

**Callebs Realty**  
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## **What is Home Staging?**

Home staging is not a new term, but for many homeowners and real estate agents the concept of professional home staging is shedding new light on how to promote a home in the real estate marketplace. In past years, homeowners were left to their own discretion as far as preparing for home showings. Though they could occasionally rely on an agent for instructions, more often than not real estate agents were just as perplexed at working out the details as the homeowner.

While agents are experts in the field of selling and closing, many are not design savvy. Agents usually know exactly what factors can help sell a home. It's just not always easy to get a home into selling condition in a timely manner without some sort of experienced assistance.

Professional home stagers are practiced in the art of preparing a home for resale. They work with the flow of a home, eliminate clutter, edit and arrange furniture, and even assist in enhancing curb-appeal. With the aid of a professional home stager, your house can make a notable first impression on potential homebuyers.

## **First Impressions**

As the real estate industry often stresses, the first impression is the key factor in selling your home. Typically, a potential buyer has made up their mind ten seconds after they step in the front door. They were already forming an opinion as they pulled into your driveway! That really doesn't leave too much room for fault.

To achieve the greatest possible outcome a home should always be presented at its best the first time around.

## **Finding a Professional**

You find and select a professional home stager much like you would find any other professional service. Ask around and get referrals. Check with your real estate agent. A number of larger real estate companies offer access to a listing

of professional home services in your area. These individuals and companies have often already been pre-screened by the real estate agencies or their agents.

### **How Much Does it Cost?**

When you contact a home stager, ask for an estimate. Most home staging businesses will be happy to give you a free estimate and it is usually a quick process. Keep in mind that this is only an estimate and estimates can be a bit off. However, unless something unforeseen takes place between the estimate and the actual job itself, an estimate should be fairly accurate.

Get several free estimates and make some calculations. Just like any service, pricing in the home staging industry can vary over a wide range. Some charge an hourly rate and some will charge you a set fee for the entire job. Be sure to ask how they determine their fee so that you can make an educated decision. Also, factor in the condition of your home, the average amount of time homes have been on the market in your area, and the asking price of your home.

Asking price can play a huge factor in what a homeowner should be willing to pay for staging services. Some professional home stagers bring in rented furnishings, driving the price up considerably. Some simply charge too much to make it pay off. A lot of home stagers seem to forget that their clients are planning on moving out of the house very soon. Most home sellers are not willing to invest a huge amount of cash in a house they are planning on leaving behind.

Find out up front what the stager is planning to bring in and at what cost. Though expert services do come at a price, the cost should balance with the expected benefit of a higher selling price. As a rule, the higher the asking price of the home, the more one can spend to have it professionally staged.