

The Science of Home Staging: Solid Proof that Will Help You Sell Faster

I may have a BA in English, but my passions lie in the sciences and math. After a few years in the business world, my love for logic evolved into a successful career as a computer scientist.

So when I first heard that staged homes sell faster than unstaged homes, it seemed to make sense, but I still wondered, How do they *really* know?

In my mind, there's only one way to prove that home staging works, and that's scientifically. To perform this experiment, we need to take two identical homes. One staged (or decorated to sell), one unstaged. Everything else being equal—the home's location, its price, and promotion to potential buyers—we need to see which one sells faster.

Since we know this isn't really possible, we can still devise a comparable strategy. Not one that we recommend, of course, but one that many home sellers unwittingly end up trying. Regardless, this technique will still prove if staged homes really do sell faster than unstaged homes. Here are the steps:

First, attempt to sell a home "as is" or unstaged. Then wait and see what happens. If there is no sale, stage the home. Clean, declutter, put away personal items, freshen up paint, add lighting, update bedding, remove old window treatments, put out fresh towels – anything that will show off your home's best features while making it feel both inviting and move-in ready. Once staged, wait an equal amount of time, or until the home finally sells. Finally, compare how long it takes to sell this home staged versus unstaged.

In 2006—before I even thought about starting my staging business—I unknowingly performed this exact experiment with a friend whose home was on the market 9 months, with no sale and no offers. The market was beginning to cool, but when the home was originally listed, the market was still hot—proving that even in the best markets, some homes won't sell "as is."

The total transformation cost less than 1% of the listing price. When staging was complete, the home proceeded to sell in only 2 months. It received multiple offers with the beginnings of a bidding war. At the time it was re-listed, there was a 7-month inventory of homes glutting the market. This means that under normal or average conditions, this home would not be expected to sell for at least 7 months. Home staging lowered that time to 2 months.

Even with my passion for decorating—and my addiction to home staging television shows—it wasn't until I saw firsthand the impact staging had that I was truly convinced that it worked. (This experience was also the catalyst that launched my home staging business.)



The *Real Estate Staging Association* (RESA) has used a similar approach—but on a much larger scale—to prove that home staging works. Each year RESA compiles a report based on feedback submitted by hundreds of home stagers around the United States. Here's what they found in 2020:

"Buyers' agents recognize that professionally staged listings are "move-in" ready and are more inclined to show staged properties."

Part of home staging is making sure that your home looks irresistible. Potential buyers want to see a house that they can move into and be comfortable in right away.

"With an average investment of 1%, approximately 75% of sellers saw a Return on Investment (ROI) of 5-15% over asking price."

Just like my friend's home all those years ago, it doesn't take a large investment to reveal the value in your home. Home staging will help you turn your home into a buyer's first choice.

"Staged homes sell faster, averaging just 23 days on the market."

Incredible results! In under a month, the process of home staging can pay off in big ways. Home selling (and moving!) is stressful enough. Home staging will give you an advantage and you'll be less stressed during the process knowing that your home will stand out in buyer's minds.

Try this experiment. Decorate your home to appeal to prospective home buyers, combine that with a great agent and the right price. Then sit back and see how quickly it sells. What have you got to lose?



Susan Atwell, home staging expert and President of *AtWell Staged Home*, is known for her ability to showcase the beauty and character of any for sale home so that it sells high and sells fast.

Let Susan show you how quick, economical, and fun it can be to stage your home beautifully using what you already have.

Ready to sell? Call now for a free phone consultation. Still thinking about it? Sign up for free home staging tips, tools, and transformations at www.StageEveryListing.com

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