



BEFORE

CHRISTOPHER STANLEY IS
SETTING THE STAGE
Whether living in or moving out, Staging Matters.



AFTER



HOME STAGING TOP 12 LIST

After a long surge, post-crash 2008, home prices are finally leveling off. As the market finds a new equilibrium, it's more important than ever for owners to create a show-ready space to excite qualified buyers. First, of course, you need a talented agent, the right price, and a powerful marketing plan. Without these, no amount of staging expense will likely matter. Staging is that icing on the cake, which makes certain properties stand out among the pack. We all know that home staging is a popular trend that's highly recommended for sellers. Staging a space can significantly enhance the look and feel of a home, thereby bringing a higher price at closing. Yet many sellers ignore the proven advice of realtors and design experts, refusing to invest in a more effective sales strategy.

Staging a home can include 3 separate areas; 1) Improving the look of the interior (traditional staging), 2) Upgrading the exterior (curbside appeal) and 3) Enhancing energy flow and feel (Feng Shui). Whether you're selling or just want to improve your in-home atmosphere, staging the space is a proven way to increase aesthetic style and flow. For the well-heeled owner, this might mean significant effort and expense from their interior designer, landscape architect and a Feng Shui advisor to create a dramatic improvement in their home environment. But don't let cost rule the plan to stage your home.

It's easy to create a better look and feel on any budget. Start with my Top 12 Home Staging Tips below, and my discussion of Feng Shui and Curb appeal to find the methods that work for your own home staging plan. Then visit your local bookstore or online resource, discuss with your realtor, and if possible, hire a professional. Staging will more than pay for itself.

1. **Paint walls gallery white.** White walls look new and rooms seem larger.

2. **Remove personal photos.** Buyers want to visualize themselves living in the home, not your family.

3. **Pop of color portal.** Paint your door an unexpected color to signal a well-cared for home.

4. **Show your buyers how life is better in your house.** Fresh flowers, scented candles, a cookbook and fresh herbs in the kitchen, and a carafe of water and a good book by the bed.

5. **Adjust the lighting between day and evening showings.** Turn on all lights during the day to make the home its brightest best. Dim the lights at night to give your home a warm glow.

6. **Clear out those closets.** Jam packed closets scream this place is too small to live in. Half empty yet well-organized closets show there's room to spare in this home.

7. **Five Star hotel bathroom.** Clear those counters and place a few high-end bath products next to sink and tub. Classic Flowers or an indoor plant and some bright white towels will make buyers think spa instead of bathroom.

8. **Big mirrors add space and light.** Add one next to a dining area or small foyer.

9. **Make your bedroom lounge-y.** Add a sitting area with an upholstered bench or chair and side table with book to make this room feel multifunctional and larger.

10. **Bookshelves.** Hardcover and sophisticated reads go top shelf. Line em up like little soldiers, similar heights together. There's nothing worse than a disorganized bunch of musty old books. And remember, old textbooks don't impress.

11. **Clean lines and surfaces.** If you can't see the majority of surfaces, there's too much clutter. Excessive bric-a-brac, while charming, makes your home feel crowded and chaotic.

12. **Showcase at least one quirky item.** Buyers and brokers see many homes during their search. Make your showing stand out with a memorable piece of art, sculpture or staging item that relates to your home or lifestyle. Think mounted surfboard in the Malibu beach house game room.

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Practiced for thousands of years in the Far East, Feng Shui is relatively new in the West. But it's essentially home staging in Asia. While some may doubt its efficacy, there's no denying that a well-organized room just works better in practice. Whether you call that improved Ch'i (energy flow) or good planning is sort of irrelevant if it makes you or potential buyers feel good. Feng Shui, translated as "wind and water," essentially means living in harmony with your environment. Some believe a well-organized home can improve their finances, create a healthier home environment, and add positive energy that makes you happier. Adding some Feng Shui to your marketing plan can't hurt. Think better energy flow attracts happier homebuyers who make stronger offers. See, it's working already.

FENG SHUI BASICS

- + Good flow isn't just for parties. You don't want buyers getting stuck in furniture traffic at an open house or a house party! Make sure people can comfortably move about each room.
- + You don't want to see backs of furniture upon entering a room.
- + Paint your bedroom a tranquil, restful color
- + For California and Feng Shui, water is money. And it also flows straight down the toilet. So keep that seat down and bathroom doors closed.
- + Hide the sharp edges – Knife sets and shaving razors top this list

- + A simple black doormat at the front entrance
- + Avoid dried flowers; silk is acceptable, live flowers are best
- + Master Bedroom – only use pairs; lamps, candles, picture frames, pillows, etc.
- + Exposed beams are thought to create stress and tension.
- + Don't place a bed or desk and chair directly under a beam. Make sure doors and windows open smoothly
- + Colorful exterior flower gardens symbolize progress, happiness and longevity
- + Keep blinds and curtains open. Light attracts good Ch'i
- + Lucky Numbers – while you can't control the address you're selling, you can choose a price that's lucky. 8 is lucky for Chinese buyers, 9 for Vietnamese. 4's are generally frowned upon. Do some research and price creatively.

WHAT ABOUT CURB APPEAL?

While interior staging is crucial, the exterior of a single family home or townhouse is your best marketing tool for any sale. First impressions matter, so make this one count. Buyers may see your ad online and drive by after hours and outside of official showing times. If there's no curb appeal, you may never get them inside to see how great your home really is.

Curb Appeal Suggestions >> Landscaping – spruce it up + clean that driveway – oil spills are so last century + Keep the car in garage not the driveway + Fresh coat of paint - choose wisely with neutrals everyone will love and throw in a pop of color with a red door or blue shutters for an easily changeable dose of pizzazz + Hang a wreath or place a welcoming potted plant at the front door. This is where every buyer starts their tour + Clear out gutters to avoid water damage and show your attention to detail in upkeep + Outdoor lighting accents. Give your home an angelic glow for nighttime showings + Clean windows let's light in and enhances the view + Clean spaces in general are crucial. Dirty and disorganized sends the message you don't care, so why should they pay top dollar