

A bright, modern home office with a desk, chair, and window. The room features light-colored walls, a large window with white blinds, and a wooden floor. A white desk with a glass top and a white chair with a tufted back are positioned in front of the window. A white cabinet with a printer on top is on the left, and a small wooden side table is on the right. The text "Spring Market" is overlaid in a white box with a dark border in the upper right quadrant.

# Spring Market

A guide to getting your home ready to sell  
By Corinne Kaas owner of Harmonizing Homes

# Spring Real Estate Market

HGTV has been a great way for many people to understand the benefits of staging. What it doesn't do is tell you how much it is going to cost and what goes into staging a home. I am the owner of Harmonizing Homes the award winning interior design and home staging company in New Jersey.

I receive telephone calls all the time from home owners, realtors and investors; the calls typically start out like this; "I have a house that I would like to stage, how much will it cost?" or, "can you give me an idea on pricing for staging a 2,400-square foot house?" My reply; Is it vacant or occupied? Answer Vacant. My reply: Typically for a living room, dining room, master bedroom and bathroom it will run between 3,000-4,000 dollars. It is extremely difficult to provide a prospective client a price without knowing what furnishings, accessories, artwork and the demographic for which we will be marketing to.

After all of this has been completed, our typical answer is "okay thank you that is much more than I am willing to spend". Hence the reason why I am writing this e-book. I want to educate the homeowner, realtor, investor on what goes into home staging.

We charge a one hundred and fifty dollars (150.00) consultation fee for a vacant home proposal which covers the cost of going to the site, taking measurements, pictures, drawings and a schedule of furnishings and accessories that will be needed. Occupied consultation cost two hundred and fifty dollars (250.00) we will discuss paint colors removal of furnishings, decluttering and a plan of action which will be given to the home owner. We will provide a schedule of new furnishings and/or accessories that we will be bringing in to the home. Our proposals are general written and sent within 24-48 hours from the meeting date.

# Spring Real Estate Market

We do not provide photographs of the furnishings as it is up to the discretion of the designer of what furnishings would best fit the space and marketing needs.

I found this article on Fixr that I thought would be helpful for those of you that are thinking of staging your home for the upcoming Spring 2017 Real Estate Market. <https://www.fixr.com/costs/home-staging>

As we approach the golden months, where homeowner's want/need to get their homes on the market. So, for first **[time home sellers](#)**, whether you have been in your home for 3 years or 30 years... there are a lot of questions. What do I need to do to prepare my home? Do I need a **home stager**? How much does it **cost**? How do I find a **realtor** with great marketing skills? I will be addressing these questions and other questions pertaining to selling your home. As one of the [top 10 2017 winner of Real Estate Staging Association Occupied Home Staging](#) we know a little bit about getting your home ready for market.

# Preparing Your Home



The very first thing that you need to do is to de-personalize yourself from your home and look at it as a product that needs to be sold. What do you have to do to sell this product? Set a time line and schedule to complete all of the items that I have listed below.

1. First thing is to go through the closets, garage basement and attic and declutter. Donate, Sell, Dump. The more you get rid of the less you will need to pack and move.

2. Second is to go through your main living area of your home and weed through your books, knickknacks, and person items. If you have a lot of items that you want to bring with you to your new location - rent a storage unit off site.

# Preparing Your Home

3. Make minor repairs such as caulking around the bath tub(s) and showers. Fix leaky faucets and/or replace them for a sleeker new design. Fix all holes and cracks in walls. A fresh coat of paint is highly recommended in all cases, but especially if you have darker color walls.

4. CLEAN CLEAN CLEAN !!! Bleach grout, power spray the outside of your house and walk ways, wash all windows inside and out. Clean and wax floors, don't forget the moldings in your home. Replace all worn entry rugs with new ones. Have all your rugs steamed cleaned. Oh, and if you have drip pans in on your stove, replace them with new ones. Change all burned out light bulbs.

