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## How to Prepare Your Home for a Virtual Tour

With more buyers shopping for homes on the Web, photos and virtual tours are a must. There are many things you can do make your home shine on camera.

1. Understand the camera's perspective. The camera's eye is very different from the human eye. It magnifies clutter and poor furniture arrangement. To make a home shine in a virtual tour or video presentation, cater to the lens.
2. Make the home "Q-tip clean." Because the camera magnifies grime, each room must be spotless. Don't forget floor coverings and walls; a discolored spot on the rug might be overlooked by prospects during a regular home showing, but that stain becomes a focal point for online viewers.
3. Pack up the clutter. But leave three items of varying heights on each surface. For example, on an end table you can place a lamp (high), a small plant (medium), and a book (low).
4. Snap pictures. This will give you an idea of what the home will look like on camera. Closely examine the photos and list changes that would improve each room's appearance: opening blinds to let in natural light, removing magnets from the refrigerator, or taking down distracting art.
5. Pare down furniture. Identify one or two pieces of furniture that can be removed from each room to make the space appear larger.
6. Rearrange. Spotlight the flow of a space by creating a focal point on the furthest wall from the doorway and arranging the other pieces of furniture to make a triangle shape. The focal point may be a bed in a bedroom or a china cabinet in a dining room.
7. Reaccessorize. Include a healthy plant in every room; the camera loves green. Energize bland decor by placing a bright vase on a mantle or draping an afghan over a couch.
8. Keep the home in shape. You want buyers who liked what they saw online to encounter the same home in person.