

Free Printable Home Staging Checklist (PDF) - Tips & Ideas

Complimentary home staging checklist by Mid Modern Designs, a Los Angeles Home Staging Company

It's time to move! What better way to prepare your home for staging than to follow this checklist for staging your home? Home staging, the process of preparing your home for sale by making it look its best, can be the difference between a lasting first impression and a sale that fizzles out. When you're selling your home, it's important to remember that you're not just selling the physical structure, but also the emotions that it can evoke in potential buyers. They need to be able to envision *themselves* living in your house. So, keep in mind that you're selling a dream – not just a house. And that dream starts the moment a prospective buyer pulls up to your home.

Home Staging Checklist

This comprehensive home staging task checklist below will help you take care of the details so you can focus on getting your home sold!

Curb Appeal

- 1. Evaluate your mailbox. Is it dented, rusty, or in need of a paint job? Make sure this first impression is a good one!
- 2. Trim the hedges and bushes around your home. You want potential buyers to be able to see the house, not a jungle.

- 3. Put away any lawn furniture, toys, or other items that might make the yard look cluttered. You want buyers to be able to imagine themselves using the space free of any distractions.
- 4. Make sure the gutters are clean and in good repair. No potential buyer wants to see leaves and debris and you don't want to run the risk that a clog could cause a leak during a rainstorm.
- 5. If you have a porch or deck, make sure it is clean, inviting, and decorated. This is a spot where buyers will envision themselves spending time, so make it count!
- 6. Give your front door a fresh coat of paint (if needed) and a new doormat is a great idea too! You want buyers to feel welcome (and imagine their own guests feeling welcome) as soon as they arrive.
- 7. Make sure all of your exterior light bulbs are working. You want the house to be well-lit, both for safety reasons and to enhance curb appeal.
- 8. If you have a garage, make sure it is clean and organized. No potential buyer wants to see clutter. Instead, you want them to think there is so much room in your garage that they could actually park their car in it!
- 9. Take a look at your home's siding. If it is dirty, power wash it. This is a quick, easy, and relatively inexpensive way to make your home look brand new again.
- 10. Add some color! Whether you add a seasonal wreath, flowers in the garden, or a fresh coat of paint on the trim, a little color can go a long way in boosting curb appeal.

Now that the outside is taken care of, let's move on to the inside...

Living Room

Note: Your living room is important. It's one of the first rooms a potential buyer sees.

- 11. De-clutter all surfaces (coffee tables, end tables, shelves, etc.). You want potential buyers to be able to see the surfaces and imagine their own accessories in this space.
- 12. Put away any personal items (especially family photos). Buyers need to be able to imagine themselves in the space, which is hard to do with another family's photos on display.
- 13. Make sure all furniture is arranged in a way that is both functional and attractive. You want buyers to visualize how they might use the space themselves.
- 14. Remove any pieces of furniture that are large or unnecessary. This will make the room look bigger and more inviting.
- 15. Evaluate your window treatments. If they are outdated or in disrepair, it might be worth replacing them. New window treatments can go a long way in making a room feel fresh and new.
- 16. Take a close look at your flooring. If it is in bad shape, this is a big turn-off for potential buyers. If you can't afford to replace your floor, consider getting a pretty area rug to cover up any unsightly areas.

Kitchen

- 17. De-clutter all surfaces here too (countertops, table, etc.). Potential buyers should marvel at all of the prep space that they will have available!

- 18. Make sure the sink is clean and free of any dishes or debris. Dirty sinks are gross! Instead, leave a great impression by making sure your sink area is sparkling clean. Wiping your sink down with a towel before each showing is a great way to keep it looking its best.
- 19. Put away (or give away) any small appliances that you don't use on a regular basis. If your countertops are cluttered, the kitchen will feel small and cramped.
- 20. Start purging old items from your cabinets and drawers. The more you can get rid of, the better! You want potential buyers to see how spacious your kitchen storage really is.
- 21. Clear off the fridge and make sure it is clean inside and out. The focus here should be on the great appliances and the amount of available space!
- 22. If you have a dishwasher, make sure it is empty, or at the very least that it has been run before your house is shown. A great habit to get into is to run your dishwasher each morning after breakfast so that if you have a showing later that day, buyers will be greeted by the cleanest possible kitchen.
- 23. Look at your floors and determine whether they need to be cleaned or replaced. Many times, a good cleaning will do the trick. If your floors are in bad shape, however, replacing them may be worth the investment if you can increase your asking price accordingly.
- 24. Kitchen lighting is so important! Make sure all of your light fixtures are in working order and that your windows are clean, letting in as much natural light as possible.

- 25. Smells can make or break a home sale, so make sure your kitchen smells amazing! One way to do this is to bake cookies or bread shortly before each showing. Also, make sure your kitchen trash is taken out daily.

A nice finishing touch is to add a potted plant, some fresh flowers, or a bowl of fruit to your kitchen table or island. If buyers can imagine themselves enjoying a meal in your kitchen, they'll be much more likely to make an offer!

