

Photography for Real Estate



How to Use Photography to Effectively Market Real Estate

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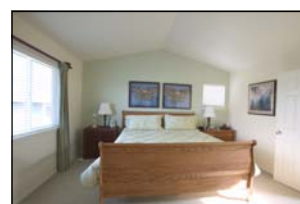
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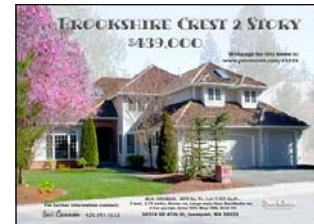
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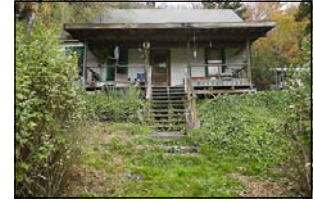
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Introduction



I've been a photographer since the early 1970's and when my wife became a real estate agent in the mid-1980's, I started taking pictures of her real estate listings. In 1999, I decided to work with my wife full-time and became even more involved doing photography for our listings. Since 2004, I've been writing a blog (www.photographyforrealestate.net) focusing on photography for real estate marketing. My blog gives me the opportunity to meet and discuss ideas with real estate agents and photographers who are interested in this area of photography.

Why Did I Write this Book?

When I started taking pictures for our listings, I quickly discovered that there are some unique problems associated with real estate photography, especially when it comes to getting good interior shots that sell a home. For example, I remember one upper-end home in the early days of my real estate shooting we sold where the home seller wanted a photograph that showed both her beautiful kitchen as well as the magnificent view of Lake Sammamish through the windows. Because I couldn't achieve this effect at this point in my photographic career, the client was quite disappointed.

After this experience, I realized that I needed to learn how to shoot better interior and exterior photos. I looked for books that would provide help and advice for shooting interiors

to improve my skills in this area. Unfortunately, all of the books I found were aimed at professional photographers with very high-end view cameras and expensive lighting setups! Since none of these photography books were of much help when it came to using the modest equipment that most agents and real estate photographers were likely to be using, I decided to write one!

Another factor that prompted me to write this book was the routinely bad photographs of homes for sale on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) and on real estate websites. Many real estate agents just don't understand how important it is to have great photos of their listings. I know that that with a little effort and information, their homes could be presented a lot better.

I really enjoy doing my Photography For Real Estate blog and this book is a way for me to share a distilled form of the information on the blog with others. (Actually, I started writing this book before I started the blog, but I've been having such fun doing the blog that it almost got in the way of finishing this book!) I hope you'll enjoy this book as much as I enjoyed compiling it!

Photography For Real Estate

Who is This Book Written for ?

This book is written for real estate agents, agents' assistants and photographers who handle photography for real estate agents. Originally, I intended this book for real estate agents since many agents aren't aware how important it is to have great photos for their listings and ads. If you are a real estate agent, I'd suggest you read the entire book, especially the chapters "Choosing a Camera for Real Estate Photography" and "On-site Shooting".

You'll find lots of good tips here on choosing the best camera for real estate photography and taking pictures that will put you ahead of your competition. If you are shooting digital and want to learn how to edit your pictures in a computer, I'd also recommend the chapters "Software for Real Estate Photography" and "Fixing Problems".

The other main audience for this book is the photographers who handle the photography for real estate agents, such as many of the readers of my blog, www.photographyforrealestate.net. If you are a photographer and you're familiar with cameras and photo-editing software, I'd suggest reading the chapters "Lighting", "On-site Shooting", and "Fixing Problems", as well as "Panoramas and Virtual Tours". These chapters will help you hone your photography skills when it comes to photographing interiors and handling the all-important exterior shot.

I know not everyone likes to read, so if you don't have time to read **ANYTHING** else in this book, **read the chapter "10 Essentials for Real Estate Photography"**! This chapter lists and explains 10 essential principles that you can use as a guide creating great real estate photos.

What do You Need to Know?

This book assumes that you know a little about photography and have an interest in taking photos for real estate marketing.

But before we jump in, let me answer some questions that commonly come up at this point:

- **What if you have a film camera?** While you don't need to use a digital camera to get the most from this book, it (really) helps. If you're using film, you can have your photo-finisher create a CD for you with the scanned pictures. Once your film has been scanned to a CD, you can use all the software and image adjustment tips in this book. However, film photographers should be aware that shooting digital substantially decreases the time between shooting photos and putting the home on the market and in many markets, same day turnaround for real estate photographs is now the norm. Therefore, I highly recommend using a digital camera for doing real estate photography. If you shot film you will find you just can't perform at the speed this industry requires.
- **What Lens Focal Length standard are you using?** The discussion of lens focal lengths in this book uses the standard convention of 35mm camera-equivalent focal lengths. Digital camera's focal lengths are usually quoted in 35mm equivalent focal lengths even though their actual focal lengths are smaller.

