

FIELD RESOURCE

# Selling While You Live There

---

*Keeping daily life functional during a six-week campaign*

---

Daniel Gierach

RAY WHITE COLLECTIVE

[DANIELGIERACH.COM](https://danielgierach.com)

Most owner-occupier vendors stay in the property through the entire campaign. That means cooking, working, sleeping, and parenting in a home that has to look like a magazine every Saturday morning and most weekday evenings. The campaign runs four to six weeks. Done well, you settle into a rhythm by the second week and the rest is just maintenance. Done poorly, you burn out by week three and your presentation starts to slip at exactly the wrong time. This guide is the practical playbook for keeping daily life functional while the home is on the market.

## Set up a minimum viable home

Before the photographer arrives, the home gets stripped back to the version that photographs well. The version you live in for the next six weeks is a slightly relaxed version of that. The goal is a home that can be reset to inspection-ready in twenty minutes, not two hours.

- Pack away anything that does not earn its place on a bench, shelf, or wall. Most kitchens have three small appliances they actually use daily. Everything else goes into a cupboard for the duration of the campaign.

---

- Choose one drawer or cupboard in each main room as your "live" zone. That is where the remote, the charger, the reading glasses, the kids' homework book lives. Everything else stays put away.

---

- Reduce the number of items on display in each room by roughly half. Fewer cushions, fewer photo frames, fewer books on the coffee table. The home looks bigger and the daily reset gets faster.

---

- Pre-pack one box per room of items you will not need for six weeks. Off-season clothes, paperwork, hobby gear, spare linen. Store it in the garage or a cupboard that buyers will not open.

---

- Identify two or three rooms or zones that will stay closed during inspections. A study, a guest room, the laundry. These are your relief valves where life can spill over between resets.

## The daily presentation reset

A daily reset is the difference between a home that looks campaign-ready on inspection day and a home that looks lived in. Twenty to thirty minutes a day, ideally at the same time each day, is enough.

- Pick a time that suits your routine. Many vendors do the reset in the morning before work or school. Others prefer evenings so the home is ready to photograph or inspect the next day.
- Make beds first. An unmade bed is the single biggest visual giveaway that a home is mid-campaign. Hospital corners, fresh-looking pillows, no clothes on the bed.
- Wipe every kitchen and bathroom surface. Crumbs, toothpaste splashes, water rings on benchtops. These take ten seconds each and they are what buyers notice.
- Empty bins or move them out of sight. The kitchen bin should never be visible during an inspection.
- Run a quick floor pass. Vacuum the high-traffic zones, sweep the kitchen, wipe any obvious marks on tiles. A full clean is a weekly job, not a daily one.
- Final walk-through with fresh eyes. Stand in each main doorway and look in. Anything that catches your eye for the wrong reason gets fixed in the next sixty seconds.

## Cooking, smells, and meal planning

Cooking smells linger longer than vendors expect. Fish, fried oil, curry, bacon, and strong cheese can all still be detectable in a closed-up house twelve to twenty-four hours later. The campaign is not the time for a slow-cooked lamb shoulder on a Friday night.

- Plan the inspection-day meal the night before. Something that does not require cooking in the home. Salads, charcuterie, takeaway, or eating out are all fine.

---

- Cook strong-smelling meals on nights without a next-day inspection. If Saturday morning is the open home, do not cook with garlic, fish, or fried oil on Friday night.

---

- Open windows whenever you cook, even briefly. A ten-minute cross-breeze clears most cooking smells before they settle into fabrics.

---

- Avoid air fresheners, plug-ins, and scented candles during inspections. A clean home should smell like nothing. Fragrances often read as "covering something up" to buyers.

---

- Coffee in the morning is fine and welcome. A fresh-brewed coffee smell on Saturday morning before an open home is a positive, not a negative.

---

- Keep a small caddy of cleaning supplies in the kitchen and one in each bathroom. Wiping a benchtop after breakfast is faster if the spray is at arm's reach.

## Working from home through the campaign

If you work from home, the office or desk space needs a plan. Buyers want to picture themselves in the home, and a desk piled with paperwork, cables, and personal documents pulls them out of that picture.

- If you have a dedicated study, treat it as one of your closed zones during inspections. A clean, simple desk with one laptop and one notebook reads as functional. A working desk with cables, charging stations, and printouts does not.
- If you work from the dining or living area, set up a "pack-down kit" in a single tote bag or basket. Laptop, charger, notebook, headphones, water bottle. At the end of the workday or before inspections, the tote goes into a cupboard.
- Schedule meetings around inspections where possible. Open homes are typically Saturday morning and one weeknight. Block those out in your calendar in advance.
- If you have video calls during the campaign, choose one consistent background spot that already presents well. Avoid filming in rooms that double as the visual hero of the home.
- Keep work documents, especially anything sensitive or financial, locked away during inspections. Buyers do walk through, agents do their best, but assume nothing is private during an open home.