Bedrooms

- 26. First, de-clutter all surfaces This is getting repetitive, but it really is so important! Grab a basket to stow away your lotion, ChapStick, books, or any other items that usually end up on your nightstand.
- 27. Make the beds in each bedroom and add some pretty pillows or throw blankets for extra color and texture.
- 28. Look critically at your wall art and make sure it is updated and reflects current style trends. Swap out anything that is too personal (photos) or unusual.
- 29. Freshen up the curtains. You may not have realized that dust and pollen can accumulate on curtains, so it's important to clean them regularly. If they are looking a little tired, consider swapping them out for new ones.
- 30. Again, smells are key! Make sure each bedroom smells pleasant and inviting. You can do this by using a diffuser with essential oils, spraying a light linen mist, or having a bowl of potpourri on the dresser.
- 31. Closet space can be a make-or-break feature for many buyers, so take some time to declutter and organize your bedroom closets. This doesn't mean that you

need to get rid of everything – just make sure that the items that are left are neatly arranged and easy to access.

- 32. Consider updating your overhead light fixtures or adding some lamps to your bedroom for a cozy, inviting atmosphere. Basic, builders' grade fixtures are boring – and often ugly. The good thing is that they are usually easy and inexpensive to replace.
- 33. Finally, wash the windows. Again, natural light is so important in making a space feel bright and airy. If your windows are “smeary” or dirty, the room will feel darker, no matter how much light is coming in.

Bathrooms

- 34. The same rules apply in the bathrooms – clear off all surfaces and put away any personal items. This means curling irons, stray lipsticks, extra conditioner bottles, and anything else that might make the bathroom look cluttered.
- 35. Add some fresh, fluffy towels to each bathroom. You can even fold them in a fancy way or add a pretty ribbon to make them look extra inviting.
- 36. Make sure the toilet seats are down and the toilets are clean. This may seem like a no-brainer, but you'd be surprised how many people forget!
- 37. Declutter the medicine cabinet and under-sink area. Toss any expired medications and toiletries that you no longer use.
- 38. Consider a new shower curtain or set of rugs if yours are looking worn or dated. These details can make a big difference in the overall look of the bathroom.

- 39. Wall art is important in the bathroom, too! Make sure it is appropriate for the space and reflects current trends without being too personal.
- 40. Finally, pay attention to the little details. Make sure the toilet paper is rolled correctly, the hand towels are hung neatly, and the toilet brush is hidden away. These small touches will make a big impression on buyers.
- 41. Bathroom smells are important, too! Consider using a plug-in diffuser with a light scent. You want your bathroom to smell fresh but not overwhelming. And you don't want it to seem like you're trying to hide something!

Home Office

- 42. Declutter and organize your home office space. This includes desktops, shelves, and any other surfaces. Buyers should be able to see that this office space is functional and efficient.
- 43. Put away any personal items. You want buyers to be able to imagine themselves in the office, just like in the rest of the house. If you have family photos displayed, consider packing them safely away for the duration of your sale.
- 44. Make sure the room is clean and tidy, with no dust or dirt visible. Wipe down surfaces and vacuum the floors.
- 45. Arrange the furniture in a way that makes sense and is conducive to productivity. The desk should be facing the door, if possible, and there should be plenty of space to walk around.

- 46. Declutter and organize your desk drawers, filing cabinets, and any other storage areas. This will show buyers that you have a system in place and that the office is functional.
- 47. Add some fresh, new pens and stationery to the desk. You can even put out a notepad or some blank Post-its to really sell the image of a productive workspace. No, the buyers won't keep these items – but they will help to stage the office and make it look its best.
- 48. Make sure the desk is clear and there is plenty of open space. A clean, orderly desk conveys professionalism and competence and will make buyers believe that if they work in this space, they will be just as productive.
- 49. Consider adding some greenery to the space. Plants can help to liven up any room, and they can also help to improve air quality.
- 50. Consider the art you have on your walls. If you have diplomas or certificates displayed, it's best to take them down. Additionally, any art on display should be professional and muted in tone – you probably want to avoid overly bright colors or questionable subject matter.
- 51. Make sure the lighting in the room is adequate. A well-lit space looks more inviting and makes it easier to work in. Add some task lighting if necessary.
- 52. Open the curtains or blinds to let in natural light. If possible, arrange the furniture so that it makes the most of the available light.

Playroom

- 53. Declutter and organize the playroom. This includes getting rid of any toys that are no longer used, as well as organizing those that you keep.

- 54. Wipe down all surfaces and vacuum the floors. This room should be clean and inviting, just like the rest of the house. Kids tend to leave a lot of clutter in their wake, so make sure you take the time to really clean up.
- 55. If this space could be used for something else by a potential buyer, make sure to stage it accordingly. For example, if you have a foosball table, you may want to stage your playroom as a game room instead.
- 56. Put away any personal items, such as photos or mementos. Remember, you want potential buyers to be able to visualize themselves in the home, and that means removing any items that are specific to you and your family.
- 57. Consider adding some playful touches, such as colorful throw pillows or a fun rug. This will help to make the room more inviting and attractive.
- 58. Make sure there is plenty of storage space. This is especially important if your ideal buyers are likely to have children themselves. Buyers will want to know that there is a place for everything to go!

