

# Put it in Neutral: Holiday Staging Tips to Help your Home Sell

Conventional wisdom used to say that listing a home during the holiday season was a sure-fire way to have it sit on the market. Waiting for spring was the general “best practice” in real estate. But in today’s extremely hot market, waiting for the weather to heat up is a thing of the past. In Minnesota, the average price of a home and closed sales have both increased — outpacing 2015 nearly all year long — and there are no signs of it slowing down.

Demand continues to exceed supply in 2016. Even in a time of year when traditionally home sales slow, sales of existing homes in the state are up 4.2 percent year-to-date and the average sale price during that period was 6.1 percent higher. With mortgage rates low and housing demand still high, don’t let the holiday season stop you from listing your home and taking advantage of the current housing climate.

Before you haul out the holly and deck the halls, consult with your local real estate agent who can best help you stage your home during the holiday season to attract more buyers and get the optimal price for your home. Here are a few tips for sellers from RE/MAX real estate professionals that will help put you in the selling spirit.

**Less is better.** A home that is clean, decluttered and neutral inside and out will attract the most buyers. Sellers should keep most of their decorations in storage, particularly if they are personal or religious. Real estate professionals advise that sellers decorate their home for the holiday season with minimal, winter themed trimmings.

**Make it cozy.** Get buyers to stay as long as possible in your home by turning up the heat, playing soft music and offering a holiday treat. As a seller, you want potential buyers to imagine themselves living in the home. Buyers who feel cozy and comfortable in your home, especially during the holidays, are more likely to make an offer.

**Accentuate the details.** Using subtle lighting and holiday décor is a great way to highlight a home’s architectural details. Mistletoe in an archway, a few ornaments on the mantel and white lights on a pine tree outside all are ways to highlight the best features of a home.

**Appeal from the curb.** Before a potential buyer even steps foot into your home, they’ll form an opinion of the house from the outside. Ensure your exterior is appealing by clearing sidewalks when it snows and using simple string lights or wreaths on the door. These basic adornments will appeal to a buyer from the curb. But remember, once the holidays are over — take the décor down and focus on keeping the yard and sidewalks clean and clutter free.



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**The median dollar value to stage a home is \$675 for each home.**

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