

# Stage Your House to Sell

## WORKBOOK

Highlight your home's strengths,  
downplay its weaknesses and appeal  
to the greatest possible pool of  
prospective buyers with our top 10  
home-staging tips.



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— STAGING GUIDE —

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## *Staging to get Buyers to fall in love with your home*

Most buyers will see your house for the first time on the internet, so it pays to have the best photos to show your house at its best. Great photos begin with great staging. Your investment into staging will pay off in a quicker sale and for more money.

Buyers typically look at five or more homes before making a choice. And the majority will decide within the first five seconds of seeing a house. The following are suggestions to make YOUR house the best possible choice.



# Staging Really Does Help. Like, a Lot

But you don't have to take my word for it. A recent survey from the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® revealed that: 77% of buyers' agents said staging makes it easier for their buyer to visualize the property as their future home. It's like helping the buyer dream it so they can achieve it — and so you and your agent can make the sale.

39% of sellers' agents said staging a home greatly decreases the amount of time a house is on the market. For you, time saved could mean moving into your new house even sooner.

21% of sellers' agents said staging a home increases its dollar value between 6% and 10%. Simply put, that may lead to more money in your pocket.

## Seller Tip ☺

Depersonalize your home. Remove personal pictures, etc. You want the buyers to picture their family in the home, not yours.



# *Focus on the Rooms that count the most*

You don't have to stage your whole house to make buyers swoon. Staging the rooms where people tend to spend the most time usually makes the biggest impression on buyers. Start with the living room, followed by the master bedroom and the kitchen.

Keep in mind that you're not going for an HGTV-worthy overhaul: Even small touches, like putting fluffy towels in the bathroom or replacing shabby throw pillows in the family room, can make your home that much more attractive.

## *Oh, and by the way: Stage your yard, too!*

Your house must look its best — inside and outside. After all, buyers form their first impression when they pull up in front of your home. It's no surprise, then, that curb appeal — how your home looks from the exterior — can increase your home's sales value up to 17%, a Texas Tech University study found.

If you've never had your yard professionally landscaped, now may be the time to do it. Landscaped homes have a sales price advantage ranging from 5.5% to 12.7%, according to research by Alex Niemiera, a horticulturist at Virginia Tech. That would mean an extra \$16,500 to \$38,100 in value on a \$300,000 home.

Professional landscaping, however, can cost a lot. You're aiming for polish, not a new garden of Versailles. If budget is a concern, start with some DIY improvements.



# Getting Started

## **#1 Take Inventory**

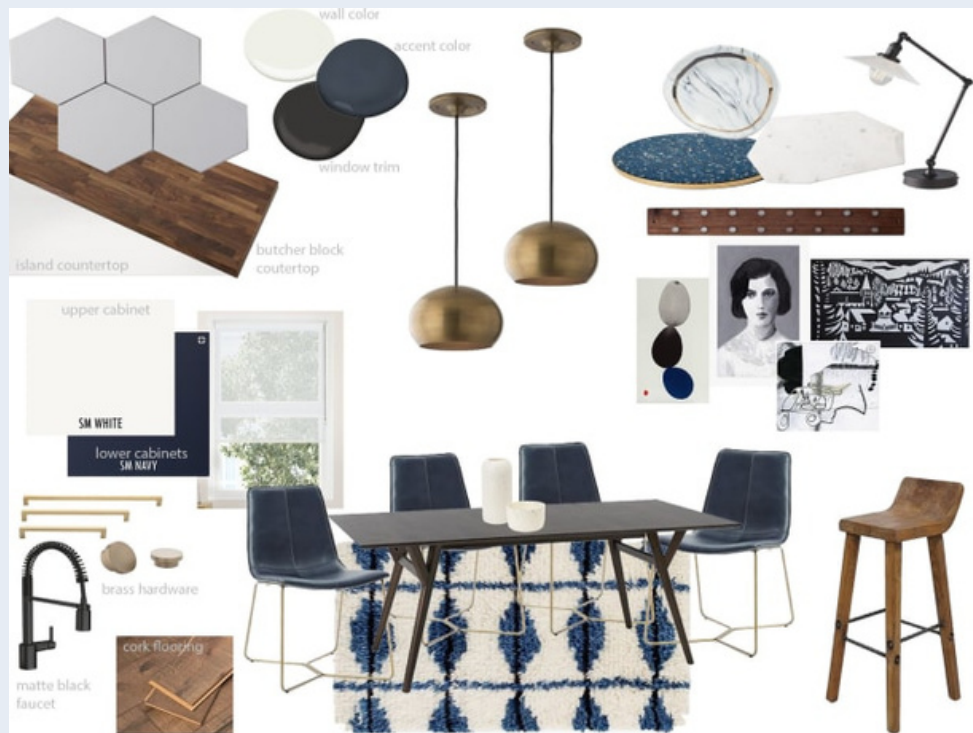
Take note of the preexisting features in your home you can highlight for house decorating ideas. Architectural details such as crown molding, wooden beams, hardwood floors, built-in bookshelves, and mosaic-tile backsplashes are all worth focusing on. These details don't just look expensive; they are expensive. Make them as prominent as possible—keep them clean, clutter-free, and the focal point of the room. For example, don't splurge on an expensive painting just to have it compete with a show-stopping fireplace.

