



Presenting your house is ultimately the most important thing you as a seller can do to maximise the sale price, and assist your home in selling faster.

Most buyers browse the internet for properties before they attend an open house, which makes having quality photos and presenting your house to its best is really important. It is your first chance, and possibly the only chance to make a great impression and make your house stand out, so prospective buyers browsing online can put your property on their viewing shortlist.

We've prepared a checklist to assist you in presenting your house for photos and open for inspection days.

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE:

Front Yard:

Your front yard and kerb appeal must look perfect before you consider taking any photos or videos. Start by mowing your lawn, pruning trees, trimming shrubs, revamping your garden, fixing your fence and getting rid of fallen leaves. You can plant flowers and feed the lawn a few weeks before to help it look good. If you are planning a dusk or evening shoot you could also perhaps add some solar lights to the garden.

Your front yard should be free of clutter. Remove empty planters, water hoses, toys, and other items that may be distracting when taking photos i.e. wheelie bins and sprinklers. You should also remove your car/s from your driveway and close the garage doors. Front door frames and eaves should also be free of cobwebs. Pressure clean the exterior or even Paint your exterior if you have too. You should also consider cleaning your windows just before the shoot.

Back Yard:

Your backyard also needs to look picture perfect. Before you take photos of your backyard, arrange any furniture that is present; consider changing the cushions if they are faded. You should also clean and cover backyard BBQ and clean the deck, perhaps even refinish the boards if needed. Also, don't forget to remove any personal belongings like toys, balls, bikes etc. Home buyers want to envision your property as their own so, make sure the exterior space is spotless and free of personal belongings - remove any items that aren't essential to make the area feel spacious.

If your house has a pool it should also be clean. Remember to remove your pool cleaning supplies, rubbish bins, and water hoses. Lastly, turn on any water features you may have.

- Move vehicles from the driveway and front
- Remove rubbish (small and large)
- Mow and edge grass front & back
- Trim back overgrown trees and bushes
- Sweep up cuttings and leaves
- Put away kids toys such as bikes etc
- Make sure outside lights work

INSIDE THE HOUSE:

Kitchen:

The kitchen is arguably the most challenging interior space to stage, so it's advisable to get started there. The idea here is to get a perfect-looking kitchen that is free of clutter and personal effects/belongings. To achieve this, you must clean your kitchen thoroughly. Clean all dishes/utensils in the sink and store them out of sight. Ideally, all dishes/utensils should be out of sight. However, you can leave a fancy knife rack on display. Focus on storing everything in the right place. Food supplies like cereals and baking supplies should be out of sight.

The floor and countertops must also be spotless. Remove dish cleaning supplies from the sink as well as all photos, notes, calendars, bills and cards from your refrigerator doors. You can leave basic appliances on your countertop i.e. your coffee maker. Small appliances such as cake mixers, rice cookers, and toasters should be out of sight.

- Clear bench tops of food, dish racks and cutting boards.
- Remove fridge magnets and other items off the fridge.
- Remove dish liquids, tea towels, soaps and plugs.
- Put away garbage bins, brooms, mops and cleaning products.
- Add a bowl of fresh fruit or a vase of fresh flowers

Living Room:

This step applies to your living room among other common rooms/areas such as entertainment rooms. Common rooms like the living room should be clean, inviting and clutter-free before you photograph them. They should also be free of personal items because this helps buyers envision your property as their own.

Get rid of magazines, books, remote controls, photo frames, toys and blankets among other personal items that can distract potential home buyers from imagining themselves in your home. Don't forget to dust your furniture, electronics, wipe and straighten blinds, clean curtains as well as roll-up long cabling and cords.

Leave a few minimal pieces of artwork and clean fireplaces if you have any. You should also consider painting your living room walls and ceiling if needed.

- Hide all TV remotes
- Turn TV's off
- Remove magazines and papers
- Remove gym equipment
- Hide loose home theatre cables
- Clear clutter from shelves and coffee tables
- Arrange furniture to make the room look larger

Dining Room:

The dining table needs to be clean and clear of clutter. You can feature a bouquet of flowers and set the table before taking pictures if you like. All chairs must be straightened and in place. Also, don't forget to remove child seats or booster chairs. Use this room to your home's advantage, If you have multiple dining areas (formal dining) then see if you can turn one into an office or a 'play-space' depending on your target audience. Work with what you have and present the area well!

- Clear clutter from the room and table
- Arrange furniture to make the room look larger
- Set table with your best cutlery and plates
 - Add a centrepiece such as flowers or candles

Bedrooms:

Start with your master bedroom since potential home buyers tend to focus most there. Start by removing all personal items as well as clutter from the bedside tables and dressers. Laundry and any other distractive items like wall photos and phone/computer chargers should also be out of sight. The bed must also be made perfectly using your best beddings. Don't forget to clean floors,

tables, furniture, blinds, ceiling fans, etc.

You should remove personal items from other bedrooms as well. Bedrooms should be clean, neat and free of personal effects. Pay particular attention to kids and babies bedrooms, how they are presented can make the room look fantastic or plain messy. When staging your children's bedroom, for instance, keep the baby cot or children bed, but get rid of change tables, nappies, baby photos on the walls, toys, etc. keep it decluttered.

- Remove any clothes and clutter from floor
- Hide any personal items
- Make all beds and straighten pillows, iron bed linen if needed
- Remove items from bedside tables
- Check globes in bedside lamps

Bathrooms:

When presenting your bathrooms, your focus should be on creating day spa-like bathrooms. To do this, you must clear bathroom counters of all personal toiletries, hygiene items like toothbrush holders and hair styling tools. Showers, sinks, bathtubs, and mirrors must be spotlessly clean and free of personal products like shampoos. Bathroom towels and shower curtains should also be clean and straight. Use white towels and rugs to bring out a spotless effect. Don't forget to straighten rugs, remove rubbish bins and bathroom cleaning supplies from sight. Lastly, replace toilet paper rolls and put your toilet seats down. Your bathroom vanity doors and linen closet should also be closed.

- Remove toothbrushes and shavers
- Remove soap bottles from showers
- Remove kids toys from bath
- Clean all mirrors and bench tops
- Set out your best towels and present the room

On the day:

Before the people arrive check over this list one more time, and then start to prepare the property for by turning on all lights and lamps, open all curtains close toilet lids, lock up pets or take them for a walk, turn off all televisions and park all cars in the garage or down the street.

If you have small children we recommend that you take the family out for a walk at an open house time as this helps people relax and doesn't make them feel like they are intruding whilst looking at your home.