

Photography for Home Stagers

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Photography for Home Stagers

Overview

- How to take better photos
- Your Portfolio
- Photos for the MLS and Internet
- Photo Editing Software

[Tips on Composition]

Fill your frame:

- Don't force the viewer to squint to see the room you just beautifully staged. Instead, either get physically closer or use the zoom on your lens (if you have one)

Fill the frame



Tips on Composition

Ensure your horizontal lines are level:

- Make sure the horizontal lines (ceilings, window sills, fireplace mantels) are level.
- Take your time and use your view finder.
- Take photos with your camera tipped slightly right & left to make sure you're covered.

Make sure your camera is level



[Photography – *Camera Angles*]

Camera Angles: The use of different angles can add a completely different element to the room you're capturing.

- Take photos from high & low angles. You can use a chair or kneel down.
- Move around the room. Take photos standing two feet to the left or right.

Take photos from high & low angles

The picture, right,
was shot while Kathy
was standing



The picture on the left
was taken while Kathy
was kneeling. Showing
more floor makes the
room feel larger

Take photos from different angles



The Realtor preferred the photo below because it showed off more of the architecture.

Michelle preferred the photo above for her portfolio because it focused more on the staging



Photography - *Lighting*

- Turn on all lights (overhead) as well as lamps
- The main source of light should be behind you if possible
- Check your view finder to ensure there is no glare or heavy shadows
- Shoot with & without flash

The importance of turning on lights



When we staged this property the electricity was off, so I photographed it without lights (left)

I went back & photographed it after the electricity was turned on (right)



Shoot with & without flash



The photo, left, was shot without flash

The photo on the right was shot with flash



Portfolio Tips – Web & Print

- **Are hard copies of your portfolios useful anymore?**
- **What to include in your portfolio**
- **What story do you want your portfolio to tell?**
 - **The variety of different styles you're capable of providing**
 - **The services you provide or would like to provide more of.**
 - **It's OK to have more than one portfolio with different emphases** (vacant, occupied, color consults, for example)

Photos for MLS

- **Should I provide my after photos to the agent and/or homeowner?**
- **How many photos should you give the listing agent?**
- **What should you photograph?**
- **How do photos you take for the MLS and your portfolio photos differ?**
- **What format (size, etc...) will the agent need?**

Photography – *Photo Editing Software*

Capturing the perfect shot can be tricky. Here are a few tools to help make your photos better:

- Photoshop (www.Adobe.com) – about \$699
- Photoshop Elements – under \$100
- Picnik (www.picnik.com) - **Free** and fee based (\$29/yr for premiere service)
- Picasa (<http://picasa.google.com/>) – In addition to editing you can use Picasa to store your photos.
- Irfanview (www.irfanview.com) **Free**
- FastStone (www.FastStone.org) **Free to try, \$35 for commercial use (lifetime license)**

Photoshopped photo



The lens distortion was corrected and the cable wire was removed. Also the plug was removed.

It's OK to remove certain items for your portfolio, like plugs or cables as long as you're not enhancing the staging. Be very conservative about what you remove from MLS photos.



Photo Manipulation Dos & Don'ts

- Don't hide or alter substantial defects in the home. You could be party to a law suit.
- Don't hide or alter substantial defects in your staging. Its unethical.
- It's OK to remove minor things like lamp cords, plugs or small vents.
- It's OK to remove photographic blemishes like glare from a flash, shadows, etc. or to adjust lens distortion or perspective distortion

Photography—*Some Technical Stuff*

- **What do all those numbers mean? What is DPI?**
 - DPI in digital photography means the dots per inch. The higher the number, the higher the resolution and quality of the picture. The higher the DPI, the larger the file and the longer it takes to load. 72-100 DPI is good for posting on the web. Higher resolutions just take longer to load without changing the appearance.
- **Difference between Jpeg & Tiff**
 - **Jpeg or Jpg:** (Joint Photographic Experts Group) Jpeg format is the most common format used for photos on the web because it presents a smaller file size and loads more quickly than Tiffs. Jpeg photos are compressed every time they are manipulated and resaved. This can result in the image becoming degraded after several saves.
 - **Tiff:** (Tagged Image File Format) A Tiff photo file is not compressed when it is saved thereby preserving the original picture quality. However, Tiff files are much larger than jpeg files and are much slower to load. Additionally, they take up a lot of room on your hard drive. It's a good idea to save your “hero” photos only as Tiff files to preserve the original photo quality. Convert them to Jpegs when you want to upload them to the Internet.

How can this picture be improved?



Improved photo



How can this picture be improved?



Improved photo



How can this photo be improved?



How can this photo be improved?



How can this photo be improved?

