

Preparing Your Home for Professional Real Estate Photography

As your Realtor I am dedicated to successfully marketing and selling your home. One of my marketing efforts is professional real estate photographs from Snap2Close Real Estate Photography, which will be used on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) and other national web service portals such as Realtor.com, Trulia.com and Zillow.com. These professional photographs may also be used on printed flyers or other marketing material.

Your home is one of your largest assets and obtaining the highest possible price and selling it quickly are your goals, as well as your Realtor's. To help accomplish this goal, it is extremely important that the photographs of your house are of the highest quality. Since more than 98% of homebuyers begin their search online, the photographs of your home are usually the first chance to make a great impression.

To have the best photos possible you will need to prepare your home prior to arrival of an Snap2Close photographer. This usually requires a great deal of effort on your part and we have prepared this guide to assist you in your efforts.

Step 1: Clean, clean and clean some more. Professional photographs will capture dirt, glass and mirror smudges, dirty countertops and a wide assortment of other factors that will distract the viewer from seeing the home's structure and architecture. Dust can show up on photographs.

Step 2: Declutter. Many homes are filled with memories of the past, pictures of your family and treasured knick-knacks that you have collected over the years. These items often distract viewers who are looking for a new home and quite frankly may lead to the potential buyer looking at another house. Please do not take this personally because this is simply a part of the business when selling your home.

Step 3: Remove excess furnishings. Large amounts of furniture do not generally photograph well and often distracts from your home's features. While it may be difficult, it is important to realize that potential home buyers are not looking to buy your "stuff". They are looking to possibly buy your home/structure.

Attached is a helpful checklist that should help you prepare your home before the arrival of your Snap2Close photographer.

GENERAL

- Remove seasonal decorations that might date the photographs.
- Move garbage cans, and other trash from view.
- Remove all pet-related items (e.g., food bowls, litter boxes, cages, beds)
- Remove throw rugs and runners in entry ways, kitchens, bathrooms and bedrooms so that the floor can be clearly seen.
- Replace all burned out light bulbs both inside and outside your home. Good lighting is key.
- The day of the shoot make sure all lights, inside and out, are turned on.

OUTSIDE

- Move cars, boats, trailers, etc. from driveway and do not park directly in front of the house.
- Close garage doors.
- Remove any patio furniture, grills, etc., in disrepair.
- Remove all children's toys, bikes, etc.
- Uncover any outdoor kitchen items that may be photographed.
- Make sure cushions in chairs are arranged neatly
- Remove any unattractive potted plants or hanging baskets.
- Store hoses out of sight or rolled-up neatly.
- Turn on any pool features, lights, etc. Make sure the pool and spa is clean.
- Remove pool sweeps, floating chlorine tools.
- Remove safety fence.
- Trim bushes and trees to maximize the view of your home.
- Mow the grass, rake up leaves and debris, pull weeds and remove dead vegetation.
- Remove yard signs (e.g., campaign signs, school signs, sports signs) Not your realtor's yard sign of course
- If patio umbrellas block a nice view then they should be closed.
- Move garbage cans out of sight.
- Remove garden tools.
- Sweep driveway, sidewalks and patios.
- If you are ambitious, plant some fresh flowers in empty planters or pots and use fresh mulch.

INSIDE

- Turn ceiling fans off.
- Open all curtains/blinds to allow light into your home. As much as possible, minimize electrical cords in view.
- Organize or hide all mail, bills, paperwork, etc.
- Turn TVs and computer screens off.
- Remove remote controls. Close TV/stereo cabinets

BATHROOMS

- Put toilet seats down
- Clean mirrors
- Minimize items on countertops, unless decorative, remove all towels, bathroom mats, rugs etc. from view
- Remove shampoo/conditioner bottles, wash rags, etc. from showers and tubs.
- Remove robes, slippers, etc. from view

KITCHEN

- Minimize items on countertops (pictures, knife blocks, appliances, etc.)
- Empty sink
- Take all magnets, notes, artwork, etc. off the refrigerator.
- Move trash cans out of site .
- Unless decorative, remove all towels from view.
- Remove all food items from view.

BEDROOMS

- Make sure beds are made and all pillows are arranged neatly
- Make sure that items stored under beds do not show
- Minimize items on bedside tables
- Store all clothing out of view
- If you have an exceptional walk-in closet that want photographed then please arrange clothes neatly.

LIVING AREAS

- Make sure pillows are arranged neatly on sofas and chairs Arrange shelves neatly

DINING ROOM

- If you have a china cabinet make sure items are straight and neat.

PERSONAL ITEMS

- Certificates, diplomas, awards, photographs, decorative names in children's room, etc. may show up on your real estate photographs. (If desired, remove before photos are taken)

Note: Curb appeal starts on the Internet so it's very important to make the pictures of your home attractive. If your listing's professional photographs on the Internet don't sell your home, you might not ever get the buyers. A lot of homebuyers do a physical drive-by before they decide to visit your home.