## The go bag concept

The go bag is the single most useful piece of campaign infrastructure. It is one bag, basket, or large tote that holds everything that has to disappear before an inspection but cannot be permanently put away.

- Use a single large fabric tote, a laundry basket with a lid, or a sturdy storage box. It needs handles and it needs to be portable.
- Items that go in the go bag during inspections: chargers and cables, mail and paperwork from the kitchen bench, current paperback books, the kids' current homework, prescription medications from the bathroom, that one item you forgot to put away.
- Pre-decide where the go bag lives during inspections. The boot of your car is the best option. A locked study or laundry is a close second.
- After each inspection, the go bag comes back inside and gets unpacked into its normal places. Do not let it become a permanent storage solution.
- A second go bag for kids is useful for families. Toys, school bags, water bottles, the soft toy that lives on the couch. Same rule: out for inspections, back in afterwards.

## Managing the mental load

Six weeks of weekly opens, midweek inspections, daily resets, and constant feedback is a real load. Vendors who pace themselves through the campaign do better than vendors who run hard for two weeks and burn out.

- Treat the campaign as a temporary lifestyle, not a temporary inconvenience. Six weeks is too long to white-knuckle. Build in things that make the period easier rather than just shorter.
- Eat out or order in once or twice a week. The budget impact is small compared to the campaign's outcome and it removes the cooking and cleaning burden on the days that need it most.
- Get out of the house during open homes. Do not sit in a café around the corner watching the time tick. Plan something genuinely enjoyable: a walk along the river, brunch with a friend, a trip to the markets.
- Limit how often you check the agent's feedback. Once after each open home and once midweek is plenty. Constant refreshing is exhausting and rarely changes the outcome.
- Talk about the campaign less, not more. Friends and family will ask. A short, honest update is better than a long re-litigation of every piece of feedback.
- Sleep matters more than usual. The temptation to clean late into the night is real. A tidy home and a tired vendor make worse decisions than a slightly messy home and a rested one.

## When buyer feedback gets to you

Some buyer feedback is useful. Some is the buyer trying to talk the price down before they offer. Some is just preference, dressed up as criticism. Knowing the difference is half the battle.

- Useful feedback shows up as a pattern. If three different buyers mention the kitchen layout, that is a real signal. If one buyer mentions the carpet colour, that is preference.
- Price feedback in the first two weeks is often buyers anchoring low. Price feedback in week four or five, especially after a competitor property has sold nearby, is more reliable.
- Ask your agent to filter feedback before passing it on. You do not need every comment. You need the patterns and the genuinely interested buyers.
- When feedback stings, give it twenty-four hours before you act on it. Decisions made in the first hour after a hard piece of feedback are usually overcorrections.
- Remember the buyer who criticises the home is often the same buyer who comes back with an offer. Negative feedback is sometimes the opening of a negotiation, not a verdict on the property.
- If a piece of feedback is genuinely useful and fixable inside a week, fix it. New cushions, a fresh bunch of flowers, a deeper clean of the bathroom grout. Small actions buy you a refreshed presentation for the back half of the campaign.

## Living a normal-ish life

The home is on the market for a few weeks. Your life is not on hold. Some routines stay, some adjust, some pause. The skill is knowing which is which.

- Keep the routines that matter most. Kids' sport, regular exercise, weekly catch-ups with friends. These are the things that anchor a normal week.
- Pause the routines that conflict with the campaign. Big home cooking projects, hosting friends for dinner, hobbies that take over a room.
- Adjust the routines that can flex. Coffee on the back deck instead of the kitchen bench. Reading in the living room with everything tidy instead of curling up under a blanket on the couch.
- Plan one good thing per week that has nothing to do with the sale. A movie, a long walk, a meal at a favourite local. The campaign should not consume every conversation and every weekend.
- Mark the milestones. Photography day, launch day, the first open home, the midpoint of the campaign, auction or close-of-marketing day. Each one is a step forward, not just another week to get through.

*A six-week campaign is a project, not an emergency. Set the home up well in week one, run the daily reset, protect your sleep, and plan a genuinely good thing for each week. The vendors who finish a campaign well are usually the ones who paced themselves from the start.*

Daniel Gierach

RAY WHITE COLLECTIVE

0412 523 821

daniel.gierach@raywhite.com

danielgierach.com