



## Preparing Your Home for Photography and a Virtual Tour

With more buyers shopping for homes on the Web, outstanding photos and virtual tours are a must. Think of this as the first showing. There are many things you can do make your home outshine the competition.

One very important point – if you have children or pets in the home during the photo shoot, please make sure to keep them out of range of the camera. Since we shoot 8 individual exposures for each photo, if a pet or child runs through the camera range, we must start all over again. We appreciate your assistance in this and want to give you the best possible photographs.

### Important Tips:

- Sparkling clean windows photograph much better than dirty windows. If possible, clean them inside and out before your photo shoot. If the seal is broken, consider replacing them. With clean windows, our photographic process allows viewers to see right through to the beautiful outdoors highlighting your yard and views.
- Wipe smudges and fingerprints from appliances and cabinets. If you have children or pets, get down to eye-level to check for little spots.
- Clean mirrors so they are streak free.
- Hide all electrical cords if you can, or coil them neatly.
- Check that there are no burned out light bulbs in lamps and fixtures. If possible, replace compact fluorescent bulbs; they add a sickly color to photographs of the home. Use incandescent or LED bulbs with filters to provide a more pleasing light. Your photos and tour will look much better if you have the same bulbs throughout the room.
- Check your beds, make sure the spread is covering the mattress and box spring and that there are no wrinkles. This might be the time you iron pillowcases and shams.
- Open all drapes and shades to let the light in. Our special High Dynamic Range photography will allow buyers to see the view through the windows, too!

- Move all vehicles out of the drive and away from the home so we can photograph the front exterior without them.
- Hide all refuse and recycling containers from view, as well as anything stored or stacked alongside the house.
- Clean floors, if needed, just before we come.
- Remove sponges, dishes, detergent bottles, etc. from around the kitchen sink, hide all towels.
- If you have things on the fridge (magnets, photos, etc.) now is the time to take them down and remove distractions.
- Use your best towels in the bathroom and make sure they are folded/stacked neatly.

## Seasonal

- o Winter -- Ensure the driveway and walks are shoveled and clean.

o

spring/Summer -- mow the lawn, trim trees, and shrubs if necessary and water the lawn thoroughly a few days prior to the shoot so the lawn will be nice and green.

- o Fall -- rake leaves and remove.

## Following are additional tips for Staging your home to show its best!

We look forward to providing you with a beautiful virtual tour of your home and helping you to sell quickly and for top dollar!

1. **Understand the camera's perspective.** The camera's eye is very different from the human eye. It magnifies clutter and poor furniture arrangement. To make a home shine in a virtual tour or video presentation, cater to the lens. [Your home needs to be the cleanest it's ever been! -Snapshot](#)
2. **Make the home "Q-tip clean."** Because the camera magnifies grime, each room must be spotless. Don't forget floor coverings and walls; a discolored spot on the rug might be overlooked by prospects during a regular home showing, but that stain becomes a focal point for online viewers. [Don't forget to hide the cleaning supplies when you're done, a dirty sponge can ruin your kitchen photos! - Snapshot, the official mascot of Exposure](#)
3. **Pack up the clutter.** But leave three items of varying heights on each surface. For example, on an end table you can place a lamp (high), a small plant (medium), and a book (low). [For help, check out](#)

home photos on Houzz on the web, it has great ideas which you can easily use. -Snapshot, the official mascot of Exposure

4. **Snap pictures.** This will give you an idea of what the home will look like on camera. Closely examine the photos and list changes that would improve each room's appearance: opening blinds to let in natural light, removing magnets from the refrigerator, or taking down distracting art. [Think of any model homes, you've toured, that's what you're going aiming for.](#) -Snapshot, the official mascot of Exposure
5. **Pare down furniture.** Identify one or two pieces of furniture that can be removed from each room to make the space appear larger. [You're selling square footage, so let them see the space, not just the furniture!](#) -Snapshot, the official mascot of Exposure
6. **Rearrange.** Spotlight the flow of a space by creating a focal point on the furthest wall from the doorway and arranging the other pieces of furniture to make a triangle shape. The focal point may be a bed in a bedroom or a china cabinet in a dining room. [Accessories arranged throughout the room in the same color also help the eye move around the space!](#) -Snapshot, the official mascot of Exposure
7. **Re-accessorize.** Include a healthy plant in every room; the camera loves green. Energize bland decor by placing a bright vase on a mantle or draping an afghan over a couch. [A little Feng Shui tip; don't know why, but a vase of red roses \(real or high-quality silks\) near the door will help your home sell faster!](#) -Snapshot, the official mascot of Exposure
8. **Keep the home in shape.** You want buyers who liked what they saw online to encounter the same home in person. [Now is the time to enlist the entire family, get them on board and knowing what they must do to keep the home showing ready!](#) -Snapshot, the official mascot of Exposure

[One additional tip, make sure your windows are sparkling clean, nothing shows dirt and grime like a window and clean windows showcase your yard.](#)

*Source: Barb Schwarz, [www.StagedHomes.com](http://www.StagedHomes.com), Concord, Pa. and 'Snapshot, the official mascot of Exposure*

Reprinted from REALTOR® magazine (REALTOR.org/realtormag) with permission of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. Copyright 2008. All rights reserved.



[Snapshot, official mascot of Exposure](#)