

# 20 Step Check List to Prepare Your Home for Real Estate Photos



COMPASS

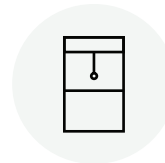
In order to maximize the sales price of your home, it is important to get the most out of your professional real estate photographer. Your goal is to help the photographer emotionally connect to your home, allowing inspiration to flow freely, enabling them to make it look alluring. This translates to more money in your pocket when AREA sells your home!

Professional photography is one of the key components of our marketing strategies. The marketing of your home will dramatically impact your buyer's opinion and your sales price. The photographer is an artist, and you will get significantly more from their services if your home is ready upon their arrival. To get the most of your photographer, follow our AREA checklist below.



## 1 – Clear & Clean Kitchen Counters & Sink

When counters are completely cleared off, kitchens look bigger, and buyers can imagine how they might use the space. Coffee makers and decorations only distract buyers making the kitchen feel cluttered. Remove everything but a few decorative items from countertops. Clean all surfaces, appliances, the kitchen sink and back splash.



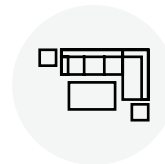
## 5 – Open All Window Treatments

Natural light from windows bring life and emotion into real estate photos. We recommend opening all of the window treatments throughout the entire house to let in as much light as possible. If it's too bright outside, your photographer will alter your shades and curtains to balance the shot. Don't forget to clean the windows!



## 2 – Clear & Clean Bathroom Sinks, Tubs, and Showers

Place shampoo bottles, soaps, shaving razors, kids toys and other items into a bin and store it out of sight. Remove items from the counters as well. You want the bathrooms to appear vacant. Clean, neatly folded towels on towel racks are a nice touch.



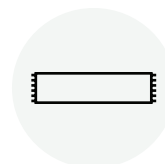
## 6 – Remove Unnecessary Furniture & Decorations

Less is more. Removing excess/bulky furniture can be challenging, but it opens up the floor space and makes the home look larger. AREA offers design services through our partnership with M StudioHouse. If you have questions or would like a walk through—just ask!



## 3 – Replace Burned Out Light Bulbs

Be sure to check all ceiling lights, as well as extra lamps and exterior lights to make sure that they work. If there are dark areas in the homes, such as a basement, add an extra lamp to brighten the space. Floor lamps that provide up-lighting are great. The more light, the better!



## 7 – Remove Floor Mats & Runners

Floor mats and runners are great at protecting your floors, but they can make the overall floor space look smaller, which in turn makes the room look smaller. Make sure to roll up and remove all floor mats in the bathrooms, kitchen, and laundry areas.



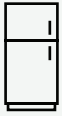
## 4 – Turn On All Lights Throughout The House

Lighting is one of the most important aspects of photography. It's important to have as much light at possible. Turn on all of the lights in the house, including lamps and exterior lights.



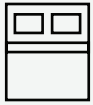
## 8 – Turn All Ceiling Fans, TVs & Computer Screens Off

Most photographers use HDR photography, which takes multiple light exposures for each photo and combines them into one final shot. Any moving items like ceiling fans or active screens look strange in HDR. We recommend turning off anything that moves or causes motion blur.



## 9 – Clear Appliance Surfaces of Magnets and Clutter

We ask our sellers to remove all magnets, calendars, and personal items from the refrigerator and any other place where they place notes. It will not only make your home appear more tidy, it keeps your personal info safe from the general public.



## 10 – Make All of the Beds

Be sure to make all the beds with matching sheets, blankets, and pillows. Use bedding that covers the entire bed and fits the mattress correctly. Use decorative pillows to brighten up the bed, if possible.



## 11 – Remove All Personal Photos & Items

It's hard for buyers to visualize themselves in your house if your personal items are everywhere. Remove all personal photos and items from the entire house; including patios, porches, and garages.



## 12 – Put All Shoes & Jackets in Closets

When buyers see shoes and jackets on coat racks and entryway floors, they subconsciously assume that the home lacks storage space. It's best to remove all jackets and shoes from anywhere that they can be seen throughout the entire house. Store away any loose items to remove all distractions.



## 13 – Clear All Night Stands & Dressers

Night stands tend to accumulate items naturally. Remove everything but a lamp and one decorative item, such as a small floral arrangement or decorative book to make the area look clean and presentable. Think of a freshly cleaned hotel room.



## 14 – Remove All Pet Items

It's important to make sure that your house shows no signs of pets. Spend some time getting this part right, as it is one of the biggest factors in home price reductions and negative feedback from buyers.



## 15 – Tidy Up the Yard & Landscaping

Make sure the front yard is cleaned up and all the landscaping is trimmed and tidy. The first picture that people will see of your home will be the outside front yard, so it should be presented in it's very best condition.



## 16 – Sweep up the Porch/Patio/Deck

This step is imperative in the Fall when leaves accumulate daily. Make sure that the entire front and back porches are swept clean. Stage these areas with flowers and decorative items to create a relaxing space that invites home buyers in.



## 17 – Clear All Cars from Road & Driveway

Always remove all vehicles, RV's, golf carts, and trailers from the driveway and front of the house. If you feel comfortable, you could ask neighbors to move their vehicles from the road to make the street look quiet and inviting in your photos.



## 18 – Hide All Garbage Cans & Lawn Equipment

Garbage cans and unsightly lawn equipment can be very distracting in real estate photos. Put all of the trash cans in the garage, along with garden hoses, lawn mowers, and other yard maintenance tools.



## 19 – Remove Outdoor Cooker Covers

Show off that awesome barbecue grill! Smoker and grill covers should be removed so that cookers are exposed. If it's an old grill that needs to be covered because it's rusty and unsightly, it's better to remove or throw it out completely.



## 20 – Open Up Patio Umbrellas

If it's not too windy during your photo shoot, be sure to open up any patio umbrellas. Dust off chairs and set up the area as though you are going to enjoy it with friends. Fresh outdoor pillows and flowers will create an inviting space.