Real Estate Photography Prep Guide for occupied properties

A well-prepared property makes all the difference in attracting buyers. Here's how to get your home photo-ready:

GENERAL PREPARATION (ENTIRE PROPERTY)

*__Clean & Declutter__

• Hire professional cleaners if possible.

- ❑ **Remove clutter** throughout the home, including countertops, floors, and furniture.
- ❑ **Store personal items**: receipts, medications, pet bowls, toys, etc.
- ❑ **Hide cleaning supplies** (brooms, mops, vacuums).
- ❑ **Remove religious objects, family photos**, and bold **personal décor**.
- ❑ Ensure all **light bulbs work** and **match** in **color temperature** (all warm or all cool).
- ❑ **Clean windows and mirrors** to remove **fingerprints** and **streaks.**

*__Exterior__

- ❑ **Mow** the lawn, **trim** bushes, and tidy landscaping.
- ❑ **Remove trash cans** from the driveway or curb.
- ❑ **Hide hoses, toys, tools, and garden equipment**.
- ❑ **Move vehicles out of the driveway** and away from the front of the home.
- ❑ **Close garage doo**r (unless it's a key feature).

💡 **TIP:** Use the garage to temporarily store excess items or clutter.

Exception: Leave EV chargers or unique features visible if they should be photographed.

ENTRYWAY

- ❑ Clear shoes, coats, keys, and bags.
- ❑ Clean floors and door glass.

LIVING ROOM

- ❑ Remove clutter from coffee tables, end tables, and mantels.
- ❑ Straighten cushions, pillows, and throws.
- ❑ Turn off TVs and hide remotes and cords.
- ❑ Open blinds, close windows.

KITCHEN

- ❑ Clear all countertops: no dish racks, paper towels, soap, etc.
- ❑ Hide sponges, cutting boards, trash bins.
- ❑ Put away dishes (none in the sink or drying rack).
- ❑ Remove magnets, papers, and photos from the fridge.
- ❑ Wipe down appliances, counters, and cabinet fronts.

DINING AREA

- ❑ Set the table neatly or leave it completely clear.
- ❑ Straighten chairs and center the table under the light fixture.

BEDROOMS

- ❑ Make all beds neatly preferably with wrinkle-free bedding.
- ❑ Remove items from nightstands (except 1-2 neutral decorative pieces).
- ❑ Hide cords, laundry, personal items, and under-bed storage if visible.

BATHROOMS

- ❑ Close toilet lids, hide toilet paper.
- ❑ Remove all personal items: toothbrushes, razors, shampoo, lotions, etc, and put them iside a cabinet or storage.
- ❑ Clear countertops, mirrors, sinks, shower glass, and tidy towels.

OFFICE / BONUS ROOMS

- ❑ Tidy desks: hide wires, remove clutter and paperwork.
- ❑ Remove personal photos and branded materials.

POOL / BACKYARD

- ❑ Clean the pool: brush interior, remove grime and leaf debris.
- ❑ Hide pool toys, cleaning equipment, and broken furniture.
- ❑ Arrange outdoor seating attractively.
- ❑ Sweep patios, decks, and walkways.

BEFORE THE SESSION ✔ **Final Checklist**

- ❑ **All lights ON** and **ceiling fans OFF**.
- ❑ **Blinds OPEN, windows CLOSED**
- ❑ **Toilet** seats **DOWN**, personal **items HIDDEN**
- ❑ **Trash cans and vehicles HIDDEN**

- ❑ **Pets confined or offsite**
- ❑ **No people on site**

DURING THE SESSION

📸 The photographer will:

• Notify you upon arrival.

• Photograph the property **as-is** – no items will be moved or cleaned.

• Require **no people in the premises** (feel free to run errands or wait in a car).

• Use wide-angle lenses and 360° cameras — everything is visible.

🚫 Please:

• Avoid cleaning, maintenance, or moving furniture during the shoot.

• Do not rearrange rooms mid-session — it causes inconsistencies in photos and virtual tours.

AFTER THE SESSION

📍 You'll be notified when the session is complete and the photographer has left.

OTHER NOTES

• **Session Time**: 2–3 hours for photos. Add time for video, drone, or virtual tours.

• **Health**: If anyone in the home is unwell, please **reschedule** to protect everyone involved.

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