



# Lights, Camera, Action, Sell: Secrets to Successful Home Staging

You only get one chance to make a great first impression



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Did you know that staged homes usually sell in half the normal time and closer to full price? (USA Today - October 2006) And that according to home industry experts, within a few seconds after entering a house, potential homebuyers make an emotional decision whether or not to buy?

As a designer, that makes sense to me especially since you only get one chance to make a great first impression. So where do you start? Besides a thorough cleaning, basic repairs and removing clutter (usually 50%) I recommend focusing on five target areas to make a home more appealing to buyers.

## 1. Curb Appeal/Front Entrance

The majority of buyers won't leave their car if the house lacks curb appeal. Stand outside and take an objective look at the home. Is the yard well manicured and the entrance inviting? If not, why not add a colorful pot of flowers by the front door, a welcoming doormat and an appealing door decoration making sure the view of the door isn't blocked by trees or shrubs.

## 2. Inside Foyer

Create a welcoming ambiance similar to what you would experience in a top restaurant. Begin by adding an attractive entry rug and the best furnishings possible to decorate this area, making sure the light fixture, walls and floors are updated and neutral.



## 3. Living/Dining Room

Arrange the rooms to emphasize the focal point(s), adding consistent pops of color with accessories such as pillows or throws to draw your eye through the rooms and create interest, while removing personal items that keep buyers from visualizing living here.

## 4. Kitchen

Clear the countertops to create maximum work space (except for a couple of large accessories) and clean your appliances to give the kitchen a bright sparkling appearance. Then as a final touch, place a little vanilla extract on your light bulbs to give the sense that something just came out of the oven.



## 5. Master

Set the stage for an inviting retreat that includes a seating area, organized closets and clutter free floors. Create a bed fit that's for a king, overflowing with decorative pillows and quality bedding. Then for the bath, think spa, adding thick thirsty towels and other items that create the mood.

And remember, even if you're not selling a home and just want to make your home more appealing, staging is a great look. Its lights, camera, action, Hollywood style.

