

Photo Shoot Prep

ACT
Studios

A GUIDE FOR HOLIDAY PROPERTY OWNERS



Photography secrets and check-list to create
inspirational images

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WHAT MAKES IMAGES INSPIRATIONAL?

In the words of Alistair Handyside, Chair of the Professional Association of Self-Caterers UK Ltd (PASC), "*Your images are incredibly important. Do it properly, don't just use an iPhone*"

You have a beautiful property that you have invested time, love and money into and it's ready for the world to see. The next step is to photograph it beautifully, to truly capture the experience a guest can have on holiday there. Put simply, this cannot be achieved without using the proper equipment and some talent.



The difference between an amateur hurried image and one that has been staged and shot properly is significant. To market your holiday accommodation well, it needs to stand out from the others in an online search. There's a skill to achieving that. Professional photographers understand lighting and use clever editing techniques to create impact images that wow. This is demonstrated when you look at the images above side-by-side

The effect that has on bookings is huge. In the photo on the right, viewers can picture themselves there, being warmed by the fire as their children run outside to play on the beach.

Great images should evoke emotion and the desire to click 'book now'.

THE PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS' BIG EDITING SECRET

Capturing inspirational images involves work. Preparation is key (we share our top tips for that throughout this guide). But it doesn't stop there. To give you an accurate idea take a look at the images below. They have been carefully taken using the right lighting and equipment. Then they have been edited, masked and blended together by hand in photoshop to produce one outstanding image.



PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

Discover ...

- Inspirational ideas to help you prepare your property for your photo shoot.
- How to get the best results from your images.
- How you can assist your photographer before arrival and on the day to get the most from your shoot.



Consider ...

- What makes your property special.
- Is there a particular image you want captured?
- Would you like to add dusk shots of your property to make it stand out?
- What is your area known for?
- What style are you going for? Chic and sophisticated or rustic and homely?

1. SHOW OFF THOSE VIEWS



Ensure any external feature doors can be open fully. Outdoor areas should be prepared and cleared in advance. Potential guests will love seeing those views drawn into the property. Help them to visualise themselves there and add to the value of your imagery.

Don't you just want to step through those doors, feel the warmth of the sun on your face and breathe in the fresh sea air?

2. KEEP IT COSY



Ensure fires are always shown beautifully alight. Realistic bright fires can be added during the editing process. Remember to top up your log basket too.

Everyone loves the atmosphere a cosy fire creates. Set the scene with tasteful cushions, throws and blankets. Guests want to picture themselves curling up and getting all warm and toasty after a day exploring the area.

The cushions, throws and blankets can add a nice 'pop' of colour to the eye. Try to think like an interior designer.

3. MAKE IT LUXURIOUS



A few choice props can really make your property photos stand out. You want guests to fall in love with your place before they even book. The aim is to add atmosphere and warmth. A breakfast tray or a bottle of fizz and some glasses can work wonders to sell the idea of the ultimate escape.

Remember, we're always here for a chat if you'd like some advice and examples of how to dress your property to get the most from your shoot.

4. IRON OUT ALL THE KINKS



Don't settle for second best when it comes to preparing your property. Make your beds look amazing. A wrinkled duvet or flat pillows don't make the best first impression.

Invest in some quality linen to create a luxurious, sumptuous atmosphere that potential guests won't be able to resist. Check the beds then check them again.

Your efforts will be rewarded with years of quality marketing.

5. SHOWCASE LOCAL PRODUCE



What food or drink do people associate with your area? Cream teas? Seafood? Whisky? Cheese? A certain cake?

If you have a fantastic local supplier nearby, include some of their produce as props during your shoot.

(You can also tag the local provider when you share these images on social media to increase your reach).

6. WHY NOT ADD A DUSK SHOT?



If you're looking for something extra special to differentiate your property, consider including a dusk shot.

Showing off the warm, inviting atmosphere your holiday accommodation offers round the clock is selling the dream.

You can also use lighting to enhance the desired atmosphere - candles, firepits, fairy lights - whatever works best.

This image really invites you in and sets this property apart. It's designed to make you want to walk inside. The result is simply magical!

7. KEEP IT SIMPLE



The less clutter there is the more WOW your images will be.

Getting ready for a photo shoot is a little different to preparing for your guests. Remove all unnecessary items like bins, cleaning products, washing up items etc. Your guests know they're included as standard so the photos don't need to show them.

Adding a few accent props is fine (it avoids everything looking too cold and clinical). But be careful not to add too many or they can distract from the full effect of the images.

8. DRESS EXTERIOR SPACES



Treat your exterior spaces as if they were additional rooms in your property. They are incredibly important. Your external spaces offer a unique experience like no other. This is your USP (Unique Selling Point).

With little effort and props including candles, fairy lights, lamps and tableware, you can create absolutely stunning shots.

Don't forget to prepare everything outdoors. Including any hot tubs and pools.

9. MAKE YOUR DOG A STAR



Finally - if your accommodation is dog-friendly, bring your pooch along to the photoshoot.

Then you can get a few good pictures of your dog too. These will jump out to fellow dog-owners who will instantly recognise you welcome pets.

If you provide a welcome pack for pups as well as their owners, make sure you get a photo of all the treats and useful items you provide.

It's the little things that go a long way. That's what guests remember - and it's what makes them want to return again and again.

YOUR CHECKLIST

THE DAY BEFORE YOUR SHOOT

A handy check-list to make sure you're ready for your photography.

Remember, if you do the preparation, a photographer can spend more time capturing images.

- Clean the property and windows.
- Make the beds up beautifully. No creases, best linen, plumped pillows. Check and check again.
- Check all the lights work, do any bulbs need replacing?
- Fully open all blinds and curtains (check for any missing curtain hooks).
- Prepare external areas with great care: power-wash patios, clean the garden furniture and set the table. Use cushions, throws, candles and props.
- Get fresh flowers and accent props ready to use.
- Straighten picture frames and mirrors.
- Remove bins (inside and out). Remember 3D tours see EVERYTHING.
- Make sure plug sockets and cables are all neat and tidy (unplug any unnecessary items).
- De-clutter all rooms (remove toilet brushes, cleaning products, air fresheners etc.)

NOW YOU HAVE HIGH QUALITY IMAGES, USE THEM PROPERLY



Please remember the golden rule:

THE BIGGER THE BETTER !!!

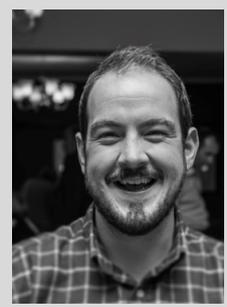
Quality, high resolution, 'iconic' images of your property and experiences should always be displayed as large as possible.

You have invested time, money and energy into these exceptional images, so make sure you always showcase them properly. From your website to social media to printed ads and flyers - one very special image used wisely will always be more impactful than a collage of several small ones.

ABOUT ACT STUDIOS



ACT Studios only create beautiful photography, 3D virtual tours and exquisite websites for self-catering businesses.



Contact us to have a chat about any of the services we offer and get a free no-obligation quote.

Call: 0333 344 6897 | Email: contact@act-studios.co.uk

"The ability of ACT Studios to showcase a property to best appeal to its target market has been a masterclass in excellence."

Gemma and Simon Nelson, Cae Madog Barn



www.act-studios.com