## **#2 Three's Company**

Mixing the right accessories can make a room more inviting. When it comes to eye-pleasing accessorizing, odd numbers are preferable, especially three. Rather than lining up a trio of accessories in a row, imagine a triangle and place one object at each point. Scale is important, too, so in your group of three be sure to vary height and width, with the largest item at the back and the smallest in front. For maximum effect, group accessories by color, shape, texture, or some other unifying element, stagers suggest.

## **#3 Make it Bigger**

To make a room appear to be bigger than it is, paint it the same color as the adjacent room. If you have a small kitchen and dining room, a seamless look will make both rooms feel like one big space.



# Tip #2

*edit...edit...edit...*

It's next to impossible to create an intentional look if you are holding on to too much filler and things that don't work. Everything in the room should have a place and a role. And ideally, they should work with the color palette. I know you've heard it before, but it really is important to get rid of clutter and dust-collecting knick-knacks that aren't serving you or the look and feel of the room.

Rather than trying to work everything around the dumpy chair, you don't like, see if you can just let it go. Maybe you can find an inexpensive but fresher one, or even a thrifted one in a better shape and color. It can be tricky to get objective about your stuff. A great way to see a room with fresh eyes is to remove EVERYTHING that is non-essential and only bring it back and add in things that serve the look and feel and color palette you want to create. You are likely to find that your room feels more comfortable and refreshed with A LOT LESS in it.



### Tip #3

# Add a little bling



One special high-end piece can elevate any room. Often, it's a light fixture or a striking piece of art.

This simple white dining room below comes to life with a glamorous and current brass chandelier. Or it could be the perfect antique mirror for over the mantel or that stylish Saarinen dining table you've been coveting.

In each room, choose one key element that brings in some bling to create an elevated look.

## Tip #4

# Create Atmosphere with Lighting

I can't emphasize this enough. Rarely without a designer's intervention do people have enough mood lighting in their rooms. If you don't have the budget for anything else, get lamps.

In order to add more lamps to a room, consider where you might add a table or surface to put them on. Maybe you need a slim sofa table, a credenza on a blank wall, or larger end tables to accommodate more lamps. Wall sconces and floor lamps are good too. Just don't expect your room to have a cozy high end feel if you are relying on pot lights.

## What about bulbs?

As it turns out, many of our homes are improperly lighted. To remedy the problem, increase the wattage in your lamps and fixtures. Aim for a total of 100 watts for each 50 square feet. Don't depend on just one or two fixtures per room, either. Make sure you have three types of lighting: ambient (general or overhead), task (pendant, under-cabinet or reading) and accent (table and wall).





A photograph of a bedroom interior. On the left, a wooden nightstand holds a lamp with a beige shade and a small potted plant. A bed with a tufted, light-colored headboard and white bedding is in the center. In the foreground, a wicker basket with a white fringed cover sits on a patterned rug. The wall is painted a neutral, light blue-grey color.

