



What is Home Staging?

To put it simply, **home staging is a way of presenting your home for sale in a way that helps prospective homebuyers to imagine themselves living there.** The process usually includes:

1. Depersonalizing your space

Even if you're *proud* of your personal trophies (as you should be!), if it's on your mantelpiece you should pack it away, along with family photos. (Yes, even the ones of the dog.)

2. Decluttering

Though you may not see it, you probably have years' worth of items on display such as that coffee table book on traveling, or your favourite collection of spoons, memorabilia, mementos and well, *stuff* that can be packed away. You may see it as taking away the home's personality but it's taking away *your* personality, which allows buyers to see a blank slate that they can put their own personal stamp (or stamp collection) on. Try to think of it as less to pack on moving day. This is the objective of home staging.

3. Redecorating

Changing out stained or worn furniture, painting, reorganizing, decorating can help buyers see the value of your home. Worn out items can distract buyers from looking at the space. This is where a professional home stager is very helpful or you could simply use us.

Who Pays for Home Staging?

The seller typically covers the cost, with the idea that they will recoup the cost (and then some!) in a higher sale price. According to a survey by the International Association of Home Staging Professionals revealed staged homes (with an investment of one per cent of the listed price) [sell up to 30 per cent faster](#) on average for 20 per cent more. These are the key benefits of home staging. Hmmm... suddenly, it doesn't seem as sad to put away that picture of Grandma on your nightstand!

How Much Does Home Staging Cost?

This all depends on the degree of staging required. An older home may need some more intensive updates, such as painting, replacing hardware and light fixtures, or renting new furniture for the presentation of your home. On the other hand, a home that is relatively new and/or updated may only require some simple depersonalizing and decluttering, which costs nothing. In terms of the home staging service, if the seller engages a professional stager, then they'll incur a service fee, which differs by stager. If the seller takes a DIY approach, it'll just cost them some time and sweat equity.

Staging Your Home to Sell Faster

Homebuyers want who are looking for a turn-key home usually do not want a project. Here's what you can do to appeal to this type of buyer, and stage your home to sell.

1. Focus on the key rooms

There are several areas that Buyers zero in on when they look at your home, with the living room, kitchen, primary bedroom, and dining room topping the list.

If you can't get to every room, make sure that you spend your time, energy, and money on these rooms.

2. Clean, clean, clean

If you have spent any time looking at homes for sale online, you have undoubtedly encountered some sellers who skimmed on the cleaning. We've all seen the kitchen photo where that morning's breakfast is still on the counter. Avoid that. Please.

If you can't stage every room in your home, you can still **clean every room**. It's essential. It signals pride of ownership and that you have cared for the house over the years.

Ensure that appliances are spotless and the bathrooms sparkle. You will not regret cleaning.

3. Declutter your home

Decluttering is something that you can do without having to hire a stager. It gives your home an open, airy feel, making it feel more spacious.

On the flip side, an overcrowded home is distracting. There is no room for buyers to imagine. Instead of potential, they see restrictions and a shortage of storage space.

Go room by room. Organize your items in piles: the things you want out of your life and the ones that can go into storage, until you're ready to move.

4. Depersonalize the space

While you are decluttering, be sure to **remove any personal items** from display. Buyers want to picture themselves in the space, and your family portraits can make it hard for them to imagine.

Photos, your kids' artwork on the fridge, knick-knacks from that trip to Italy – sure, they have sentimental value to you, but not to potential buyers. Remove these items and replace them with more generic artwork that will appeal to potential buyers.

5. Add Plants

Freshen up your space with live, thriving plants. They can do wonders to **make your home feel more inviting**. Do not crowd any area with plants, have them dispersed throughout the space.

6. Give Rooms a Purpose

Just because you use that spare room as a gym, home office and the guest room does not mean that a potential buyer will see the practicality of it. They want each room to have a single, defined purpose. A bedroom is a bedroom. An office is an office.

Defining the purpose of each room will maximize the appeal and contribute to that **open, clutter-free feel** that buyers want. Giving each room a purpose allows buyers to envision how they too can make use of the space.

If you can add office space, do it. With so many people shifting to remote or hybrid work, it allows them to see themselves working in that space.

7. Fresh Paint

According to the RE/MAX Canada survey - 36 per cent of RE/MAX brokers surveyed said Buyers want a fresh coat of paint. This simple and cost-efficient update can go a long way. When you head to the paint store, opt for light, neutral colours. People's colour preferences vary widely, and bold choices may scare some buyers off.

8. Let There be Light

You want your home to feel **bright and inviting**. Lighting plays an essential role. Open your curtains and blinds to let the natural light pour in. Turn on all the lights. Bring in a lamp to let your home shine if you need new lighting!

9. Furniture

When it comes to furniture, less is more. Don't clutter a room with too much furniture. The starting point for most professional stagers is getting rid of furniture. Often, they will remove about half of the furniture in the home. The goal is to **make your house look bigger**. Furniture takes up space and can make the home feel cluttered.

If you need to upscale your furniture, you can rent the right pieces to make your space more inviting.

10. Boost the Curb Appeal

The exterior of your home is a great place to start your staging efforts. Some sweat equity over a weekend can turn into real equity in your bank account.

Make your home sparkle with a power washer. If you don't have one, rent one. Remove dirt and grime from your siding, roof, fascia and gutters. Give your deck a scrub too.

If your shutters or front door needs some paint, be sure to freshen them up. Pay attention to the little things like the house numbers, mailbox and welcome mat.

Ready, Set, Move!

When you're ready to sell your home, consider staging it and consult your RE/MAX agent for advice on how you can potentially sell it faster and for a higher price.

2nd opinion from Jenn and Hilary

Sometimes we are just too close to the situation to make good 'staging' decisions as that trophy or picture has been there so long, it is simply overlooked. Time to let the professionals come have a walk thru your home and provide you with that 2nd opinion or a different perspective on what needs to be done to get the 'top dollar' on your property.