



STAGING APPROACHES

The Pros and Cons behind Vacant vs. Occupied
Staging in St. Louis Homes





INTRODUCTION

One of the biggest decisions sellers face is whether to stage a vacant home or work with what they already have. Both approaches can be effective, but they serve different purposes. The right choice depends on how the home currently presents and how buyers will experience it.

What you will learn in this guide:

This guide will walk you through the benefits and challenges of vacant vs. occupied staging.

Why First Impressions Matter More Than Ever

Most buyers will:

- View your home online first
- Decide within seconds if they're interested
- Compare it to multiple listings immediately

Pro Tip:

- If your home doesn't stand out visually, it gets skipped—regardless of its actual value.



How Staging Impacts Buyer Preception

Buyers aren't just buying square footage—they're buying:

- A lifestyle
- A feeling of ease
- A move-in-ready experience

Staging helps communicate all of that instantly.



VACANT STAGING

CHALLENGES

- Feel Smaller Than They Are
- Lack of Warmth and Personality
- Make it Difficult to Judge Scale

BENEFITS

- Defines Rooms Purpose Clearly
- Enhances Listing Photos
- Creates Finished, High-End Feel
- Helps Buyers Emotionally Connect



How Staging Impacts Buyer Preception

- Luxury homes in neighborhoods like: Ladue, Frontenac, Town & Country, and Lake St. Louis
- Renovated or flipped properties
- Homes that have been sitting on the market



Vacant Staging Pro Tip

Focus on key rooms first:

- Living room
- Dining room
- Primary bedroom

You don't always need to stage everything.

OCCUPIED STAGING

CHALLENGES of Lived-In Homes

- Too much furniture or decor
- Personal style that doesn't appeal broadly
- Layouts that don't highlight space

BENEFITS

- Faster to implement
- Maintains livability while selling
- Enhances what already exists





Best Use Cases in St. Louis

- Well-maintained homes
- Homes with updated furnishings
- Sellers still living in the property

Occupied Staging Pro Tip

- Remove at least 25–50% of decor
- Simplify surfaces (less styling = more space)
- Use neutral tones where possible
- Prioritize lighting upgrades



How to Choose

Ask:

- Does the home feel complete or empty?
- Does the current furniture enhance or distract?
- What level of competition are you facing



Key Takeaway

Vacant staging creates something from nothing, where occupied staging refines what already exists. Both are tools available based on what works best for you.

