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Airbnb Photo Prep Guide

Make Your Listing Look Incredible — Every Time

By Dave Koch, Luxury Airbnb Photographer

Why This Guide Matters

Most guests decide whether to book your property in just seconds—based entirely on your photos.

Better prep = better photos = more bookings and higher nightly rates.

This guide shows exactly what to do to make your space look irresistible before your photographer arrives.

1. Prepare Each Room with Intention

Declutter Hard

- Clear all surfaces — counters, shelves, nightstands, and dressers
- Hide cords, tissue boxes, garbage cans, chargers, remotes
- Remove family photos and anything overly personal
- If it distracts the eye, it goes

Clean Like a Pro

- Wipe all mirrors, windows, and shiny surfaces
- Sweep and mop floors, vacuum rugs, clean under beds
- Make all beds wrinkle-free with fluffed pillows and smooth linens

Set the Scene

- Replace burnt-out bulbs; match all light colors (no mixed temps)
- Open blinds (unless light is harsh), turn off ceiling fans
- Add thoughtful accents: fresh flowers, a fruit bowl, or folded towels

2. Room-by-Room Styling Tips

Living Room

- Style the coffee table (e.g., book + plant or tray setup)
- Align cushions and throws
- Turn off TV, hide remotes and visible wires

Kitchen

- Remove everything from countertops but 1–2 styled props
- Absolutely no paper towels or dish racks
- Clean stainless steel and hide trash cans, soaps, and sponges

Bedroom

- Beds should be magazine-perfect
- Clear nightstands—leave only 1 lamp or 1 styled item
- Hide fans, hampers, extra cords, or personal items

Bathroom

- Close toilet lids
- Remove products—leave 1–2 styled accents
- Neatly fold or hang towels with perfect symmetry

Outdoor Spaces

- Wipe furniture, straighten chairs
 - Light fire pits or lanterns if possible
 - Remove hoses, tools, clutter
 - Style patios like a magazine shoot
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✨ 3. Add Lifestyle Moments

Create Visual Texture

- Use layered blankets, accent pillows, and mixed materials (linen, wood, fur)
- Add pops of color with fruit, florals, or curated decor

Tell a Story

- Add a tray with coffee mugs, wine glasses, or a breakfast nook setup
- Style a reading chair with an open book and glasses
- Show aspirational moments: champagne flutes on the deck, a hammock with a throw

Match the Vibe

- Mountain cabin? Add cozy textures and rustic details
- Modern loft? Think clean lines and bold contrast
- Beach house? Keep it breezy, light, and relaxed

4. Final Walkthrough (One Hour Before the Shoot)

- Walk through like a guest seeing it for the first time
 - Better yet—have someone else walk through and give honest feedback
 - Turn off all TVs and fans
 - Open any doors that should be photographed
 - Hide anything that shouldn't be seen—closets or garages are fair game
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A Quick Word About Mindset

You might be looking at the examples in this guide—million-dollar homes with designer furniture and magazine-level finishes—and thinking, “*That’s out of my league.*”

But that’s the wrong way to look at it.

The first step to earning more per night is treating your rental like it’s worth more. That means presenting it *like* a premium property, even if it’s not a luxury estate (yet).

Professional photography is a great start—you’re already on the right path. Now let’s keep that momentum going.

Style it like a million-dollar listing.
Prep it with care.
Create a visual experience that says *this place is special*.

Because if you want to level up your income, bookings, and reviews—you have to believe your property deserves it.

And then?

Watch it rise to meet that expectation.

Bonus: What Photographers Need From You

- Let us know your priorities—what you want to show, highlight, or avoid
 - If showcasing amenities (espresso machine, tile backsplash, smart tech), tell us early
 - Want a lifestyle table setup or full dinner scene? We can provide props or coach you through it
 - Tell us about neighborhood features worth including (parks, cafés, nightlife)
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Let's Make Your Space Unforgettable

Your job: prepare with intention.

Our job: capture it beautifully.

Together, we'll create images that don't just show the space—

They *sell the experience*.

Helpful Resources

 YouTube Series: [<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLa2r3OSbuxKB5uslapq-axEGih4WgVCiE>]

 See Great Prep Examples: [<https://photoslc.com/luxury-airbnb-photography/>]

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