

## Does Staging Your Home Really Help it to Sell?



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According to Consumer Reports ([www.consumerreports.org](http://www.consumerreports.org)) approximately 1 in 10 home sellers stated that they wished they had completed more cosmetic changes to their home *before* they placed it on the market. Their survey further stated that a higher percentage of home sellers, “who sold their homes for significantly less than the original asking price”, regretted not completing more repairs before placing their homes on the market.

Consumer Report’s recommendations for preparing your home for sale are:

**Clear out clutter** (including “your collections of national-landmark spoons and Star Wars action figures”). And to take your pictures off the refrigerator! However, they stated not to leave rooms completely empty.

**Make it shine** (they state that because so many “perfectly polished” homes are on the market, that yours should be also. Replacing worn carpet, polishing wood floors, toning down bright colors, and getting rid of pet smells is necessary).

**Move around the stuff that’s left** (suggesting that you accentuate fireplaces or perhaps views with how you arrange your furniture).

**Hire a pro** CR suggests that you might just want to hire a professional stager, quoting that a 2-hour consultation is about \$300, with a full staging costing \$500 to \$5,000. CR states the stager’s fees may be a tax deduction as an advertising fee, but we suggest you check with your accountant.

In another Consumer Reports interview with a professional stager, her recommendations for preparing your home for sale are:

- 1) Clean
- 2) Get rid of clutter
- 3) Be careful with colors (walls and floors)
- 4) Compromise if you can’t afford to replace everything (if you have to, fix the stuff in poor condition, and do your best with the stuff in better condition)
- 5) Be creative (with furniture placement, decorations, etc)
- 6) Have certain rooms create a “theme”, such as peaceful bedrooms, or perhaps a “warm” family room.
- 7) Go for it. Don’t be afraid of the changes.

CR asked this stager the biggest mistake home sellers make: “not putting the stuff away, not taking down the bulletin board with all the bills stuck on it, and not getting all the photos off the refrigerator.”

Additionally, CR suggests that you take a walk down your own street, then come back up to your home to see what a potential buyer sees. They quoted a broker that if the outside “looks overgrown, stark and hard” that buyers say “I don’t even want to get out of the car.”

Consumer Report’s take on using a stager is to “de-emphasize your personal taste and make your home more visually appealing to a broader range of buyers.”

Two websites specializing in information on staging state that the average time on market for a staged home is 35 days, and for a non-staged home the days on market averaged 175 days. These same two sites state that your return on investment for staging and repairs range from 121% to 578% return on your money spent. These two sites are: [www.homestagingsource.com](http://www.homestagingsource.com) and [www.stagedhomes.com](http://www.stagedhomes.com). Their two PDF analyses are linked [here](#).

As a home seller you have so many decisions to make. REaIMARKABLE recommends that you at least take the advice of the professionals offered in this article and prepare your home as well as you can before ever placing it on the market. If you can afford it, you may wish to also investigate talking to a professional stager. If the returns on investment stated at these websites are anywhere close to accurate, you should lessen your time on market and sell your home for more money. Finally, before you spend any time, money, and effort you may wish to read both [What Really Makes a Home Sell](#) and [What is a Real Estate Marketing Company](#). The more you know about home sales and real estate, the better the decisions you will make.