

# 14 Home Staging Tips to Sell Your Home

By Danni Duggan

Staging presents all of the possibilities of a home rather than a glimpse into the lives of the people who are trying to sell it. Let me state up front that I am a fan of using a staging company for most listings. Whether you decide to go with a professional staging company or do the job yourself, the following 14 tips will get you well on your way to obtaining the right offer on your home.

Before we talk about the inside, I want to point out that the outside of the home is often forgotten in the process, and that is so wrong. Contrary to what your parents (hopefully) taught you about people, what's on the outside does, in fact, count when it comes to home sales.

1. **The front door should be inviting.** Make sure your door mat is clean and ready to welcome visitors and your front door is in tip top shape. Shine the wood, or give the door a fresh coat of paint. Do not be afraid of a pop of color on the front door.

2. **Curb appeal matters.** Curb appeal can be the difference between someone driving by your home slowly (ahem, or quickly), and someone wanting to see the inside. Make sure the front of your home is clean, your house numbers are easily readable, your walkway and stairs are power washed, and plants are tame and inviting, not reminiscent of Jurassic Park. The front of your home should say, "You REALLY want to see what's inside."

3. **Got a front porch? Flaunt it.** This is where you place the iconic rocking chair with a side table for your morning coffee and a book. Many old Portland houses are ripe for a front porch swing. Why not build one?

4. **Don't forget the backyard.** If you have a patio or a deck that is great for entertaining, be sure to set the scene. Patio lights. A set table. A wine tableau. All of these things show buyers the potential a space offers if they lived in this home.

Okay now that we have scrubbed and spruced the outside, here are the things to consider when staging the inside of your home.

5. **Clean it like no one lives there.** Seriously. In addition to decluttering, you will want to deep clean the entire house. This may be the time to call in the professionals: cleaning windows and baseboards, tackling cobwebs, dusting ceiling fan blades and bathroom fans, scrubbing light switch finger prints, shampooing carpets, cleaning the stove, you know, everything you either hate to clean yourself or never even thought to clean. This step can make the biggest difference, and can be the least expensive fix to any home. You want buyers to see that you have maintained the home and tended to the basics while you lived there.

6. **Not everyone loves pets.** I know. I cannot believe I just typed that either. But if you have a pet, and you are used to living with certain imperfections that come with sharing your home with pets, understand that there is a percentage of the population who does not share your tolerance. Pet owners should be



extra vigilant about steam cleaning carpets, vacuuming daily, and keeping most surfaces free of pet hair during the home showing period. Pet toys, feeding dishes, beds, and grooming accoutrement should be discretely put away during home tours.

7. **Bring in the nature.** Bring in some elements from nature. This is not a "Cue the deer" recommendation, but a bouquet of flowers from the garden, a bowl of fresh fruit in the kitchen, or some nice citrus that's ready to accompany homemade iced tea all say "home."

8. **Set the dining room table.** If your home style is casual, set the table casually. If your dining room is formal, then go for it – charger plates, table cloth, formal settings, wine glasses. What does it look like to entertain guests in this home? Help set the stage for buyers.

9. **Rearrange furniture to increase flow of traffic, and remove unnecessary pieces.** Your furniture should invite conversation, perhaps a buyer will sit down with her



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agent and decide to write an offer. At the same time, if people have to turn sideways to get around the reclining chair-and-a-half, consider removing that piece. If a buyer suspects that their own furniture could not possibly fit in your home, they may walk away.

## 10. **Area rugs “really tie the room together.”**

Area rugs define spaces and hide imperfections in the flooring. If you have ever had dogs and Douglas fir floors, you know exactly what I am talking about. Strategic use of area rugs can help anchor a space.

11. **Paint is your new BFF.** While prepping your home for sale may not be the time to try new sponge painting techniques (wait, are there actually “new” sponge painting techniques?), it is also not the time to go to “builder’s white.” We live in the Pacific Northwest, and there are lots of great neutrals that

evoke our natural environment. I am personally partial to The Affinity® Colour Collection by Benjamin Moore as well as The ColorEvolution Collection by Miller Paint.

12. **Make sure the master bedroom has the “wow” factor.** Remove at least half of your clothing so that the closet appears to have all the room anyone will need. Declutter. Declutter. Declutter. Make sure your night stands are clear of – what? – clutter. Do what you can to make this room appeal to both men and women alike.

13. **Organize toys like it is your life’s mission.** Not only are toys strewn about a turn off to folks who do not have children, but they are a turnoff for those who do have children as well. You do not want potential buyers to imagine that your home cannot properly contain the inevitable toy explosion that comes with having children.

14. **Got a bonus room?** Show buyers what fabulous things they can do with it. Sure, maybe it has been the “room that shall not be named” in your home, you know the one where you throw everything in there and lock the door 10 minutes before your guests arrive. Now is the time to dive in, clean up, and turn it into a home office, a library, a children’s play room, or even a crafting room. Showcase that this home comes with a little bonus space, and the possibilities are endless.

Whether you go with a professional home stager, or you decide to tackle the many projects solo, keeping the above tips in mind will go a long way to getting your home sold quickly and for top dollar.