



How Pets Can Help You Sell Your Home

Published March 15, 2016

| Realtor.com

It all started with Chompers the corgi, starring in a [video to sell a San Francisco home](#) in 2015. Then in Tiffany, a 5-year-old Shih Tzu mix whose owner, a real estate agent in Australia, started placing the [pooch in listing photos](#), resulting in "nearly double" the page views and a slew of sales.

Then the furry floodgates opened wide. Now there's even a website, [Pet Realty Network](#), devoted to helping animal lovers find pet-friendly real estate agents and property.

Not too long ago, pets were considered a serious hindrance to the home-selling process -- cuddly companions that should be hidden at all costs. So what caused the change of heart?

For one, the ever-growing number of animal lovers -- [56% of homes now have pets](#) -- may have helped turn the tide. But more than that, furry faces are just plain good advertising, touching on our emotions without getting too personal. The Internet proves this thousands of times a day when videos such as "Cat vs. Cucumber: Guess Who Wins" get a zillion views.

When used for real estate purposes a pet "solidifies the American dream: the kids, the dog, the whole package," explains **Sherron Lawrence** of Realty National.

So how do you leverage Quilty the canary dog to help you sell your place?

"It's all about showcasing the attractive things and putting away the unattractive," explains **Kyra Frankel** of [White Space Staging](#). If you're wondering where to draw that line as pet owner (news flash: not *everything* Olly the dachshund does is cute, endearing, or irresistible), here are some tips for every area of your home.

Entryway

One way to win over pet-loving home buyers as soon as they walk in the door is to show off that essential accoutrement you grab every day when you take your dog for a walk: the leash.

"Tastefully hint at a pet-friendly space by showing an attractive leash hung nicely," advises Frankel.

Key word: *attractive*. Don't put some ratty old thing that's been dragged through the mud on display. If you have a cotton, canvas, or fabric leash, toss it in the washing machine to give it new life, or pick up a new one that complements the decor. Fake it if you have to. There are many stylish ones out there these days, such as this [blue-and-black option](#) from See Scout Sleep.

Kitchen

Find a cute treats container to display on the counter, and think about upgrading your animal's standard water bowl with a sparkly new (and stylish) one.

"A fresh bowl of water paints the right picture," says Lawrence. This [one](#) from Docapet can play off the stainless-steel accents in your kitchen and fit right into the decor.

Living room

While showing off framed photos of family is considered a serious no-no, "it's OK to leave framed dog and cat photos," says **Louise Whittet** of [White Space Staging](#). "More and more listings are doing this, as well as shelter magazines and websites. It isn't as personal as a family photo, but it's successful in implying a space for all types."

Bedroom

"A faux sheepskin throw rug can be seen as a romantic element," explains Frankel, "or also a cozy spot for a pet to curl up." Alternatively, place a new, or at least nice and clean, dog bed at the foot of yours. While on the pricier side, these Mungo & Maud [pet beds](#) are so chic, we'd sleep on them.

"Dog or cat beds and baskets -- if they're clean and have a sensible place to be -- are great," says Frankel. "But stash the chew toys."

Backyard

"I've suggested that sellers repaint the doghouse with a fresh coat," says Lawrence. "It freshens it up quickly." Just remember to stick to light colors, as [darker shades absorb the sun and heat](#).

But the most important tip: Make sure the backyard is immaculate (read: no poop. None. Whatsoever. BTW, did we mention *No poop?*) before showing your property. You want your pet-friendly listing to be memorable for the *right* reasons.

And remember, the one mood killer to avoid at all costs is any kind of animal scent: Whether it's the whiff of cat litter or just an overall doggy smell, any odor or hair can [drive off a buyer](#) in an instant.

Lawrence lays it out simply: "No smell, no problem."