Tip #5

# Painting

Painting a living room a fresh neutral color helps tone down any dated finishes in the space. Even if you were weaned on off-white walls, take a chance and test a quart of paint in a warm, neutral hue. These days, the definition of neutral extends way beyond beige, from warm tans and honeys to soft blue-greens. As for bold wall colors, they have a way of reducing offers, so go with neutrals in large spaces.

A big part of the reason people agonize so much about paint colors is that paint has impact. Just the right paint color can definitely pull together a room. It can create a fresher look or it can create drama.

A new paint color will certainly create a refreshing change, but remember it can't do all the heavy lifting.



# 6

## Add Some Sparkle

### Tip #6

Every room needs a little sparkle. Reflective surfaces add and amplify light, they bring a sense of glamour, and most often, they are less visually heavy than more solid materials.

A glass coffee table is always a good idea.

You can place a mirror anywhere, try a large one leaning against a wall to reflect some light and expand the view. Mirrors and lighting go hand-in-hand, as a few strategically placed mirrors, paired with the perfect lighting, can create the illusion that your space is far larger than it actually is. Simply hang your mirror across a lighting source, like a window or lamp light, to create this illusion.



Tip #7

# Pops of Art Work



Every room needs a focal point. A large scale piece of art or a well-designed gallery wall will instantly inject personality into any room.

Art can also set the palette. This is what gives a room identity. Mousy little drab pictures won't accomplish this. It's best to go bold with it. Look for scale and dynamic colors and textures.

## Tip #8

# Upgrading and steaming your window coverings

Drapes and window coverings can be expensive. But you can make simple off the shelf drapes look more expensive by simply hanging them correctly and adding extra panels to make them look fuller and more luxurious.

Single curtain panels will ALWAYS look cheap and chintzy. ESPECIALLY if the curtain rod is not wide enough and hung too low.

Place your curtain rod high, close to the ceiling to maximize height, and wide enough that the drapes can be gathered mostly to the outside of the window frame. This will make the window look larger. Get at least 2 or 3 panels for each side of a large window so they look nice and full. Curtain rings and a pretty rod are details that will make even big box store curtains look luxurious.



## High-End tip

Make sure your window coverings look clean and crisp. You can machine wash most curtains and lightly dry them, if they have wrinkles, make sure you either iron or steam them!



## Tip #9

# Rethink Your Furniture Groupings

There's a common belief that rooms will feel larger and be easier to use if all the furniture is pushed against the walls, but that isn't the case. Instead, furnish your space by floating furniture away from walls. Reposition sofas and chairs into cozy conversational groups, and place pieces so that the traffic flow in a room is obvious. Not only will this make the space more user-friendly, but it will open up the room and make it seem larger.



The background of the entire page is a dark, muted blue-grey color. In the upper center, there is a large, faint, light-grey number '10'. Below the number, there is a dark blue rectangular box with the text 'Tip #10' in a white, cursive script font. The box is flanked by thin white vertical lines. Below this box, the title 'Style and Accessorize' is written in a large, elegant, white cursive script font. The background also features faint, out-of-focus images of framed artwork and a textured surface, possibly a rug or fabric.

## Tip #10

# Style and Accessorize

You will enjoy the changes you accomplish from any of the tips above, but don't stop there! A room will never feel finished without some styling. No matter how well decorated your house is, it needs styling. In a well staged home every surface is styled and the room is full of personality. This is what styling does. It adds interest and personality.

However, you don't have to completely clean out your space in order to achieve an expensive aesthetic in your home. By incorporating a few key pieces in a room, you can add to the overall comfort and flow of your home's design.

You don't need to compromise your budget in order to fill your home with nice décor. Try shopping affordable home décor shops online or in store to achieve the look you're going for.

Obviously I'm not saying that your room has to be photoshoot ready everyday, but have some fun expressing your personality with vignettes on surfaces like coffee tables, sideboards, shelving and your mantel.

# Arrange to Sell



## Declutter

Overall- Declutter the entire home and replace old light bulbs with new.



## Entry

Entry- Organize by creating a “drop zone” that has storage for loose items.



