FREE FOR AGENTS

The Listing Prep Checklist

Twelve things to handle before the photographer arrives — so the photos come back right the first time, and nobody has to reshoot.

Joseph Barber · Real estate and interior photography, Southern California

Most reshoots are not a photography problem. They are a preparation problem — a car in the driveway, a trash can in frame, mismatched bulbs throwing three different colors across one room. All of it is fixable in the hour before I show up. Send this to your seller a few days ahead; it takes about forty-five minutes to work through.

Before I arrive

- ☐ 01 **Turn every light on — and match the bulbs**
  Mixed color temperatures are the single most common problem I walk into. One warm bulb beside two daylight bulbs turns a clean white kitchen orange on one side and blue on the other. If you replace nothing else, match the bulbs in the main rooms.

- ☐ 02 **Open every blind and shade to the same height**
  Uneven blinds read as sloppy in a wide shot even when nothing else is wrong. Fully open is usually best; if there is harsh direct sun, half-open on every window beats fully open on some.

- ☐ 03 **Clear the driveway and the street out front**
  Move every car, including the neighbors' if you can ask politely. The exterior shot is the first image a buyer sees, and a parked car dates the photo and clutters the frame.

- ☐ 04 **Hide the trash and recycling bins**
  Garage, side yard, anywhere out of sight from the street. This one costs nothing and shows up in every exterior frame.

- ☐ 05 **Clear the kitchen counters completely**
  Small appliances, knife blocks, dish soap, sponges, paper towels — all of it away. A bowl of fruit or a single cutting board is plenty. Empty counters photograph as spacious; cluttered counters photograph as small.

- ☐ 06 **Remove personal photos, mail, and paperwork**
  Buyers need to imagine themselves living there, and family photos interrupt that. It is also a privacy matter — these images end up on the public internet.

- ☐ 07 **Bathrooms: lids down, fresh matching towels, counters bare**
  Toothbrushes, razors, and half-used bottles away. Matching towels in a single color read as intentional; mismatched towels read as lived-in.

☐ 08 **Put away everything belonging to a pet**
Bowls, beds, crates, litter boxes, toys. A meaningful share of buyers have allergies or simply do not want a pet home, and the evidence costs you nothing to remove.

☐ 09 **Strip the refrigerator door**
Magnets, kids' artwork, schedules, photos. A bare fridge door looks like a showroom; a covered one looks like someone else's house.

☐ 10 **Yard: hoses coiled, toys away, mow the day before**
Mowing the morning of leaves clippings and mower tracks across the lawn in every exterior frame. The day before gives the grass time to settle.

☐ 11 **Pool: skim it, and switch the equipment off**
Still water reflects the house and the sky. Running jets break up that reflection completely. Turn the pump off about thirty minutes before I arrive and the surface goes glassy.

☐ 12 **Switch off every TV and monitor**
A black screen photographs cleanly. A screen mid-show dates the listing, competes for attention, and occasionally raises a licensing question nobody wants.

> **On timing.**
> If the home faces west, late afternoon gives you warm light across the front elevation. East-facing homes photograph best in the morning. I will usually suggest a window when we book — but if twilight exteriors matter to you, we plan the whole shoot around that one shot, because the window is roughly twenty minutes long.

> **On occupied homes.**
> Vacant is easier, but occupied is normal and entirely workable. The list above matters more, not less, when someone still lives there.

When you are ready to shoot

Photography, the twilight exterior set and the Google-approved 360° tour come in one package, delivered the next day. $0.45 per square foot, $950 minimum. Text me the address and I will send the exact quote within a few hours.

(949) 531-8405 · joseph@josephbphoto.com · josephbarberphotography.com/real-estate