

# HOMESWISE

Real Estate Tips and Advice

## Listing Photos that Sell

By ANNA CHANG-YEN | Green Shoot Media

How a home is marketed can have major impacts on how quickly it's sold and the final sale price. A big part of marketing homes for sale in the modern age is photography.

From multiple listing service feeds to data aggregators such as Zillow and Trulia to social networks, once your home is listed, the data is flung far and wide across the internet. That means the photos accompanying your home listing will be worth much more than a thousand words as they bounce around the web letting potential buyers peek inside.

How many photos do you need? Should you hire a professional photographer? What should the photos show? A good agent will help you navigate the particulars of helping your home make a great first impression in photos.

### QUANTITY AND QUALITY

Consider these numbers: According to Trulia, 90 percent of buyers start their home search online and make a decision about whether or not to see a home in person after looking through the listing's online photos. In addition, a listing with more than six photos is twice as likely to be viewed by buyers than those with fewer photos. While it's



possible to overdo it with multiple copies of photos and unnecessary or poorly staged shots, in general, more is better.

Almost everyone these days has a phone in their pocket, but not just any snapshot will do. The home should be clean and in tip-top shape when photos are taken. Professional real estate photographers offer real value to sellers, with an eye for capturing unique details and choosing just the right angle to highlight a

home's various spaces.

Be sure to point out any features that make your home unique to your agent before the photographer visits. Do you regularly enjoy the view of the sun rising over the trees from the back deck while having your morning coffee? Let your agent know, so the photographer can possibly capture the moment. Do your kitchen cabinets offer unique features, such as a stand mixer lift? Does your home theater feature custom lighting? Let your photog-

rapher capture these potential selling points.

### TRENDS

While digital photos are nothing new in the real estate arena, there are some recent innovations to be aware of. Drone photography is an affordable alternative to traditional aerial photography for showing off a home with substantial surrounding property and features.

A 3-D virtual reality-type tour practically drops potential

### REAL ESTATE 101

#### Best Practices

Bad photos cheat your home out of a chance to reel in buyers who might otherwise be interested in your home. If you decide to DIY your listing photos, be sure to avoid Realtor Mag's list of nine photo errors that are common in real estate listings, from bad lighting to angles that make rooms look cramped. Read the full list at <http://bit.ly/1rmZ2Jt>.

buyers into your home. Multiple photos are taken throughout the home, including 360-degree shots in every room, and they're then stitched together into an immersive walk-through experience.

### STAGING

If you've already moved out of your home, consider staging it, both for online photography purposes and for showings and open houses. It's hard for potential buyers to see your house as a home when they only see bare walls and floors. We've all seen those photos in which it's hard to tell family room from dining room from bedroom. Don't let your home be that home.