## Furniture Placement

Living- Arrange furniture in a symmetrical pattern and add lots of color.



## Clear Off Countertops

Kitchen- Clear countertops by stowing everything away in cabinets and drawers.



## Dining Area

Dining- Add a pop of color to the dining room table.



## Bedroom

Bed- Utilize throw blankets and pillows to create a comforting space.



## Bathroom

Bath- Create a spa vibe by updating shower curtains, bath mats, and soap dispensers.



## Office

Office- Keep the design very simple by keeping the desk clear besides a few decorations.



## Laundry Room

Laundry- Use shelving to put away essentials to make it appear as organized as possible.



# STAGING Checklist

## Front Door

- ☐ A fresh coat of paint for a clean look
- ☐ Windows on door should sparkle
- ☐ House numbers in good condition and visible from the street
- ☐ Plants, mats and lighting should be inviting
- ☐ A tasteful wreath is a welcoming touch
- ☐ Polish brass door knockerr and kickplate
- ☐ Replace any hardware that is too old to clean
- ☐ The door should close easily and not creak or rub the frame
- ☐ The door should be in good repair and feel strong and safe
- ☐ Doorbell working properly and fully intact
- ☐ Fix or replace locks that sticks or are tricky to open
- ☐ Remove garbage cans or sports equipment

## Mailbox

- ☐ Replace if showing signs of wear
- ☐ Put a fresh coat of paint, if needed
- ☐ Freshen faded flags with fresh paint
- ☐ Replace tattered house numbers
- ☐ Weed and freshen up any flowers at the base

## Landscaping

- ☐ Remove any dead trees and shrubs
- ☐ Mow and edge lawn
- ☐ Make sure lawn is clean of debris
- ☐ Trim hedges and shrubs
- ☐ Weed gardens and rake leaves
- ☐ Sow grass seed in bare spots
- ☐ Keep flower beds weed-free
- ☐ Flowers add a nice touch in season
- ☐ Container flowers add punches of color
- ☐ Trim shrubs that obscure windows
- ☐ Trim plants and shrubs away from walkways
- ☐ Prune tree branches away from drive
- ☐ Trim trees and shrubs that obstruct view
- ☐ Remove wasp's nests
- ☐ Clean fishponds, bird baths, fountains, etc.
- ☐ Ensure windows open, close and lock
- ☐ Remove excess yard ornaments
- ☐ Be sure all yard lighting works
- ☐ Remove unsightly items from property
- ☐ Place fresh flowers on table
- ☐ Eliminate odors

# STAGING Checklist

## Outdoor Repairs

- ☐ Repair and repaint fences
- ☐ Paint and repair outbuildings
- ☐ Repair all loose hinges, shutters, and screens
- ☐ Replace rusted or broken exterior light fixtures
- ☐ Replace broken window well bubbles
- ☐ Clean windows and screens
- ☐ Repair roofs, gutters and downspouts
- ☐ Add a new, fresh doormat

## Exterior

- ☐ Repaint, if needed
- ☐ Paint peeling trim around windows and doors
- ☐ Power wash exterior and deck
- ☐ Re-stain and seal deck
- ☐ Repair, replace or remove old deck furniture
- ☐ Clean window wells
- ☐ Power-wash windows
- ☐ Clean and repair gutters
- ☐ Replace missing shingles
- ☐ Ensure lights are working and bright
- ☐ Replace old or damaged windows

## Exterior continued

- ☐ Power wash driveway
- ☐ Clean windows and window wells
- ☐ Repair holes or cracks in walls
- ☐ Get rid of weeds around driveway
- ☐ Remove garbage cans or sports equipment
- ☐ Remove any oil stains on driveway
- ☐ Freshen up a gravel driveway with new gravel
- ☐ Repair and reseal asphalt driveways
- ☐ Repair sidewalks
- ☐ Keep sidewalks and driveways clear of debris
- ☐ Make sure garage doors function properly
- ☐ Garage doors should be kept closed for showings
- ☐ Replace damaged hardware on garage door
- ☐ Put a fresh coat of paint on garage door, if needed
- ☐ Arrange patio furniture in an attractive manner
- ☐ Leave patio umbrella up for a festive touch
- ☐ Be sure attached grills are clean
- ☐ Be sure children's play equipment that stay are in good repair
- ☐ Get rid of junk in the garage

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## Seller Tip

Take care of your yard!  
Mow the lawn, trim your bushes and  
buy a few bags of mulch to pour in  
the flower beds to tie things  
together. First impressions count.