5. You want to make sure that all of your safety equipment is in working order and you have fire extinguishers.



In Home Staging the object is to stay away from bright bold colors. The use of neutral tones is much more appealing to the buyers eye; which is very different than in a design project as seen above. Below is an example of a very neutral color palate. I am also including some of our color selections all from Benjamin Moore.



# Preparing Your Home



# How a home stager can help

- **Neutrals - Beige**

- Manchester Tan HC81
- Carrington Beige HC93
- Grant Beige HC83
- Hazy Skies OC48

- **Neutrals - Gray**

- Stonington Grey HC170
- Seattle Mist 1535
- Gray Owl OC52

- **Colors**

- Paris Rain 1501
- Gray Cashmere 2138-60
- Dunmore Cream HC29
- Gray Wisp 1570

Why is staging a home so important? Staging is a production, and I become the director. The house is being staged to look like a model home: cozy, comfortable, colorful and inviting, with a personalized look to make it stand out from the rest of the other houses on the market. Our staged homes sell fast and for top dollar. Staging goes beyond repainting and cleaning; staging a house takes it to the next level by making it look bigger, brighter, cleaner, and accentuating the positive aspects of the property. It's all about creating an inviting space to inspire buyers. We create an ambiance that portrays a life style that a buyer really likes...They immediately imagine themselves relaxing in the yard, cooking in the kitchen and entertaining their family and friends. I want the prospective buyers to leave with a positive impression created by properly placed furniture, color-coordinated accessories, beautiful rich linens and table settings — everything evoking a cozy, inviting feeling which makes a lasting impression.

# How a Home Stager can help

As you can know now, with a click of a button everyone can see your home and what it looks like compared to others. They can see if it is neat, clean and updated, and also if it is cluttered and needs TLC. So what can a home stager do for you the home owner. Staging makes you money, it creates a strong marketing image. Stagers work in both occupied and vacant situations. The first step with staging starts with a consultation. These consultations can range anywhere from 150.00 - 300.00 per hour, usually with a two hour minimum. After the consultation the stager gives you all of the suggestion on what to do to improve your home or they can do it all for you. Some stagers have their own furniture along with accessories. Other stagers use furniture rental companies for their projects and rent you their own accessories. Furniture rental is usually for a three month period of time and than can be rented one month at a time. Hiring a stager actually frees up your realtor to market your home and negotiate the offers that come in...they don't have to worry about getting your home presentable for the market. The cost of staging varies for region to region. You can get a ball park figure on the actual cost of staging by multiplying 1.25 per square foot of the rooms that you are going to stage. You have to add in delivery fees, furniture and accessory fees and floor plan fees. Home Stagers are visual marketers and they market your home according to the demographic that the realtor is focusing on. As recent as last week we were asked to view a vacant property for sale by owner. We went to the property prepared our proposal according to the homeowners recommendations; which was living area, dining area, master bedroom and all bathrooms. Our proposal included all the furnishings, rugs, accessories and art work staging and delivery. Our all in cost for the staging was \$3,635. He declined and decided to do it himself. Realtor's had advised him it was not necessary to do a full staging. [See link of home staged by homeowner](#). The home has four bedrooms but showing only dining seating for 4, entertainment seating for 3. It is not portraying the homes potential, instead it is showing the potential buyer that there is very little living space. So be mindful in taking recommendations from non professional home stagers.



# Home Staging

Showing a home vacant is like showing off your naked body - it better be perfect!



If you are going to hire a home stager make sure the staging company has insurance and is certified. A good reference to find a stager in your area is through RESA, Real Estate Staging Association. Lastly, USE A GOOD REAL ESTATE PHOTOGRAPHER.

In part 1 we went over what you needed to do as a home owner to prepare your property for the market including recommended paint colors. In part 2 we covered why it is important to hire a home stager for either vacant or occupied homes along with the costs. In part 3 we covered the vetting process for hiring a real estate agent. In part 4 I'd like to highlight one of our most recent project and what goes into the process. Day 1 meet with agent to view the condo in Highlands NJ . Take some measurements and discuss the demographic of marketing along with furniture placements and how many rooms to stage.



