



How to prepare your property for a successful sale

The MSE Guide to Home Staging

Home Staging your property...

What is Home Staging?

'Home Staging' involves preparing a home for sale, with a special emphasis on presentation and appearance, to achieve the best possible price and a quick sale.

Why have we prepared this guide?

Many of our clients have difficulty finding the time, motivation or energy to prepare their home for sale. We've developed this guide to highlight the key steps you should take to help you gain the highest sale price for your home in the shortest possible time.

Why Home Stage your property?

The process of Home Staging:

- helps you think like a buyer to make the most of every opportunity
- assists with de-cluttering and organising in advance of moving - to save you removal costs for items you don't actually want or need

- sets your home above similar houses
- makes your home appear more attractive, light, bright and spacious

and most importantly:

- maximises the price achieved from the sale
- increases the likelihood of a quick sale

Avoid the 'drive by'!

You only have one chance to make potential buyers fall in love with your home and it is well-recognised by property professionals that the real key to success and a rapid sale is the first impression it gives. The appearance of the exterior can make a huge difference as to how positively the interior will be viewed and most people find it hard to see through disorganised, cluttered or overdressed rooms. Some tidying and a little cosmetic work can really make the difference between getting a sale or losing the buyer's interest as they drive by for a quick look before a formal viewing.



...in 3 simple steps

step 1 - fix

Your pre-sale preparation

Inspect the exterior and each room of your house and make a list of repairs, for example:

- **Exterior:** Broken fencing, steps, paving or decking areas. Damaged windows, woodwork, render.
- **Interior:** Cracked/flaking plaster, peeling wallpaper, damaged kitchen or bathroom fittings, dripping taps, broken locks, door and window furniture, wobbly shelves, faulty electrical appliances or plumbing.

Call a handyman or tradesman for a quote to make repairs. Check out our website www.mseproperty.com for Home Staging resources and useful links.

repair... refresh... and rejuvenate

step 2 - de-clutter

Preparing for marketing photos

Think like a buyer. First impressions are vital so improve the appearance of the exterior of your house and garden. Stand in front of your property and note anything that stands out as being unsightly or cramps the space. Really scrutinise and continue this exercise in every room of your home.

Clean, bright and spacious wins buyers over so clean, clean, clean... allow as much light in as possible and clear clutter to make more space. Clean carpets and animal bedding to ensure there are no strong odours. And don't forget to keep your de-cluttered house looking good throughout the process of selling, not just for the first viewing!

clear the clutter, showcase the space, create instant kerb appeal

step 3 - beautify

Preparing for your viewings

Even if you only have a short time to prepare your property, we'll guide you through the most **quick and effective steps** to take for a successful viewing. Your MSE Property Consultant will give you further support and advice.

Fresh, tidy and spotless are key elements - no nasty aromas - strong cooking, animal or musty smells are all major turn offs so ensure carpets, furniture, bathrooms and kitchens are clean and fresh. Tidy away children's toys and keep pet bedding and food out of sight.

see our '10 quick steps to impress potential buyers' at the back of this guide



before

‘front of house’ welcome

- Ensure your house name or number is clearly visible from the road
- Clear away any rubbish or unsightly items
- Trim hedges and any greenery blocking light from windows and doors
- Weed flower beds and cut back overgrown shrubs
- Have windows and paintwork cleaned
- Add flowering plants in hanging baskets, pots or window boxes near front entrance (and keep them watered!)

hallway/entrance hall

- Always enter via the front door for viewings
- Clear hallway of any unsightly clutter
- Remove any excess furniture blocking or cramping the available space
- Move toys or sports items to hidden storage area
- Store away out of season coats, hats and shoes
- Remove clutter from surfaces - papers, post, keys, mobile chargers, etc

living/reception room

- Re-arrange furniture to give an 'open' view of the space
- Remove, sell or store any excess furniture to make the room feel larger
- Clear floors of clutter to create more visible floor space
- Tidy and clean shelves, coffee table, etc
- Dust surfaces, lampshades and fittings
- Get rid of newspapers and clean the fireplace
- Reduce the amount of ornaments and books or magazines on display
- Draw curtains right back to allow as much light in as possible – fit tie-backs if necessary (and set aside the net curtains!)

