the same purposes as you may have, it demonstrates that all the spaces in a home can be used, giving buyers the most value for their money. Give each room in your home a specific purpose and stage it with that in mind. Any finished space in your home should be capitalized on—basements and attics included.



## LEAVE THEM FLOORED

A home's flooring should not be overlooked and can be one of the highest yielding and transformative changes. For kitchens and bathrooms, ceramic tiles and stone will always be enticing to buyers, as will hardwood floors throughout the rest of the home. Although these materials can be pricey, they are beautiful, low maintenance and provide lasting elegance and value to a home's atmosphere.

To quickly return to the importance of cleaning, stained flooring and carpets can be unsightly and discomfoting to prospective buyers.

## MAXIMIZE, MAXIMIZE AND MAXIMIZE SOME MORE

Staging furniture can be a delicate balance—there should be as much walking space as possible without a noticeable void of furniture that makes a home feel barren. This can be an optimal time to lean on your advisor for help. A fresh pair of eyes can help decide which pieces of furniture may be cluttering the space or prohibiting buyers from the ability to walk through and envision themselves living in the area with their own belongings.

## SHED LIGHT

Nothing is more enticing than a sun-drenched dwelling. While natural sunlight is a frequent favorite of prospective buyers (open those shades!), a good lighting design scheme can help bring brilliance into any space.

Try using LED halogen bulbs for overhead lights—known for their warm, white cast, halogen bulbs are the closest to natural light a lightbulb can get. Areas that may be in need of extra assistance could benefit from a sconce, floor, or table lamp. As they say, it's the little things that count, and this couldn't be more true than with lighting.

## APPLY PATCHES WHERE NEEDED

On the assumption that all foundation problems have been taken care of, staging the home is the perfect time to ensure that any cracks in walls or ceilings don't imply otherwise. While life happens, damage to these areas can be a hard impression to overcome.

## SHOWTIME

While staging can take a lot of forethought and big-picture thinking, when it comes down to showing time, the small details can be the final push in the right direction that buyers need. There are a plethora of resources when it comes to final touches before a walkthrough. Common tricks include baking apples and cinnamon, opening windows, lighting candles, fluffing pillows, putting out fresh flowers, a final sweep and vacuum, etc. These final touches are a great way to add that *je ne sais quoi* that makes prospective buyers eager to take next steps, especially in this fast-paced market.

## LEAN ON YOUR SPHERE

When you're selling a home, it is so important to lean on the sphere of experts that you have in reach. Engel & Völkers advisors have seen the most premier properties on the market, and know how to make a staging strategy that influences, impacts, and excites. As such, they are an invaluable resource to help ensure the highest return on your investments, no matter how big or small.





A high-end, modern living room with a white brick fireplace, a patterned armchair, and a grey sofa. The room features white architectural details, a large window, and a warm, inviting atmosphere.

## Now, Onto the Next Chapter

**T**he key takeaway is that staging is not about renovating your home, it is about maximizing what you have already built. Whether bringing in third party assistance via your advisor or you're able to address a few key aspects on your own, it will pay off in the long run. Buyers have higher expectations than ever before and are eager to jump when they see something they love. So, why not deliver it to them? As the selling process commences, staging your home will most importantly do this: help seal a closing chapter so that you have the best beginning for the next.





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