# HOME STAGING

Day 2 proposal is sent to realtor of costs for furniture rental and accessories along with how many hours is needed to stage and de-stage along with delivery and pick up of furniture. Day 3 proposal agreed upon, contract submitted and payment received. Day 4 pull inventory and furniture that will be used in the staging Day 5 Staging Day



# Home Staging

Adding the furniture allows the future home owner the ability to visualize themselves sitting and relaxing in this space.





# Home Staging



With adding a bed and night stands along with seating the potential buyer can easily see how they can utilize the space.

# Home Staging

There was a little nook on the bottom floor. We added a small office, there is plenty of storage for files etc . under the stairs



# Home Staging



January 31, 2017 we staged this condo in the Highlands, March 6th offer has been accepted with an April 1st closing date. Unique Realtor of Exit Realty East Coast by the name of Keri Bryceland. She totally gets the benefits of Staging.



# FINDING A REALTOR





# FINDING A REALTOR

Okay, now that you have cleaned, prepped and had your home staged. You have had a appraisal from an independent appraiser so you know what your home is worth and you have checked out the comparable in your neighborhood. Now its time to put the for sale sign in front of the house. What do you look for in a Real Estate Agent? I have bought 7 and sold 6 homes and have lots of stories about various agents. You want an agent that dresses properly, call me old fashion but it tell me a lot about their dedication to their business. You are hiring them, they should respect you and what you want done. Hire a professional photographer, gosh I can not tell you how important that is. Open Houses insist on it! Contact us for our picks of realtors <http://harmonizehomes.com/contact>. Ask the real estate person that you are interviewing for a list of their clients that you can call to check on their references. Ask them what their listing price was and what their selling price was. Another good question to ask is how long their listings are on the market. Check with your state's regulatory body to find out if a prospective agent is licensed and if there have been any disciplinary actions or complaints. The information may be posted online. Pick a winner Peer given awards such as the Realtor of the Year Award. Agents are best at judging their peers. Select an agent with the right credentials Doctors have specialties, and so do real estate agents. Even generalists will get additional training in some areas. So, the alphabet soup after an agent's name can be an indication that the person has taken additional classes in a certain category of real estate sales. Here's what some of the designations mean: CRS (Certified Residential Specialist): Completed additional training in handling residential real estate. ABR (Accredited Buyer's Representative): Completed additional education in representing buyers in transactions. SRES (Seniors Real Estate Specialist): Completed training aimed at helping buyers and sellers in the 50-plus age range

# HARMONIZING HOMES

Research how long the agent has been in business. Ultimately, what you're looking for is someone who is actively engaged in a particular area and price range. You'll want an agent to demonstrate knowledge of the area and homes in your range and show what kind of market presence they have. Look at their current listings. Check out an agent's listings online. Make sure that their listings are using professional photographers. You don't want agents using their cell phones or iPads which happen to me at one of my homes. Places to look include the agency's own website and sites such as Realtor.com, which offer a searchable online database of properties in the Multiple Listing Service. Most buyers start their search on the internet, and you want an agent who uses that tool effectively. One important key is what their own website looks like and their agencies. Look at how closely the agent's listings mirror the property you want to buy or sell. Are they in the same area? Is the price range similar? And does the agent have enough listings to indicate a healthy business but not so many that you'd just be a number? Ask about other houses for sale nearby. A good agent should know about other area properties that are available off the top of his head. Mention a house in your area that's sold recently or is for sale. If the agent knows the property and can give you a few details, that means he or she really knows your area, he says. You want someone like that, who's on top of the market. References: National Association of Realtors How to vet a Real Estate Agent Harmonizing Homes for our realtor picks

# New Jersey

Harmonizing Homes makes top 10 in the United States



**RESA 2017**  
HOME STAGING INDUSTRY AWARDS™  
TOP 10 HOME STAGER OF THE YEAR - OCCUPIED, USA



**RESA 2017**  
HOME STAGING INDUSTRY AWARDS™  
TOP 10 REDESIGNER OF THE YEAR

# Harmonizing Homes

H A R M O N I Z I N G

*Homes*

INTERIOR DESIGN AND HOME STAGING

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