## Overall Interior

- ☐ Mop all hardwood and tile
- ☐ Clean windows and window wells
- ☐ Repair holes or cracks in walls
- ☐ Repaint with neutral colors
- ☐ Clean baseboards and trim
- ☐ Organize basement
- ☐ Check and replace lightbulbs
- ☐ Dust all lights and ceiling fans
- ☐ Dust shelves and art
- ☐ Remove family photos
- ☐ Take out all trash
- ☐ Have carpets professionally cleaned
- ☐ Fix leaky faucets
- ☐ Organize closets leaving free space
- ☐ Clean all blinds and curtains
- ☐ Ensure windows open, close and lock
- ☐ Clean all filters and vents
- ☐ Replace worn pillows and rugs
- ☐ Declutter and arrange in inviting way
- ☐ Place fresh flowers on table
- ☐ Eliminate odors



# STAGING Checklist

## Kitchen

- ☐ Deep clean refrigerator and stove
- ☐ Ensure all appliances are working
- ☐ Wash all cabinet fronts
- ☐ Organize to create space
- ☐ Minimize items on counter
- ☐ Remove magnets from refrigerator
- ☐ Hide trash can in a closet

## Bedroom

- ☐ Declutter and organize closets
- ☐ Create empty space in closets
- ☐ Dust and organize nightstands
- ☐ Launder bedding and pillows
- ☐ Clean shades and curtains
- ☐ Organize furniture to look spacious

## Laundry Room

- ☐ Clean all surfaces
- ☐ Organize shelves
- ☐ Wipe down washer and dryer
- ☐ Put all clothing away

## Bathroom

- ☐ Remove rust and mildew stains
- ☐ Replace caulk around sink/tub/shower
- ☐ Replace worn rugs and towels
- ☐ Clean or replace shower curtain
- ☐ Clean and repair grout
- ☐ Ensure the sink/tub/shower drain well
- ☐ Ensure the toilet operates properly
- ☐ Check the exhaust fan
- ☐ Clean toilet bowls
- ☐ Clean soap residue from shower/tub
- ☐ Check water pressure at all fixtures

## Garage

- ☐ Wash floors
- ☐ Seal or paint floors
- ☐ Organize to create floor space
- ☐ Organize items in bins on shelves
- ☐ Cover exposed wiring
- ☐ Ensure the garage door is working

# A Word about Clutter

From the prospective homebuyer's view, clutter translates into an undesirable home. Cluttered homes often appear smaller. They look darker and tend to smell from the excess dust. The excess stimuli can be an immediate turn-off because the combined effect suggests that all the home's other features will be rundown, decayed and in need of much repair. The converse is also true: homes devoid of clutter and kept clean give the impression of being well maintained and not requiring much work on all the lights in each room and open all blinds and drapes.

It is important to understand that when prospective buyers view a home, they do so through various lenses. Some will look at a property in terms of its resale value, others will view it as a starter home, and others will view it as their potential home for life.

## *Clutter can take away value*

For those looking at property in terms of resale value, clutter is a good thing. Clutter means that the property doesn't show well and as such the potential buyer stands a good chance of acquiring it below value. For those looking at a property as a starter home, the clutter only serves to widen the gap between the desired home and the home they must settle for. People looking at a property as their potential permanent home will imagine themselves occupying it. Clutter compromises the ideal image and prospective buyers view the home in terms of cleaning and maintenance.

