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Beyond the intricacies of [mortgage](#) applications and real estate jargon, the sheer number of online listings can be overwhelming to buyers. There are literally *millions* of real estate listings online.

So just how do you make your property stand out to draw in those potential buyers?

“Think of it like online dating,” says Melanie Siben, a certified negotiation expert and licensed [real estate agent](#) with Rutenberg, a real estate brokerage in [New York City](#). “You never get a second chance to make a first impression, so everything from your photos to your wording has to be on point from the get-go.”

Follow these tips from real estate experts on how to make your online listing a standout.

1. Hire a pro (or two!)

[Real estate agents](#) exist for a reason: they know best how to market your property. So hire one!

The same goes for photographers. Just because your iPad has a camera doesn't mean it's a great idea to rely on it for DIY home listing photos.

Instead, hire a professional photographer, says Siben. “Online listings are all about the photos. Don't compromise on quality — hire a photographer who specializes in shooting interiors.” (Not, for example, [pet](#) portraits.)

2. Stage it

[Empty rooms are not an online listing's friend](#). “Photos of vacant rooms are dull,” says Siben. “Buyers want to see the possibilities with a space.”

To that end, hire a stylist or [professional stager](#). “A stager will make adjustments and recommendations that are typically simple yet extremely helpful,” says Justin Udy, a real estate agent with Century 21 Everest Realty Group in [Midvale, UT](#). “Having a

professional look at the home through a different lens allows you to make small adjustments with big impact.”

3. Create a shot list

It’s extremely important to meet with the photographer at the property beforehand to create a shot list. “Go over how each room will be photographed and what time of day it will be shot,” says Siben.

Adds Udy: “Be sure to provide a special-features list to your photographer. He or she will likely have a creative eye but will never know all the unique and amazing features a home has to offer that deserve to be photographed or highlighted unless you tell him or her.”

4. Be honest

Technology is a wonderful thing, especially when it comes to photos. “Wide-angle lenses can make a small room appear spacious,” says Siben, who adds that while that’s a great thing to attract buyers, it can also come across as disingenuous.

“I always have a disclosure in my listings that, if applicable, a wide-angle lens was used to make rooms appear larger,” she says. “Buyers appreciate that honesty, and it adds to the credibility of the listing, from the photos to the description itself.”

5. Keep it simple (and clean)

Clutter equals anxiety. And no buyer wants to feel anxious while scanning through photos of your home for sale.

“Simplicity sells,” says Siben. “Photos can only be touched up so much, so remove the personal photos, the knickknacks, and the clutter. Makes the space look more polished, inviting, and clean, so that buyers can envision *their* things in your home.”

6. Go 3-D

If pictures are worth a thousand words, then videos and 3-D floor plans are worth a million.

“I’ve hired architects to create 3-D floor plans and renderings to give buyers a better idea of what a home feels like to walk through,” says Siben.

Videos provide the same effect, though Siben offers this caveat: hire a professional videographer to shoot the listing video. DIY iPhone videos of your home? Not recommended for your online listing.

7. Take a sunset stroll

In other words, have the photos taken at dusk. “These twilight photos as the sun goes down with all lights on are completely different than the majority of homes you see online taken at midday where the sun is the brightest and colors are muted,” says Udy. “A professional twilight photo tour will truly showcase a property and differentiate your home online.”

8. Know that there’s no such thing as too many photos

Unlike other online real estate listing services, [Trulia](#) allows you to upload as many images as you want. Take advantage of this perk and upload various angles of each room in the home. “Take a minimum of 24 photos — at least 36 is recommended, 50 or more for luxury homes,” advises Udy.

9. Know the keywords

“In a sea of properties on the market, you must make it easy for people to find your home through key phrases and words,” explains Udy. “Take the time to create verbiage, details, and information that give a detailed explanation of the home. Be sure to highlight its amenities, features, and proximity to surrounding areas.”

Siben agrees: “Your listing’s title and the text must be compelling to buyers and brokers. Use picture words that trigger the imagination of the buyer.”

Finally, if you’re not a strong writer, hire someone who is to write the description of the property.