

AGENT APPRECIATION MONTH

Top 10 never-fail home staging tips for agents

When done right, staging evokes a stronger emotional tie for buyers, which translates to a greater commitment to the home



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BY [MISTY SOLDWISCH](#)

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[Staging](#) has been integral to my company's success for many years. Consumers' expectations of how a home should look have been raised thanks to the advent of real estate "reality" shows. This vision becomes the expectation, even though it's not how people actually live. Real estate professionals have an opportunity to elevate how a home is presented in order to align with client aspirations.

When it comes to [staging](#), I truly believe you get what you pay for. In my experience, sellers who opt for staging tend to get 5 percent more in sales price, but more importantly, staged homes sell 20 percent faster. That is because, when done right, staging evokes a stronger emotional tie for buyers, which translates to a greater commitment to the home.

Have I made a believer out of you? Here are my top 10 staging tips you can put into play in your business:

1. Clean is more important than staged.

In the eyes of a potential buyer, cleanliness is paramount and takes priority over staging. Staged homes that



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2. Go big or go home.

A few staged rooms or new pieces scattered here and there won't have the desired impact. A consistent design approach throughout the home is critical in creating a unified look that elevates the home experience.

3. Staging starts at the curb.

Don't forget to [stage the outside](#) of the home, particularly the front yard, foundation plantings, the walkway to the front door and the front porch area including, house numbers, door décor and the mailbox.

4. Make sure unstaged areas aren't a turnoff.

A big part of staging is decluttering, but don't dump unused items in a living area like an extra bedroom. A basement, attic or garage are all fair game for storage, but make sure those spaces are neat and organized.

5. Use what you have.

Don't underestimate the value of consulting with a professional stager on how to use a client's existing items. Detailed and direct advice on what to keep and what to remove can be invaluable in how home furnishings are edited and rearranged to achieve the optimal presentation of a home.

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6. Have a get-out-of-jail card.

It's extremely helpful to have solid relationships with at least one or two stagers on whom you can call in a pinch. Sometimes timing is of the essence. To get a home on the market as quickly as possible, you need to

7. Don't be afraid to mix styles.

A rustic-style home doesn't require rustic furnishings. Mixing different styles can [open your listing](#) up to a wider audience.

8. Double down on distinctive elements.

Your instinct may be to downplay a standout feature of a home, like an unusual backsplash in the kitchen. However, being all in on these focal points can create an unexpected and memorable impression that may capture a potential buyer's interest.

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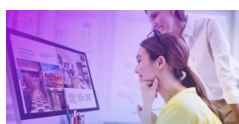
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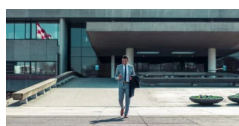
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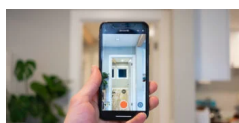
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9. Think aspirational.

Staging is often used to elevate the experience of a home, making it someone's dream home. That's why the staging elements must align with the vision, evoking West Elm instead of thrift store chic.

10. Put your money where your mouth is.

A home is so much more than a commodity; it's a place where we live and dream, a stage for the lifestyle we lead. When it comes to tapping into the emotions of a buyer, staging is not only an effective way to [communicate](#) how they can activate their dreams and aspirations, but a competitive property marketing advantage.


Misty Soldwisch is a broker/owner and team leader with [Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate](#) in Des Moines. Follow her on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

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