kitchen

- De-clutter and clean all work surfaces and floors
- Put away infrequently used appliances to create more space on worktops
- Organise, tidy and dust all items on open shelves
- Thoroughly clean oven, hob and sink
- Tidy cupboards (people will often look in them)
- Ensure the room smells really fresh – no strong cooking smells!
- Open the windows before viewings to allow the air to circulate

before



garden and outside space

- Mow the lawn, trim lawn edges, rake and remove leaves
- Weed flowerbeds and cut back overgrown shrubs and foliage
- Tidy away garden tools, hoses, recycling boxes, bins or any unsightly items
- Put children's toys and outdoor games away or out of sight
- Dispose of rubbish and garden refuse
- Clean or sweep paths, patios, decking and driveway
- Leave space on the driveway for buyers to park
- Clean or put away plastic garden furniture
- If you have a patio, place a table and chairs to showcase an extra 'outdoor room'
- Add or refresh plants in pots or containers and keep them watered



Top selling tips from MSE's Senior Negotiator, Kate Bowker...

What factors do you think buyers find most off-putting and may lead to a lack of interest in a property?

The presence of bad smells put off most buyers, especially pet smells. Use an air freshener and ensure you keep carpets clean. In fact, cleanliness is probably the main influencing factor when viewing a property. Get children's rooms tidied, scrub the bathroom and make sure your kitchen is spotless!

What advice would you give to sellers to help them in showing off their home in the best light?

A property needs to have kerb appeal as a buyer's first impression when pulling up to a property will have a lasting effect and may well influence the entire viewing. It is important that hedges are trimmed, fences are in good repair, front doors are clean and freshly painted and dustbins are firmly out of sight. Generally the buyer for your home buys it for the same reasons you probably did, so if it's a family home make sure it appeals to families. A modern city centre apartment should feel contemporary and ideal for entertaining. All accommodation should be shown for its intended purpose, so a dining room should have a table and chairs in it, a bedroom should have a bed and suitable storage, and so on.

What one tip do you think has the most impact on a sale?

The points I've mentioned already are very influential but also flexibility with viewings, especially at the weekend. We appreciate you're busy, so to ease the pressure give us a key - let your agent get on with the viewings. It's all part of the service we offer you for convenience and less stress!

If a seller has to do a viewing, what's your advice for them?

It's important to show the viewers around, highlighting any major improvements you have made, like a refitted kitchen or bathroom, new windows, new central heating system, any rewiring and garden design or landscaping. But don't overload them with irrelevant information. Remember to take any negative comments on the chin, and don't try too hard to justify any decorative decisions – simply suggest that they are cosmetic and can be easily changed. Finally, after a quick tour, don't forget to leave them to look around on their own. Give them some time and space to make their own opinion – don't hang around and crowd them. Answer any questions honestly and don't be afraid to ask them what they think! Your MSE Property Consultant needs to know how you think the viewing went, so we can combat any negative comments when gaining the potential purchasers' feedback.

Need some more advice?

Talk to your MSE Property Consultant today to see how you can best prepare your home for a profitable sale. We are property specialists and our expertise and knowledge is often underestimated and underused. We'd be happy to give you a constructive critique and point out any weak points about your property. It's all part of the service we offer our sellers to help them achieve a quick and successful sale.



10 quick steps to impress potential buyers

Before each viewing...

- Tidy all surfaces – put away anything that shouldn't be on display
- Hang up clothing, jackets and towels
- Clean all kitchen and bathroom surfaces, close toilet seats
- Dust all other visible surfaces
- Hoover or sweep all floors
- Open windows – ensure all rooms smell really fresh
- Open all curtains and blinds fully
- Place a vase of flowers in hallway and a bowl of fruit in the kitchen
- Move your vehicles to leave parking space free for your visitors
- If you are doing the viewing, ensure you are ready to welcome them and have local useful information available, e.g. transport, doctors, schools, etc

Ask your MSE Property Consultant for specific advice before each viewing.



Your property, our expertise...

mseproperty.com

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