

# HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY STAGE YOUR HOME FOR SHOWINGS & OPEN HOUSES

- DE-PERSONALIZE:** THE NUMBER ONE RULE OF STAGING IS TO DE-PERSONALIZE, DE-PERSONALIZE, DE-PERSONALIZE! REMEMBER THAT STAGING NEEDS TO BE ANONYMOUS, THIS WAY POTENTIAL BUYERS CAN SEE THEMSELVES LIVING IN THE HOME RATHER THAN PICTURING YOU LIVING THERE. WHEREVER YOUR NAME APPEARS, A STRONG PERSONAL STYLE IS PRESENT, OR LARGE PICTURES OR PROMINENTLY PLACED PHOTOGRAPHS ARE SET OR HANGING, REMOVE OR TAKE DOWN TO ALLOW POTENTIAL BUYERS TO SEE THE POTENTIAL THE HOME HAS FOR THEM.
  
- CREATE A BALANCED SPACE:** TO MAKE A ROOM APPEAR BIGGER, PAINT IT THE SAME COLOR AS THE ADJACENT ROOM. IF YOU HAVE A SMALL KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM, A SEAMLESS LOOK WILL MAKE BOTH ROOMS FEEL LIKE ONE BIG SPACE. **TIP:** IF YOU WANT TO GIVE THE ILLUSION OF MORE SPACE, PAINT THE WALLS THE SAME COLOR AS YOUR DRAPERIES. IT WILL PROVIDE A SEAMLESS AND SOPHISTICATED LOOK.
  
- DON'T OVERCROWD ROOMS:** DON'T OVERCROWD A ROOM WITH FURNITURE THAT IS TOO LARGE FOR THE SPACE; IT WILL ONLY MAKE THE ROOM APPEAR SMALL AND CRAMPED. HOWEVER, DON'T LEAVE A ROOM TOO BARREN EITHER. IN A NARROW SPACE, SHELVES CAN ADD DEPTH TO MAKE A ROOM FEEL LARGER. **TIP:** PAINT THE BACKS OF THE SHELVES THE SAME COLOR AS THE WALLS TO CREATE AN ILLUSION OF DEPTH. WHEN DRESSING A WINDOW, REMEMBER DESIGNER MONICA PEDERSEN'S FORMULA FOR BALANCE: FOR A LARGE WINDOW IN A LARGE ROOM, USE LARGE-PATTERNED WINDOW TREATMENTS. A SMALL PATTERN TENDS TO DISAPPEAR IN A LARGE ROOM.
  
- UPGRADE WITH ECO-FRIENDLY MATERIALS:** USE ECO-FRIENDLY MATERIALS WHEN UPGRADING YOUR HOME FOR SALE. BUYERS ARE WILLING TO PAY MORE FOR A HOME THAT IS CONSIDERED GREEN. IF YOU'RE ON A BUDGET, CONSIDER CORK FLOORING. IT'S EXTREMELY DURABLE AND COSTS ABOUT HALF THE PRICE OF TRADITIONAL HARDWOOD FLOORING. **TIP:** CONSIDER PLASTERING YOUR WALLS. NOT ONLY IS IT A BIG SELLING FEATURE, IT'S AN ECO-FRIENDLY, NATURAL MATERIAL THAT RESISTS DUST AND FINGERPRINTS. IT ALSO WORKS GREAT IN DAMP ENVIRONMENTS (LIKE BATHROOMS) BECAUSE IT SOAKS UP MOISTURE.
  
- REPURPOSE YOUR RESOURCES:** SALVAGE OLD MATERIALS TO SAVE MONEY. THE *DESIGNED TO SELL* EXPERTS ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR WAYS TO REPURPOSE OLD JUNK. THEY'VE TURNED STRIPS OF HARDWOOD FLOORING INTO A FENCE, CUT DOWN PIECES OF OLD LAMINATE COUNTERTOPS TO MAKE SHELVES AND MADE HEADBOARDS OUT OF JUST ABOUT ANYTHING, INCLUDING OLD DOORS.

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- CREATE SERENE BEDROOMS:** CREATE A RELAXING SETTING WITH LUXURIOUS LINENS AND SOFT COLORS THAT WILL MAKE A POTENTIAL HOMEBUYER WANT TO SIT BACK AND RELAX. **TIP:** IF YOU DON'T HAVE THE MONEY TO BUY A NEW BED, JUST GET THE FRAME THEN BUY AN INEXPENSIVE AIR MATTRESS AND DRESS IT UP WITH NEUTRAL-PATTERNED BEDDING.
  
