

Ready, Stage,*Show!*

By [Michelle Marie Kinney](#)

It's often been said, "You only have one chance to make a good first impression." The same can be said of your home. In today's market your home must compete with a vast array of inventory. Even the slightest turn off can instantly kill a buyer's interest, and cause them to buy another house.

It should go without saying that the home must be clean. Not just clean, but eat off the floor clean. Every mirror must shine, every light fixture must sparkle and every surface needs to feel clean. Details are important.



Clean!



Sparkle!



Shine!

Staging a home can allow your home to speak for itself. Staging has less to do with furnishing a home than it does to explain the home. It's not necessary or even desirable to completely furnish a home. Each element used to stage a home should convey an idea or information about the home such as, where would a dining room table go? Staging can explain how a room could be used.

Explain it!



Problem: How to illustrate that tiny living-dining area is large enough for a dining table?

A small bistro table and chairs indicate where the dining table would be placed in the room. Without the table, the pendant light fixture would do nothing but float in the room without a purpose. The area rug defines the dining area in this tiny living/dining room.

Notice the book shelves are very lightly stocked with décor items. If they were left empty, they would have seems off balance and may have been perceived as a waste of wall space. The area below the chair rail was painted a neutral color to replace a busy stenciled pattern. A stenciled pattern or wall paper can be an owner's pride but we are trying to attract a buyer. Think neutral!

Make a Suggestion!



Question: Where does the TV go?

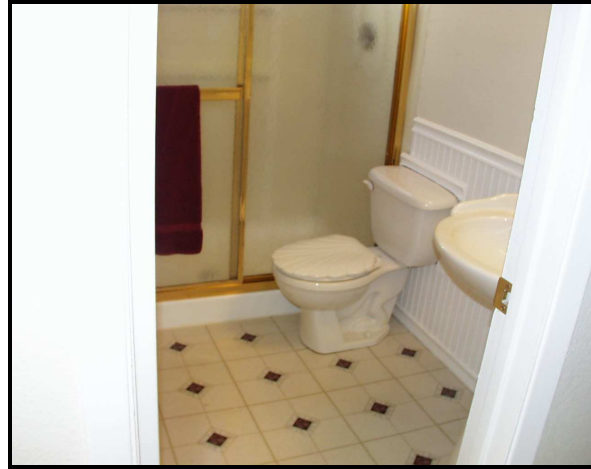
In this living room the position of the sofa and the entertainment center indicates where a TV would be placed. The stars mounted on the wall suggest a wall mount TV would be ideal.

Notice the billowy curtains are mounted above and well beyond the sides of a standard sliding glass door giving the illusion of a larger more luxurious space.

Paint it!



Before



After

Problem: Too personal

The positive effect of a fresh coat of paint can not be stressed enough. In this case the wood wainscoting was painted a semi-gloss white, giving the bathroom a fresh and clean look. The wooden toilet seat was replaced with a clean white look. Again, it's imperative that a bathroom have a clean appearance. The lavender-pink paint was repainted with a neutral color. When it comes to color, beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Neutrals are always a safe bet!

Give it a purpose!



Question: What's this space for?

This odd space, about 36 inches of counter space, in a kitchen seems to have no purpose. The counter space is on the “other” side of the refrigerator. It would make a good place to set the microwave, but we’d rather not point out that a microwave is not included in this kitchen. Instead, a couple of empty wine bottles and glasses indicate that this area could be used as a bar service area.

Work with what you have!



Before



After

Homes are seldom perfect. Even cleaning and painting won't change everything. Often you must work with what your have. Sometimes rearranging furniture can make a huge difference. In this home the color was blue and there was a lot of it! The carpet and drapes were of excellent quality and both were brand new ... and blue. It was not practical to change the carpet or even the drapes. By using furniture from another room in the house, the blue color was toned down without attempting to cover it up. Is it perfect? No. The point is to make the home look its best.

Minimize the negative & accentuate the positive!

Home staging can explain how space can be used and illustrate how a space can work. The objective of staging is to allow the buyer to understand how the home can be used to minimize the negative and accentuate the positive! It's not necessary to completely furnish the home but staging can make a home feel more welcoming than a vacant house. Color choices and various styles of décor is very personal, everyone has their own taste. Painting everything white is not the answer. In the end it's best to stick with neutral colors.

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