

Bringing you news from the world of New Zealand real estate.

Staging your home, yourself

It's time to sell your home, and you've decided to stage the place yourself for potential buyers. That's an excellent choice – not only does staging tend to facilitate sales, but it can increase the amount of money you get for your property. In fact, some professional stagers estimate that their services boost their clients' bottom line by up to 10%.



You can try your hand at staging to reap the same financial benefits when selling your home. To make the process a bit easier, here are seven areas to focus on when sprucing up your space:

1. The Living Room

People coming to view your home want to know that they

can live comfortably in the living room. If the area is empty, it's hard for them to visualise their own furniture fitting within the room's parameters. On the other hand, a cluttered room will feel cramped and tiny, which is not what anyone wants while relaxing in the den.

So, focus on emptying the excess – everything from

overloaded bookshelves to coffee tables covered in magazines. You can leave a few knickknacks behind to make the living room look, well, lived-in. Just be sure that the final product looks like an intimate, comfortable conversation space. Use just enough to show the space's potential without overdoing it.

2. Kitchen

According to both buyers and sellers, the second most important space to stage is the kitchen. It might be an odd choice, because it doesn't house nearly as much furniture as other rooms. But the kitchen is a huge selling point in your home, and it should be showcased as the best version of itself.

So, once again, remove any clutter from your countertops. Instead, showcase up to three small appliances on your countertops. You can keep an accessory or two alongside these items, too – for example,

if you have a coffee machine, a canister of coffee can sit next to it. Potential buyers will open cabinets to see how much space there is, so don't stuff them with the countertop clutter. Instead, sort through it and toss what you don't need, or pack it up and place it elsewhere during showings.

3. Master Bedroom

For the next owner of your home, the master bedroom will become their retreat. Therefore, you don't want the space to look too personalised to you. You probably painted the area or chose a duvet cover that you love. But if these items are brightly coloured or boldly printed, other buyers won't be able to picture themselves living there.

So, replace any bright colours with a look that's more neutral. Re-paint the walls and replace the linens if necessary. Once again, be sure to clear any clutter away - this is especially true if you have extra-large furniture that makes your master feel smaller than it is — keep the basics only, and the bedroom will appear spacious.

4. Bathrooms

Another huge selling point for your home — the bathrooms. Whether you have one or ten, each one should be staged with care to show them off as luxurious retreats, which is what buyers are looking for. Once again, you'll start by removing clutter from

countertops and organising your bathroom bottles so that storage seems sufficient. Then, you could make a few swaps to make the space appear swanky. New towels and updated cabinet hardware won't break the bank, but they'll make a huge difference in the eyes of potential buyers.

5. Dining Room

An empty dining room will look dark and unwelcoming. On the other hand, a simply staged space will show it off as a comfortable place for friends and family to gather. Start by ensuring you have the right-sized dining table — something too big will make the space look extra-small. But you don't want the room's dimensions to dwarf your table either, so add a leaf or pop a new tabletop over your piece's base to make it proportional.

Finish the project by either setting the table or placing a centrepiece on it. No matter what you do, make sure the final look is inviting. Otherwise, potential buyers won't be able to envision themselves enjoying meals within your dining room.

6. Additional Bedrooms

The master bedroom should get the most attention, but the rest of your bedrooms will need attention pre-sale. Start in the closets to reorganise clothes and remove any clutter — every storage place should appear to have ample space. Then, you'll

want to neutralise the decor again. And, if you're using extra bedrooms as catch-all rooms without an intended purpose, give them one while staging. For example, put a desk in one guest room, so it shows as an office, or rebuild your child's crib to present a smaller space as a nursery.

7. Exterior Spaces

Finally, don't forget your home's outdoor spaces — the first that potential buyers will see is the front of your property, after all. An easy way to figure out how to improve your kerb appeal is to park your car where realtors will. Get out of the vehicle and scrutinise the appearance of your place.

From there, you'll be able to pinpoint what needs to be done. For many buyers, a power wash is in order to make the home's facade, the driveway or both appear to be sparkling. Weeding garden beds and adding some greens could further beautify your abode. There are so many ways to improve your property's kerb appeal — choose a few and revolutionise the look of your home from the outside in.

No matter how you choose to stage your place, the effort is always worth it. So, take the time to de-clutter and lightly decorate, and you'll see just how many rewards — and how much of a profit — you can reap from the process.

Follow the **Whale Tales...** Wherever you are

Whether you're in Invercargill, Westport, Whangarei or Taranaki, you and your whanau can take part in Whale Tales – an interactive trail of decorated whale tails based in Auckland but able to be enjoyed across the country.



As presenter of the World Wildlife Fund event, Harcourts is proud to showcase the 80 one-of-a-kind 'Big Broo' whale tail sculptures dotted around Auckland until the end of April. Designed by a vast array of known and up-and-coming Kiwi artists, the tails have caused a great deal of excitement – with Harcourts

providing many of the 80 smaller tails to primary schools to design and display around the region.

Whale Tales is expected to raise vital funds to help save New Zealand's Bryde's Whales and restore their home in the Hauraki Gulf by the auctioning off of the tails on May 2...with our award-winning auctioneers

providing the expertise and experience to attain the best prices possible.

Bryde's Whales only live in three places around the world, and number only 135 due to dwindling food supplies, overfishing of key predators of kina such as crayfish and snapper, and getting entangled or ingesting plastics and other rubbish.

You and your families can start your Whale Tales adventure by going to: trail.whaletales2022.org, where you can join in the fun and action from anywhere in the country.

We need as many New Zealanders as possible to take part in Whale Tales to make a lasting impact for our Bryde's Whales and their home in the Hauraki Gulf. You can also support this project by joining in free and educational events available at www.whaletales2022.org.

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