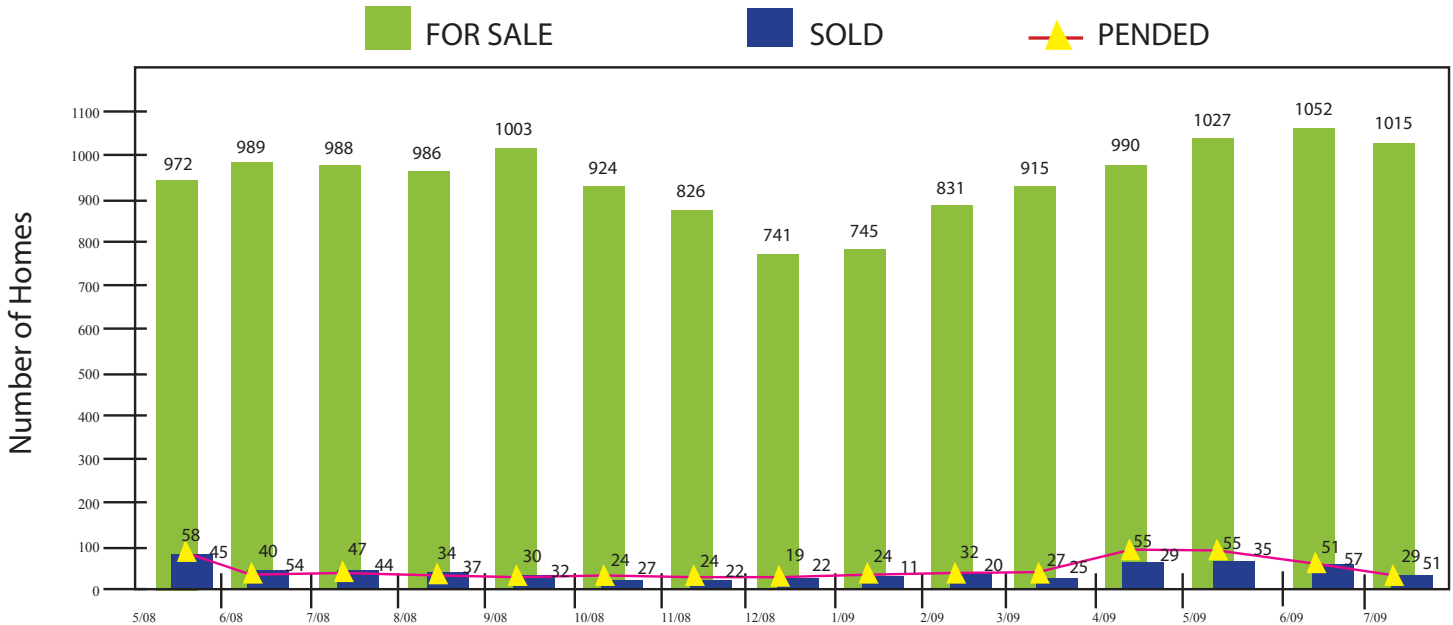


For more staging resources, go to [www.karenmills.net](http://www.karenmills.net) and click on Home Staging.

Article written by top home stager Karen Mills. Besides staging, Mills is also an interior designer, the host of Living Large on News Radio 980 KMBZ, a nationally published writer and speaker who's design firm was nominated for Small Business of the Year in 2009, 2008 and 2007.

# Market Facts and Trends for Listings Over \$500

Published Aug 2009\*\* Location: All Heartland MLS areas combined (101-450) Number of Homes for Sale vs. Sold vs. Pending (May 2008 - July 2009) Single Family - Resale/Existing copyright of Trendgraphix, Inc.



For Sale	1052	1015	-3.5%	988	1015	2.7%	972	1015	4.4%						
Sold	57	5	-10.5%	44	51	1539%	45	51	13.3%						
Pended	51	29	43.1%	47	29	-38.3%	58	29	-50%						
Date	5/08	6/08	7/08	8/08	9/08	10/08	11/08	12/08	1/09	2/09	3/09	4/09	5/09	6/09	7/09
For Sale	972	989	988	986	1003	924	826	741	745	831	915	990	1027	1052	1015
New Listing	219	160	173	158	155	125	97	62	155	164	188	190	169	200	144
Sold	45	54	44	37	32	27	22	22	11	20	25	29	35	57	51
Pended	58	40	47	34	30	24	24	19	24	32	27	55	55	51	29
Mon of Inv. on Sold	21.6	18.3	22.5	26.6	31.3	34.2	37.5	33.7	67.7	41.6	36.6	34.1	29.3	18.5	19.9
Mon of Inv. on Pended	16.8	24.7	21	29	33.4	38.5	34.4	39	31	26	33.9	18	18.7	20.6	35
Absorption Rt. Sold	4.6	5.5	4.5	3.8	3.2	2.9	2.7	3	1.5	2.4	2.7	2.9	3.4	5.4	5
Absorption Rt. Pended	6	4	4.8	3.4	3	2.6	2.9	2.6	3.2	3.9	3	5.6	5.4	4.8	2.9
Avg. Act Price	882	878	872	890	890	909	916	926	922	917	911	906	905	919	924
Avg. Sld Price	728	840	741	819	633	716	789	715	581	648	756	845	776	731	718
Sold/List Diff. %	93	92	93	93	95	93	89	90	96	94	94	88	92	91	93
Days on Market	83	111	119	100	97	101	159	109	40	144	105	115	118	123	119
Sold/Orig LP Diff. %	90	89	89	88	92	89	83	86	93	87	90	81	88	85	87
Avg CDOM		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Median Price	675	636	639	665	562	685	624	606	560	568	635	650	728	650	630

\*\*All reports are published Aug. 2009, based on data available at the end of July 2009. All reports presented are based on data supplied by the Heartland MLS. Heartland MLS does not guarantee or is not in anyway responsible for its accuracy. Data maintained by the Heartland MLS may not reflect all real estate activities in the market. Information deemed reliable but not guaranteed.

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Wed, Sept 9, 2009 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

**Remarkable Prospecting**  
Thu, Sept 10, 2009 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

**Top 10 Outlook Tips**  
Fri, Sept 11, 2009 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

**The Power of ReeceAndNichols.com, Part 1**  
Mon, Sept 14, 2009 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

**Customizing Your Agent Website 101**  
Wed, Sept 16, 2009 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

**Remarkable Selling**  
Thu, Sept 17, 2009 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM

**Remarkable Buying**  
Fri, Sept 18, 2009 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

**Using Facts & Trends to Grow Your Business**  
Mon, Sept 21, 2009 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

**Customizing Your Agent Website 201**  
Wed, Sept 23, 2009 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

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