Definite Video and Photography
Checklist to Prepare Your Home for Real Estate Photos

Note: Real Estate Photography is taken with the camera about 3 1/2' - 4' height. Get down low to see what the camera will see.**

1. Clean Kitchen Counters & Sink
Clear off kitchen counters to make the kitchen space appear more prominent. Kitchen counters with coffee makers, mixers, and decorations can be a distraction for buyers and make the kitchen feel cluttered. Remove everything except a few decorative items from the countertops and clean all surface area, including appliance, kitchen sink, and backsplash. Remove trash cans. Take family photos, kid drawings and magnets off the fridge. **Frequently missed areas: under the stove hood, under cabinets above the countertops.

2. Clean Bathroom
Take all items off of the bathroom counter and place all of the shampoo bottles, soaps, shaving razors, toothbrushes and other items into a bin that can be stored underneath the bathroom sink. You want your bathroom to look bigger and vacant. Clean the countertops, sinks, toilet, and shower. Neatly fold any decorative towels on the towel rack and place a few for show items on the countertop. Toilet lids should be closed.

3. Turn On All Lights Throughout the Entire House
Lighting is one of the most important aspects of photography. Be sure to check all of the ceiling lights, lamps, and exterior lights to make sure they all work. Turn on all the lights in the house before the photographer arrives. Go the extra step: Have daylight temperature bulbs (5600k) throughout the house.
4. Remove Unnecessary Furniture & Decorations
Removing and storing excess or large furniture can be challenging, but it opens up the floor space and makes the home look much more presentable. Consult a professional stager to determine which items should stay or go. Floor mats and runners can make the overall floor space look smaller. Make sure to roll up and remove all of the floor mats in the bathrooms, kitchen, and laundry areas.

5. Make All of the Beds
This is the most obvious step, but it gets overlooked often, especially in the secondary bedrooms. Decorate all the beds with matching sheets, blankets, and pillows to brighten up the bed. **Do not hide stuff under beds if it can be seen by the low angle of the camera. Remove items behind or hanging on any doors. They need to open fully.

6. Remove All Personal Photos and Items
You want the buyer to visualize themselves in your house, but it will be hard if your items are everywhere. Since you want your buyers to fall in love with the house, you will need to remove all private photos and items from the entire home, including the patio, porch, and garage. This includes, water bottles, cell phones, iPads, medications, medical necessities, Clean up cables going to TV, video games, personal device charging stations etc.

7. Put All Shoes & Jackets in Closets
Remove all jackets and shoes from anywhere they can be seen throughout the hour and store away any loose items to remove all distractions. Buyers do not want to see shoes and jackets on coat racks and entryway floors because they will assume that the home lacks storage space.

8. Remove All Pet Item
Not everyone has pets. Some people are severely allergic to animals, while others simply do not like having a pet in their home. Make sure your home shows no signs of pets, especially pet smells. Spend time cleaning your home to get rid of the pet odor and remove all pet items from the house.

9. Tidy Up the Yard & Landscape
First impressions are crucial when selling your home. Make sure your front yard is cleaned up, and all of the landscape should be trimmed back and tidy. The first picture that people will see of your home will be the outside front yard. Your front yard needs to be in very good condition to grab the buyer's attention. Sweep the front and back porches and clean and clear all cars from the road and driveway. Have hoses rolled up or removed. Remove any tarps covering furniture, wood piles, or appliances such as BBQs. Remove Kids toys, plastic kid pools, pet items, garbage cans.

10. Laundry room should be tidy. Remove any dirty laundry, cleaning supplies etc.

Final Thoughts
Your home's marketing is the most important part of selling your home. It begins with preparation and is paired with a great real estate photographer. Definite Video and Photo can help make your home sell quickly with high-quality photography, 3-D imagery, videos and virtual environment creation. Contact me for more details about my services.
I know this can be overwhelming for some. If consultation is needed, for a small fee I can travel to the location and give advice on how to get started to prepare your home

Checklist -- Area By Area

Exterior, Front Yard & Backyard
- Close all garage doors.
- Remove cars from driveways and the front of the house so they are not visible in the photographs.
- Attend to landscaping (mow the lawn, remove leaves, shovel snow from the driveway/walkway, etc. depending on the season).
- Remove dead foliage and empty planters.
- Remove trash cans.
- Remove or roll up visible water hoses, ladders and other tools.
- Remove toys and playground supplies.
- Clean and arrange outdoor tables, chairs, etc. and fluff cushions.
- When applicable, clean the pool area and remove the pool cover when in season. During the off-season, remove any debris from the pool cover.

Interior
- Turn on all lights and replace any bulbs that are dim or burned-out.
- Open window curtains and sheers.
- Open slats on vertical window blinds. Blinds may be raised or lowered, as long as they are uniform throughout the house.
- Turn off televisions and computer screens.

- Hide remote controls.

Entryway
- Remove coats and backpacks from entryway hooks and put them in a closet.
- Remove shoes.
- Remove clutter (keys, wallets, papers, etc.) from an entryway table.

Kitchen/Dining Area
- Clear countertops -- less is more. Items like soap dispensers, paper towel rolls, dish towels and sponges should all be stowed.
- Leave a couple of stylish items on the counter (a coffee maker or a bowl of fruit).
- Hide all dishes; place dirty dishes in the dishwasher.
- Remove any items from the kitchen sink.
- Hide garbage cans and recycling bins.
- Clear the front of the refrigerator of magnets, postcards, photos, etc.
- Clear dining table. Consider having a vase of fresh flowers on the table.
- Straighten all chairs and space them evenly.
- Remove children's chairs or high seats.

Living Room
- Remove magazines, papers, mail and random clutter.
- Arrange books and art in bookshelves so it looks tidy.
- Remove toys.
- Remove clutter and clean interior of the fireplace.
- If the fireplace has a glass front, clean it.
- Arrange furniture pillows.
- Hide and/or arrange cables from TV, stereo and other electrical devices where possible.

Bedrooms
- Make the beds, including decorative pillows/shams if available.
- When visible, edges of bedding and sheets should either be tucked in neatly or hung straight.
- Pillows should be wrinkle-free, fluffed, matching and arranged neatly.
- Remove personal belongings like pictures, clothing, electronics and clutter.
- Remove trash cans.
- Clean under the bed and remove items that may show in the photos.

Home Office
- Clear desk.
- Hide and/or arrange all the cables.
- Hide papers.
- Arrange items neatly on a bookshelf.
- Remove personalized items.

Bathrooms
- Clear and clean countertops and sinks. A decorative soap dispenser can remain.
- Toothbrushes, hairbrushes, makeup, etc. should all be removed.
- Remove waste baskets, hampers, toilet brushes and plungers.
- Put toilet seats down.
- Remove shampoo, soap, etc. from showers and tubs.
- Remove all old and/or unmatched bathroom towels. Matching, nicely folded towels may remain.
- Remove floor mats.

Pets
- As much as we love pets, there should be no evidence of them in your home.
- Remove food and water bowls.
- Place pet beds, litter boxes, cat towers and toys out of view.
- Clean pet hair from furniture.
- Whenever possible, pets should be placed in a room that will not be photographed or "taken for a ride" while the photographer is working.
- Cats have a way of showing up in photographs unbeknownst to the photographer (under a bed, on top of a cabinet, etc.).