

Listing photo checklist

Light & Polish

For agents in the US, UK and Australia · Free from the Light & Polish team

Print this page and run through it before the shoot, during it, and before you upload. It covers the photos themselves and the rules that most often trip agents up. It is general guidance, not legal advice. Always follow your own MLS, portal and regulator rules.

Before the shoot

- ☐ Book a time when the sun is behind the camera for the front exterior
- ☐ Clear counters, sinks, fridge doors and bathroom surfaces
- ☐ Remove bins, hoses, cars and toys from the front
- ☐ Turn on every light; replace dead bulbs with matching colour
- ☐ Open blinds evenly; make the beds; close toilet lids
- ☐ Hide personal photos, mail and anything with names on it
- ☐ Get the seller's OK for the shoot and any planned edits

During the shoot

- ☐ Shoot at chest height with the camera level, so walls stay vertical
- ☐ Use a moderate wide angle; avoid extreme lenses that make rooms look bigger
- ☐ Take each room from at least two corners
- ☐ Bracket exposures for rooms with bright windows
- ☐ Get at least one photo showing a large part of the exterior
- ☐ Keep people, pets, reflections and yard signs out of frame
- ☐ Photograph the view honestly, including what's next door

Editing: usually fine

- ☐ Exposure, white balance and colour correction
- ☐ Straightening verticals and horizons
- ☐ Window pulls so the view isn't blown out
- ☐ Removing movable items (bins, cars, clutter)
- ☐ Sky replacement that keeps the season and light realistic

Editing: don't

- ☐ Remove or hide fixed features: power lines, pylons, masts, roads, neighbouring buildings
- ☐ Hide damage, damp, cracks or stains
- ☐ Change walls, floors, fixtures or the view in staged photos
- ☐ Add logos, text, watermarks or contact details to MLS photos
- ☐ Use photos you don't have the rights to (e.g. copied from Google)

Labelling and disclosure

- ☐ Label virtually staged photos "Virtually staged"
- ☐ Label other altered photos "Digitally altered/enhanced" where your MLS requires it (e.g. CRMLS from 1 Jan 2026), and upload the original too if required
- ☐ UK: caption wide-angle shots of small rooms, as Primary Authority advice suggests
- ☐ Australia: check your state or territory fair trading guidance and your portal's photo rules
- ☐ Keep the unedited originals on file

Before you upload

- ☐ Lead with the strongest exterior or main living space
- ☐ Order photos as a walk-through: outside, living, kitchen, bedrooms, bathrooms, garden
- ☐ Check your MLS or portal's size and count limits
- ☐ Check every photo on a phone screen
- ☐ Have the seller approve the final set and captions

Sources for the rules above: CRMLS Photographs and Media FAQs and 2026 rules changes (kb.crmls.org); Bright MLS Rules (branding on listing media); NAR Code of Ethics, Article 12; The Property Ombudsman Code of Practice for Residential Estate Agents, 7i; Primary Authority Advice WTS/PM/TPO/19 on property photographs (Warwickshire Trading Standards, TPO, Propertymark). Rules change and vary by MLS and portal, so check the current versions.

Want a second pair of eyes? The Light & Polish team edits listing photos (colour, sky, twilight, declutter) with a 24-hour turnaround, and you pay after delivery. Try 1 free sample edit: lightandpolish.com/listing-photos · hello@lightandpolish.com