

# Home Staged Home

"**Home Staging**" is more than just preparing to sell your home by making it look the best it can. It's really the art of first impressions. For many home sellers and real estate agents, the concept of "home staging" is being more frequently recognized and used to effectively promote and market a home in the marketplace. If you are in the process of, or thinking about, selling your home, you may want to consider hiring a professional home stager to assist you. They work with the "flow" of a home, eliminate clutter, arrange furniture, and even assist in enhancing curb appeal. Or, if you're more the do-it-yourself type, below are some tips on what you can do to improve your home's "first impression."

*In home staging  
simplicity and comfort  
is your ultimate goal!*

**Start at the curb:** Curb appeal is the first step to selling your home. No one wants to buy a previous owner's dirty house. Powerwash the siding and wash windows until they shine. Trees, shrubs, and flowers should be neat and tidy, the garden weeded and the lawn mowed and edged. Once you've removed everything that isn't necessary, add touches such as large, lush flower pots or hanging planters to welcome visitors.

**Move inside:** Once you've created a promising exterior, you need to focus on the interior. The key to staging is to make it meaningful, set the tone and suggest countless possibilities. That means you need to remove everything that could distract the buyer's attention. Keep only what you must to remain functional. If you don't use something every day, pack it for the move. This is also very important. You want to remove anything personal such as family pictures and mementos. Like the exterior, the inside needs to be neat and clean. Once the house is clean, stage your home with minimal furnishings. Arrange furniture to enhance the strengths of the room and facilitate traffic flow. If your furniture shows signs of age, consider borrowing pieces. If you need inspiration, visit some model homes to see how decorators have put rooms together. It's not necessary for individual rooms to be used for their original purpose as long as the functions they represent are logical and show the space off well. If paint is showing signs of age, repaint. Neutrals often work best. Clear out closets, cupboards, and drawers. Strip the kitchen down to the necessities. Counters, however, should be clear, except for a decoratively placed bowl of fruit or bouquet of fresh flowers. Open the curtains to allow natural light to fill the room. Some home stagers also use scents to put the best face on a listed home. You can appeal to a buyer's sense of smell. Hot apple cider, cinnamon rolls, or fresh baked cookies add