

This homeowner checklist and information is provided by *A-Perspective Virtual Tours* to assist in preparing for a residential virtual tour shoot.

As more potential buyers are turning to the internet to begin their new home search, sellers in today's market are relying on virtual tours for that most important first impression. If you are selling your home, take some time to get it virtual-tour and open-house ready. Your extra effort will pay off with more interested buyers and a faster sale. By performing a few simple tips, you can make the minor changes necessary to help your home stand out above the rest.

Virtual tours show buyers a complete and extensive view of your home and allow them to narrow their search conveniently from their computer. Since potential buyers will be sorting through online real estate listings, it is important to understand that your home looks different through the lens of a camera than in person.

Just as you would prepare for an open house, prepare for your virtual tour shoot by "staging" your home. Move personal belongings out of sight or use this as an opportunity to donate or throw away items that you no longer use. The goal is to maximize the space of your home and depersonalize it enough to allow potential buyers to imagine themselves living there. A virtual tour always looks better when the home looks "neat and clean".

Another inexpensive way to prepare your home for buyers is to brighten it up by replacing old or dim light bulbs. Consider using a higher wattage light bulb in rooms or areas that don't get direct sunlight. You can also add a brightly-colored throw or vase to lighten up a space that has dark flooring or furniture. Don't forget about ceilings and floors; most virtual tours show all angles. You can get additional layout and style ideas from home and design magazines. Remember, you want to create an environment that will allow future homebuyers to easily visualize themselves living here.

Homeowners/realtors are responsible for ensuring that property is prepared for shooting at the scheduled time. We will adjust lighting/window treatments as necessary to get the best shot but can not clean or move items.

If these tasks seem too great, or time is of the essence, consider hiring a professional cleaning company and utilizing the services of a professional home stager. The result will definitely be worth the small amount of investment.

Interior - General

- Remove excess furniture to make rooms look larger
- Clean and de-clutter as clean, spacious rooms will photograph best
- If there are specific rooms that are not to be shot, this is a good place to store items temporarily
- Keep the family pictures on walls and shelves to a minimum
- Wash and clean lighting fixtures, replace light bulbs and shades
- Make the home as "bright" as possible by opening all blinds and turning lights on
- Straighten cushions, bedding etc.
- Ensure all windows, mirrors, and shiny surfaces are cleaned
- Wash and wax floors
- Wash walls, remove fingerprints and cobwebs
- Clean woodwork with Murphy's oil soap to remove film and restore luster
- Clean and polish doorknobs, handles, and pulls or replace if necessary
- Dry clean or launder draperies and curtains if possible
- Make sure electrical cords are tucked away
- Close all dresser drawers and closet doors, put away clothing and shoes
- Open doors between rooms for spacious feeling and easy 'flow' of tour
- For security reasons, hide any valuables you wish not to be included in photographs
- Recycle old magazines and newspapers
- Conceal pet food bowls, litter boxes, pet toys
- Remove seasonal décor if the tour may be used year round

Kitchen

- Clear kitchen counter, hide everyday items (small appliances, kitchen utensils, hand soap, fridge magnets, etc.)
- Clean cabinets with mild detergent or Murphy's Oil Soap
- Clean and degrease vents and exhaust hoods
- Clean appliances thoroughly
- Polish and clean sinks, remove stains
- Empty trash, conceal trash cans if possible

Bathrooms

- Clean and polish fixtures
- Fold decorative hanging towels in baths, ensure toilet seats down, shower curtains open
- Place toiletries and cleaning products in cabinets or closets
- Re-caulk tub and sink if necessary
- Scour sinks, showers, and tub
- Clean grout
- Wash mirrors

Basement

- Organize and de-clutter belongings
- Sweep or vacuum floors and ceilings
- Wipe down furnace, water heater, washer and dryer

Exterior

- Ensure lawn is freshly mowed
- Sweep or hose down walks, steps, and driveway
- Clean up pool area. Conceal cleaning equipment, pool toys, towels etc.
- Store children's toys, bicycles, gardening tools, and other items out of sight
- Remove cars from driveway/front of house
- Wash windows
- Hose down siding and use a cleaner for vinyl/aluminum if necessary
- Use a deck cleaner or power wash decks and patios
- Wipe down (stain if necessary) patio furniture and grills
- Keep garbage cans are out of sight