

# Stage It to Sell It

Congratulations! You have made a decision to sell your home.

It is not your home now it is a house and now a marketing product. Most of the buyers will see it first on the internet and might rule it out without even giving it a chance. We need to make sure that does not happen.

This marketing product now has 2 opportunities:

1. You need a great Realtor who either knows how to take good pictures and virtual tours. Make sure to ask for samples of the work.
2. Your marketing product must be showroom ready.

Start packing! The idea of staging is to minimize the stuff that made this house yours and allow the buyer to see themselves in the property.

Stand at the doorway to each room and determine what the buyer is going to say. Buyers only know what they see, not what it is going to be. Generally a buyer does not have a vision for what it can be and they don't have to really with so many choices in the market.

Yours has to be best in the category it is in.

## General

- √ This is the time to fix any deferred maintenance items. A common one in our town is water pressure regulators. You don't want to have a flood at this time and you want the house to be ready for the new owner.
- √ Check all light fixtures. High voltage bulbs are better now because we are showing the light. Dark homes do not have the same appeal. The extra cost is worth it right now.
- √ Repair and paint cracks in walls and ceilings
- √ Keep your blinds and curtains open during the day.
- √ Pack up the valuables to protect them.
- √ Nothing dead or wilted. Plants either need to be healthy or given away.
- √ Detail it. Clean the cracks, baseboards and floors including the carpet. Wash the windows.
- √ Create a model home look which is sparse but shows the space.
- √ De-personalize
- √ Be sensitive to odors from pets, cooking, and smoking.
- √ ALWAYS have the tile and grout cleaned and the carpet cleaned professionally unless you are replacing it at this time.
- √ Clean your floors every day now.

Now let's get those drive by shoppers and first impressions!

## Curb Appeal

- √ Rake the rocks and pull the weeds.
- √ Remove and replace any dead or dying plants.
- √ Trim trees and all bushes away from the house and front walkway.
- √ Clean and detail the front entry. This means the door and tracks too.
- √ Hose down the walkway
- √ Touch up any paint and consider a bright color for the front door.
- √ Keep the garage door down with the cars inside.

## Now they are in what is next?

The most important rooms in a house are the kitchens and bathrooms and these are the rooms we use the most. Let's go room by room and look for opportunity to get you more money in a shorter period of time. Staging works! The data shows this to be true.

## Living Room/Bonus Room or Den

Think model home here where less is much more. You need space for the buyers to mentally move in.

- √ Remove personal items to help the buyer feel it to be theirs.
- √ Pack up collections and leave just a few items. Rule of thumb is that small things are distracting so try to use the rule of a basketball. If it is smaller than one pack it up.
- √ If you have too much furniture remove the pieces that steal your space since that is what we are selling.
- √ No ashtrays in the house at all. As a matter of fact even outside or in the garage it can be a detractor.

## Kitchen

Often the most important room in the house. Appliances that are not used every day should be packed away or tucked into a closet. Create Space.

If you can smell it you can't sell it. Make sure the trash is cleaned regularly and be sensitive to the cooking odors.

Do not let the dishes pile up. This may be the hardest challenge but keep those counter tops clear and clean.

- √ Repair chipped tile counters or edges
- √ Clean the counters completely. Polish if it is granite, clean grout if tile.

- √ Remove all magnets, drawings, notes, etc. from the refrigerator.
- √ Clean the stove and oven. Replace the burner pans if they are stained.
- √ Clean exhaust hoods, filters, etc.
- √ Reduce the number of bar stools if they crowd.
- √ Keep the dishes out of the sink and drain.
- √ Don't forget to remove collections here too.
- √ Clear everything off the window ledge.
- √ Reduce or eliminate rugs. The break up the space.
- √ Make sure the pet dishes are out of the way for buyers walking around.
- √ No drips, make sure faucets are working properly.
- √ Clean and organize drawers, pantries and cabinets. Buyers WILL look.

## Bedrooms

For some reason most of our bedrooms in Havasu are on the small side. We really need to show this space when we stage. If you are lucky in another town and I have a large bedroom it is just as important to show it off.

- √ Make the bed every day.
- √ Fresh bedspreads freshen the room so if yours is worn buy a new one.
- √ Clear off the dressers and end tables of unnecessary items. I have a pet peeve here and that is tissue boxes. Tuck it in your bedside table.
- √ Keep the closet doors closed and keep the floor clear.
- √ Again with the smells, we want none so make sure dirty laundry, pillows and anything else is clean and fresh.

## Garage

- √ While it is okay to use the garage if you have no other place to put your packed items make sure you keep it looking organized and clean.

These steps will get you started and don't be shy about asking a trusted and honest friend for a second opinion. With all the shows on TV now about staging for getting a home ready to sell everyone has an opinion.

Your goal is to sell for as much money as possible and you do that if you can get those first buyers to pick your home. The longer you stay on the market the more the buyer thinks something is wrong and they start looking for it.