Properties with clutter translate into increased time on the market and lower values, not only because the clutter decreases the perception of size, air and light, but also because of the perceived level of work involved in maintaining the property. It might behoove sellers to spend a little upfront and hire a professional clutter clearer and/or home stager. This initial cost will be recouped by way of a higher selling price and faster sale

# Staging and Decluttering

## “

Make a clean sweep of all unnecessary articles in attic or basement. Then neatly store boxes and items you wish to keep showing off storage and utility space to the best advantage. Stack magazines and newspapers neatly. Use baskets to store mail, bills, bathroom items or any items that tend to add clutter.



## “

Closets and storage areas will appear more spacious when they are neatly arranged. Remove hanging clothes where possible to avoid the “sardined” look. Line up shoes. Stack boxes in an orderly fashion.

## “

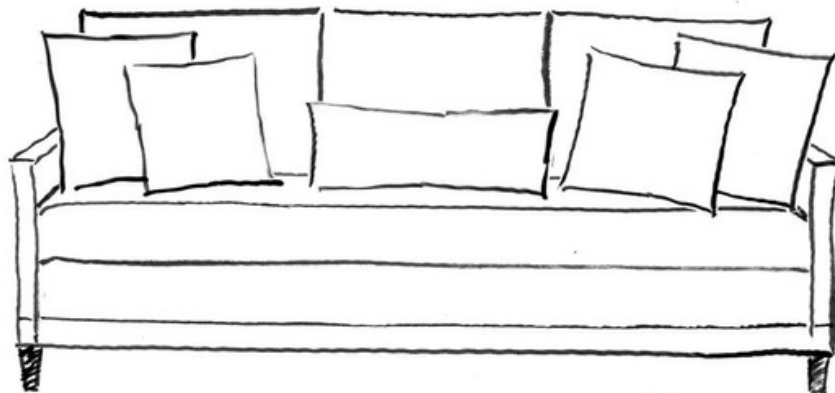
Remove any pieces of furniture that you can store elsewhere to make rooms look more spacious. Be sure to have an easy flow of traffic through each room.



