

# Home Staging for Real Homes Like Yours

How do you break the home staging “mold” and mix it up so that your staged home doesn’t look like everybody else’s staged home?

The best and easiest way is to use what you already have. What could be more unique than a home, curated for years by caring home owners, thoughtfully reimaged by a professional home stager?

Don’t get me wrong. I love beautiful staging, but much of it can bore me to tears. Specifically, staging in which all of the owners’ personal possessions and furniture are removed and too often replaced with trendy, unoriginal, sterile stylings. And all this is usually thrown together quickly, with little or no consideration for the family who may have to live there while the home is on the market.

Are these staged homes all starting to look the same to you too? Same old, same old, boring home staging, rinse and repeat.

What if you’re not interested in spending thousands of dollars on décor when you already have a fully furnished home?

What if you have higher priorities like fixing an ailing septic system, repairing a roof, or taking that oil tank out of the ground? What if the sale of your home depends on these fixes?

Where, then, do you invest your staging dollars, and how do you reap the benefits of home staging without breaking the bank?

My advice is consistently the same. Focus on cleaning, repairing the structural elements of the property, painting where needed, and finishing it all up by creatively using the existing furnishings, lighting, art, and accessories to show off the home’s best features.



This less glamorous—yet extremely economical and practical approach to staging—is called “owner-occupied,” or simply “occupied,” home staging.

Originating in the early 1970s, occupied home staging is the foundation for all home staging, and yet it’s still relatively unknown, rarely represented in the media, and mainly misunderstood even within the real estate industry.

For many home sellers and Realtors alike, the predominant belief is that staging is too expensive, will take too long, and is only required in certain situations. What most don’t know is that staging is for all homes, at all price points, and every home can be visually marketed to show its best at little to no expense. So don’t just stick a For Sale sign on your lawn, cross your fingers, and hope for the best. That’s not a market strategy, but home staging is!

Fortunately, most home stagers—particularly those who focus on staging owner-occupied homes—prefer to work with what you already have. This way, your home remains uniquely “yours,” you save a lot of money, and your home immediately appeals to potential buyers.

Many of these occupied home staging specialists will also work with you to stay organized and be ready for showings at a moment’s notice because you never want to turn down a showing. It’s not the number of showings that’s important, it’s getting that one right buyer.

If you think that your home is the exception to the rule and can’t be staged using what you already have, you’re in luck. Occupied home staging specialists thrive on these perceived challenges and limitations.

Such as the need to stage quickly, maybe in as little as a day or a few hours, to make a seller’s deadline...

Having just enough of a budget for repairs and touch-ups but not enough for a complete paint job...

Needing to use only what is in the home with the exception of some creative borrowing from family, friends, agents, and online or in-person swap meets...

Or keeping the home livable throughout the sales process.

Home stagers who specialize in owner-occupied properties meet their home sellers “where they are.” They see the possibilities and use their creativity to turn furnished homes into modern creations that can compete with any other comparable home on the market.

Using what you already have will minimize your investment in décor, maximize your investment in what is staying with the home, and keep your home from looking and feeling like every other staged home on the market.



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](http://www.StageEveryListing.com)

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