Basements, Attics, or other Utilitarian Areas

- 59. These spaces should be clean and organized, with everything in its proper place. If you have been holding on to things that you know you will no longer use, it's time to get rid of them.
- 60. If your attic or basement is unfinished but you use it as a bedroom, living room, workout room, or any other type of space, make sure it is as clean and inviting as possible. Give the same care to staging this room as you would the rest of your house.

- 61. If your home storage areas are full, you may want to consider renting a storage unit. This will declutter your space and make it appear larger, giving buyers the impression that there is plenty of room for their belongings.
- 62. If you have any valuable items stored in these areas, make sure they are well-protected. This includes things like jewelry, art, collectibles, and so on. You don't want anything to get damaged or stolen while your home is on the market.
- 63. Storage boxers should be stacked neatly and labeled. This will make it easier for you to find things when you need them, and organization is extremely appealing to potential buyers because it is visually pleasing and makes the space appear well-kept.
- 64. These areas should be free of any hazards. Make sure there are no loose wires, nails sticking out, or anything else that could potentially hurt someone.
- 65. These areas should be well-lit, so make sure to add some additional lighting if necessary. Plug-in hanging lights, floor lamps, and table lamps are all good options.

Patio, Porch, or Deck

- 66. These areas should be clean and inviting, with no dirt, leaves, or other debris. Get your broom or leaf blower and give these areas a good cleaning.
- 67. If you have any patio furniture, make sure it is in good condition. This includes things like chairs, tables, and umbrellas. If any of your furniture needs repair, now is the time to take care of it.

- 68. Add some colorful flowers or plants to these areas. This will help to make them more inviting and attractive. If you are putting your house on the market in the winter, planters filled with evergreens and berries can be a nice touch.
- 69. If your deck or patio needs to be stained or sealed, now is the time to do it. The time you invest in this now will pay off when potential buyers see how well-cared-for your outdoor spaces are.
- 70. Check for splinters, loose boards, and other hazards. These areas should be safe for potential buyers to walk around in, so make sure there are no dangers lurking about.
- 71. Make sure there is plenty of lighting so that potential buyers can see these areas even when it's getting dark outside. String lights, solar lights, and lanterns are all good options. Plus, these whimsical light fixtures can help to make your outdoor spaces more inviting and appealing.

For Pet Owners

Note: If you have pets, it's important to take some special considerations into account when selling your home.

- 72. If you have any pet odor in your home, it's important to get rid of it before potential buyers come to look.
- 73. Remove all pet hair from your furniture, floors, and any other surfaces in your home. A lint roller can be helpful for removing pet hair from fabric surfaces.
- 74. Pets can be a great source of comfort, but it's important to remember that not everyone is a "pet person." When potential buyers come to look at your home, it's best to keep your pets out of the way.

- 75. If you have any pet damage in your home, it's important to take care of it before potential buyers come to look. This includes things like scratched floors, chew marks on furniture, and so on.
- 76. Be sure to disclose any pets that you have when you are marketing your home. Some people are allergic to certain animals.

General Tips

- 77. Always keep your home as clean as possible. This includes things like vacuuming, sweeping, mopping, and dusting on a regular basis.
- 78. Fireplaces need to be cleaned before potential buyers come to look. This includes sweeping out the ashes and cleaning the fireplace itself.
- 79. Finally, if you have a lot of extra stuff, consider renting a storage unit for the duration of your home sale. This will give you a place to put things that you don't need daily, but that you don't want to part with permanently.

When to Hire a Professional Home Staging Company

The old saying is true – if you want something done right, hire a professional. Home stagers typically charge just one percent of a home's sale price. However, these [expert home staging services](#) usually result in the homeowner earning several percent more than their original asking price. In a [2021 survey conducted by the Real Estate Staging Association](#), staged homes sold for an average of \$40,000 over their list prices.

The [cost of hiring a staging professional](#) varies depending on the size of the home and the services required ([see our home staging pricing calculator](#)). [HomeAdvisor](#) reports that sellers can expect to pay between \$755 and \$2,829 in staging costs.

While it is possible to stage your own home, it's not always the best idea. Home stagers have a trained eye for detail and know how to make a house look its best. They also have access to a variety of resources, such as furniture and accessories, that most homeowners don't have.

If you decide to hire a professional home stager, be sure to interview multiple candidates and ask for references. Once you've found the right person for the job, be sure to communicate your vision for the home and what you hope to achieve with the staging. The more information you can give the stager, the better!

Preparing your home for sale doesn't have to be a daunting task. With a little bit of planning and elbow grease, you can make your house look its best and maximize its selling potential.

Our Ultimate Staging Checklist will help you take things step-by-step, so you don't miss anything important. This comprehensive guide includes [tips for every room in the house](#), from the living room to the attic.

By following our advice, you'll be one step closer to getting your home off the market and into the hands of a new owner!

Lastly, for more home staging tips for homeowners, [read our blog here](#).