

THE VIRTUAL STAGING KIT

The photo check, the label rules, the pricing sheet and a three-photo test

Virtual staging means using editing software or AI to put furniture into photos of an empty room. Agents buy it by the photo. This kit is the workflow, the check that keeps your photos honest, the label rules and a pricing worksheet. It is educational, not legal advice. Rules differ by MLS and state, so check yours. No income is promised: many people who try this sell nothing, and results vary.

THE 5 STEPS

- Step 1: start with a real photo of an empty room (good light, straight angle, nothing in the way).
- Step 2: upload it to an AI staging tool and pick a style.
- Step 3: check the result at full size (page 2). Walls, floors and windows must stay exactly the same.
- Step 4: label it virtually staged the way your MLS requires, and keep the original (page 3).
- Step 5: sell it per photo, in packages (page 4).



BEFORE: real empty-room photo



AFTER: staged with AI

Demo. Photo: Curtis Adams on Pexels (free to use). Staged by me with AI in seconds. This is NOT an MLS-ready photo: the AI hid a light switch and erased a keypad, see the check on page 2.

WHY AGENTS STAGE

In the National Association of REALTORS 2025 Profile of Home Staging (a February 2025 survey of REALTORS), 83% of buyers' agents said staging a home made it easier for a buyer to visualize the property as a future home.

A PROMPT THAT HELPS (COPY IT)

Prompt

Virtually stage this empty room for a real estate listing photo. Add only furniture and decor: [LIST ITEMS]. Keep the room exactly as photographed: same camera angle, walls, wall color, windows, doors, ceiling, floor and lighting. Keep every wall fixture such as light switches, outlets, thermostats and keypads visible and unchanged. Do not add or remove any permanent fixture, do not change paint color, do not change the view outside. Furniture must have correct scale, perspective and shadows. No people, no text, no logos.

THE PHOTO CHECK (DO THIS BEFORE YOU DELIVER ANYTHING)

- Open the original and the staged photo at full size and flip between them.
- Walls, paint color, floors, ceilings, windows and the view outside must be identical.
- Permanent fixtures must still be there: light switches, outlets, thermostats, keypads, vents, smoke detectors, ceiling fans and lights, fireplaces, built-ins.
- Never hide or fix flaws: stains, holes, damaged floors, exposed wiring. Photos must present a true picture of the property.
- Furniture must look right: correct scale and perspective, shadows that match the light, nothing floating, melting or warped.
- No people, no words and no logos on the photo itself (some MLSs prohibit them: the label goes in the listing fields).
- If anything fails, change the prompt (name what must stay unchanged) and run it again.

MY TEST

What the AI got wrong

I staged a real empty living room from a free stock photo. At first glance it looked great. At full size I found the AI had hidden a triple light switch behind the new wall art and erased a keypad next to the doorway. Stellar MLS says permanent fixtures may not be attached, removed, altered or added to photos, so this photo would have to be fixed before it could be used.



BEFORE
switch plate + keypad



AFTER (AI)
switch hidden, keypad erased

THE PROOF TEST: 3 PHOTOS FOR A FRIENDLY AGENT

Photo	Tool	Problems found	Label done	Agent said

THE LABEL CHECKLIST (EDUCATIONAL, NOT LEGAL ADVICE)

FLORIDA

Stellar MLS, Article 04.04

Disclosure of virtually staged photos is required in the photo description field by adding the words "Virtually staged" and by checking the virtually staged field. The first words of the public remarks must read "One or more photo(s) was virtually staged." Photos must always present a "True Picture" of the property. Permanent fixtures of the interior or exterior may not be attached, removed, altered or added, and no words or people may appear on a property photograph.

CALIFORNIA

AB 723, effective January 1, 2026

Per the San Diego MLS summary, agents and brokers must clearly disclose when a marketing image has been digitally altered (virtual staging, adding or removing furniture or fixtures, changing colors, altering views or AI images of things that do not exist). The disclosure states that the image has been digitally altered and gives a link or QR code to the original photo. Ask your broker or a lawyer.

YOUR MLS

Look it up

Search your MLS rules for "virtual staging" or "altered photos". Many require a label, a field, a remark or all three. When in doubt, label it, say it plainly and keep the original photo.

ALWAYS DO THESE

- Give the agent both files, the original and the staged one, and tell them how your MLS wants it labelled.
- Put a plain label in the agent's photo captions or remarks too, for example: "Photo 3 is virtually staged. Original available on request."
- Never stage to hide a defect or to show something the buyer will not get.

A MESSAGE TO AN AGENT

Message

Hi [NAME], I noticed your listing at [ADDRESS] has empty rooms in the photos. I stage empty-room photos with AI and label them virtually staged the way [MLS NAME] requires. Want me to stage 3 photos for you to look at? If you like them, we can talk about a package. [YOUR NAME]

WHAT VENDORS PUBLISH (OCTOBER 2026)

SERVICE

BoxBrownie: virtual staging

US\$24.00 per image on its pricing page (also listed: item removal US\$8.00, day to dusk US\$4.00, image enhancement US\$1.60).

AI TOOL

Virtual Staging AI: monthly plans

Basic \$16 a month for 6 photos (\$2.67 a photo). Standard \$19 for 20 (\$0.95). Professional \$39 for 60 (\$0.65). Enterprise \$79 for 150 (\$0.53). Prices change, and these are what vendors charge, not a quote or a promise of what you can earn.

YOUR PACKAGE WORKSHEET

- Your cost per photo = [TOOL PLAN PRICE] / [PHOTOS PER MONTH].
- Look at three local competitors' public prices before you set yours.
- Your price per photo: [PRICE]. A 5-photo package: [PRICE]. A 10-photo package: [PRICE]. Put your own numbers in, and do not quote income you have not earned.
- Include in every package: a photo check, the label wording for the agent's MLS, the original photos.

WHERE THIS COMES FROM

- Stellar MLS Rules, Article 04.04: Virtually Staged Photos
- San Diego MLS: AB 723 Made Simple
- NAR: 2025 Profile of Home Staging
- BoxBrownie pricing
- Virtual Staging AI pricing

Checked October 6, 2026. Rules and prices change. This guide is educational, not legal or financial advice, and it promises no income.

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- Email your first prospects: EmailClik.com finds + verifies addresses (free version)