- MAKE AWKWARD SPACES FUNCTIONAL:** MAKE THE MOST OF AN AWKWARD SPACE BY GIVING IT A FUNCTION. THE SLANTED CEILINGS IN THIS ATTIC BEDROOM CREATED A HIDEAWAY NOOK WITH NO REAL PURPOSE. BY ADDING WALL-TO-WALL SHELVES AND A DESK, THE AREA HAS IMMEDIATELY TURNED INTO A PRIVATE OFFICE. THIS NEW SPACE ADDS VALUE TO THE HOME AND IS A FEATURE POTENTIAL BUYERS ARE SURE TO REMEMBER.
  
- UPDATE WITH PAINT:** BE SURE TO SET OUT A FLOOR PLAN WITH THE DIMENSIONS OF EACH ROOM SO BUYERS CAN SEE EXACTLY WHAT THEY'RE GETTING. THIS WILL ALSO ALLOW THEM TO ENVISION THEIR FURNITURE IN THE SPACE. IF YOUR DOORS AND CASING LOOK OLD AND OUTDATED, GIVE THEM A FRESH COAT OF SPARKLING WHITE PAINT. IT WILL MAKE YOUR WHOLE HOUSE LOOK CLEANER AND MORE CONTEMPORARY.
  
- BUILD A MEMORABLE FIRST IMPRESSION:** OPEN STAIRWAYS AND FOYERS NEED TO DRAW BUYERS UP AND IN. CLEAR OUT THE CLUTTER AND ADD A LITTLE COLOR. GET RID OF SHABBY APARTMENT-GRADE WINDOW BLINDS; NEW WINDOW TREATMENTS ARE AN EASY AND INEXPENSIVE FIX THAT CAN CHANGE A ROOM DRAMATICALLY. **MYTH BUSTER:** FLOOR-TO-CEILING MIRRORS DO NOT MAKE A ROOM LOOK BIGGER – THEY ONLY MAKE A ROOM LOOK OUTDATED. **TIP:** EVIDENCE OF PETS IS A TURNOFF TO MANY BUYERS, SO KEEP YOUR CRITTERS UNDER WRAPS.
  
- INVEST IN CONTEMPORARY APPLIANCES:** IF YOUR KITCHEN APPLIANCES ARE OUTDATED, INVEST IN A NEW COOKTOP, STOVE OR REFRIGERATOR. STUDIES SHOW THAT SELLERS RECOUP EVERY PENNY THEY SPEND ON APPLIANCES. **TIP:** STAINLESS STEEL LOOKS GREAT IN THE KITCHEN AND WILL HELP SELL YOUR HOUSE, BUT NOT WHEN IT'S COVERED IN FINGERPRINTS. AN EASY AND ECO-FRIENDLY WAY TO KEEP STAINLESS STEEL CLEAN IS TO MIX ONE PART VINEGAR WITH ONE PART WATER AND WIPE WITH A CLEAN CLOTH.
  
- REVAMP THE KITCHEN:** IF YOU CAN'T AFFORD NEW CABINETS, GET NEW DOORS AND DRAWER FRONTS, PAINT EVERYTHING TO MATCH AND ADD NEW HARDWARE. INSTEAD OF REPLACING THE ENTIRE DISHWASHER, YOU MAY BE ABLE TO GET A NEW FRONT PANEL. CHECK WITH THE MANUFACTURER TO SEE IF THEY SELL REPLACEMENTS FOR YOUR MODEL. IF NOT, LAMINATE PAPER CAN BE USED TO RE-COVER THE EXISTING PANEL. **TIP:** WHEN STAGING YOUR KITCHEN FOR HOMEBUYERS, KEEP THE COUNTERTOPS NICE AND CLEAR. JUST PUT OUT A FEW WELL-PLACED ITEMS AND ADD FRESH FRUIT OR FLOWERS FOR A PUNCH OF COLOR.

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- UPDATE OUTDATED BATHROOMS:** CONSIDER HAVING TACKY, OUTDATED BATHROOM TILE REGLAZED. IT COSTS MUCH LESS THAN REPLACEMENTS AND CAN MAKE YOUR BATHROOM LOOK BRAND NEW. **TIP:** TO REMOVE MOLD FROM GROUT, TRY A SIMPLE SOLUTION OF BLEACH AND WATER. IF THAT DOESN'T WORK, TRY STAINING THE GROUT.
- DISBAND THE CLUTTER:** REAL ESTATE AGENTS SAY THEY OFTEN CATCH HOUSE HUNTERS OPENING BATHROOM CABINETS. SO, DISBAND THE CLUTTER AND CLEAN OUT YOUR CABINETS. YOU WANT TO SHOW BUYERS STORAGE, NOT A LACK OF STORAGE. STORAGE SELLS HOUSES – IT ALWAYS RANKS HIGH ON A BUYER'S PRIORITY LIST.