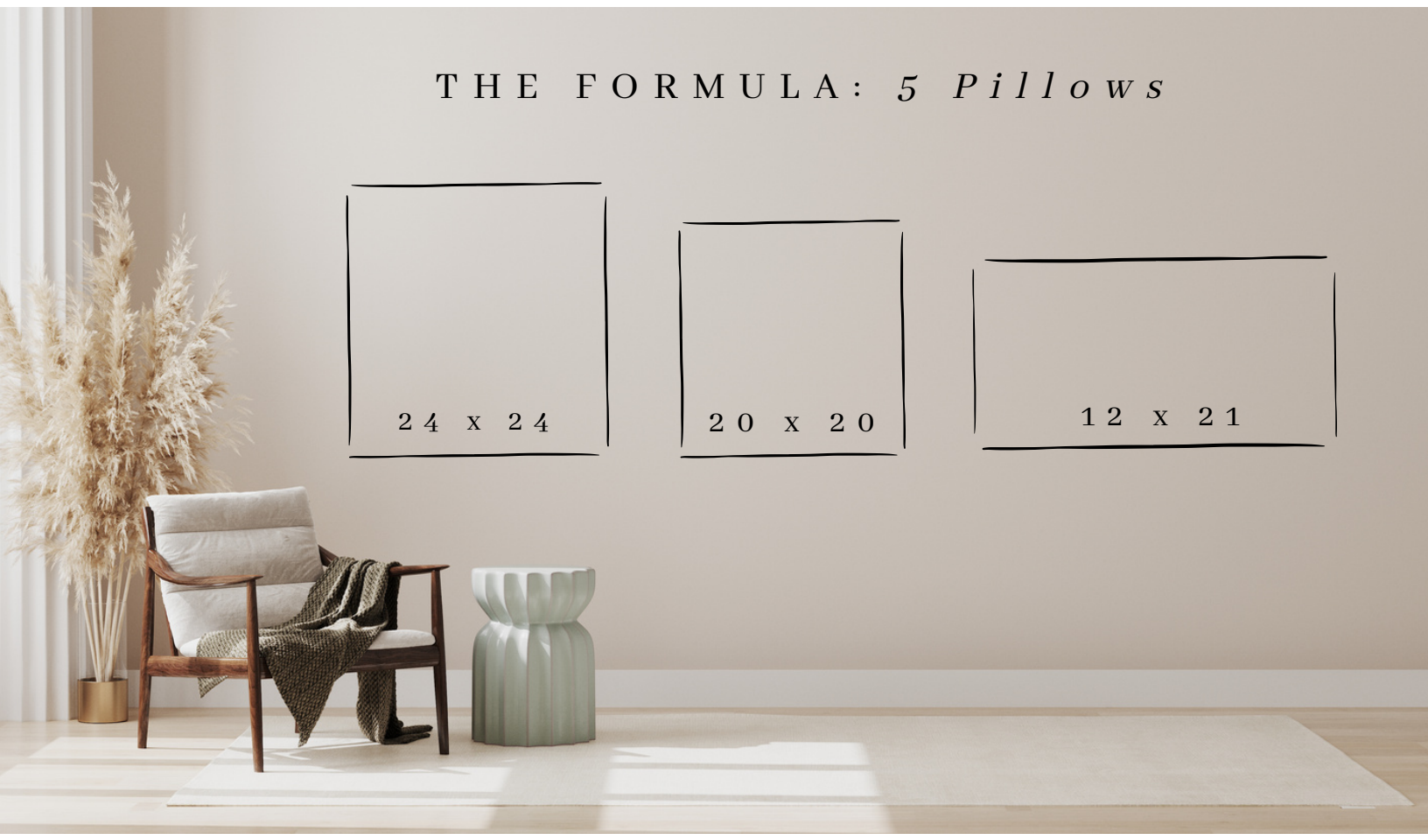
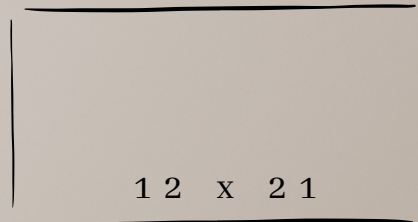
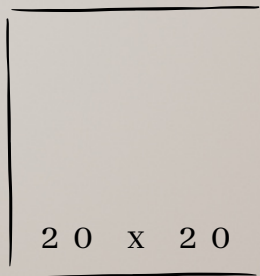
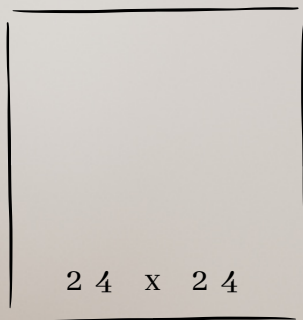


# P E R F E C T P I L L O W F O R M U L A

T H E L O O K : *C l a s s i c*



T H E F O R M U L A : *5 P i l l o w s*





# Set the Mood

## **Don't Spare the Kilowatts!**

DON'T SPARE THE KILOWATTS! When showing, brighten up the house with proper illumination from the front porch light all the way through the house. Remember the basement and garage lights as well. Certain accent lights should be turned on even during daylight hours. Be sure all burned-out bulbs are replaced. Clean dusty light bulbs so the room appears its brightest

## **The Personal Touch**

Add little personal touches that make a house a home. For instance, a vase of flowers, a plant, or small pillows. Don't overcrowd. Achieve a balanced happy look.

## **Warm and Inviting**

Make your home inviting with fresh aromas from your oven. When there is no time to bake, put a teaspoon of vanilla in a warm oven.

Frozen or canned cinnamon bread or rolls may be baked just before showings. You may also want to consider using electric potpourri pots throughout the house. But, don't overdo it. Too strong of perfumes might be overpowering to people with allergies or other sensitivities.

In winter months, try to keep a crackling fire in the fireplace. In summer months, clean out the fireplace and add logs for a decorative



*And Now you are Ready to Sell*



By following these tips, your home should be properly staged for viewing by prospective buyers. If you desire a personal Home Enhancement Consultation, I will be happy to meet with you at your earliest convenience. Of course, this is included as part of my Marketing Plan and there is no additional cost to you.

Every impression counts! For more ways in which you can ensure sales success for your home, call me today! I am here to help!



# The Road to *Home*



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*Find your Dream  
Home today*

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*"Seeking the best for our clients"*



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