

# Can Feng Shui Boost a Home Sale?

By Gwen Donovan

**A**lex Stark is an internationally-recognized consultant, advisor and practitioner of Feng Shui whose insights include how the appearance of a space is critical to its energetic integrity. While the ancient theories of Feng Shui have been around for over 6,000 years, Stark maintains that there is a place for it in today's real estate world, especially when it's time to sell.

His collaborations with Sharon Kurtz and the Kurtz Team resulted in advancing sales of numerous area properties. "I have worked with Sharon and the Kurtz Team on many occasions to share Feng Shui techniques that are helpful when marketing a home for sale. We work well together, and I appreciate how Sharon has embraced Feng Shui in her real estate business," Stark says. "The combination of Sharon's skills and Feng Shui principles can greatly increase sales."

When preparing a home for sale, Stark advises sellers to look carefully at their rooms. "The most important thing is to make the home as neutral and open to interpretation as possible to welcome buyers," he says. "Homes tend to be very personalized, so you want to make sure there are not too many family portraits, remove any bizarre-looking hobbies and put away any religious or political items."

After making spaces as neutral and uncluttered as possible, Stark reveals how the methodology comes into play. "Feng Shui focuses



Feng Shui specialist Alex Stark advises clients around the country, including the owners of this elegant Washington, D.C. estate.

on energy, or 'chi,'" Stark says. "It is a set of techniques and methods that allow the user to maximize and promote opportunity and get results." He adds that the way a home makes you feel has to be very receptive and wide open. "You want the house to say 'I'm available.'"

In order to improve a home's energy, Stark says sellers need to provide cues and clues in a home. "If it's French Provençal, don't decorate it with antiques and heavy brocade fabrics. Add metal, steel or glass, which will allow a person to feel welcome." Alternately, a contemporary home constructed using glass, metal and wood should be treated differently. "You can soften the architecture with antiques and lamps like your grandmother had to change the energy," he notes.

Stark was called to consult on a home on Long Island in the \$5 million range that had gorgeous architecture but simply wasn't selling. "It was very formal, and at the time and in that market, three or four years ago, it needed a more family-oriented feeling. So we put plastic beach

balls in the pool, scattered toys in the living areas and re-decorated the playroom and nursery to be more appealing. We call this 'creative disorder.'"

Rooted in Asian culture, Feng Shui is a complicated discipline that took Stark over ten years to fully learn. The principles also apply to the land a home or building is sited on. "Feng Shui is by nature holistic and ecological," he says. "It respects the land and all practitioners have that in mind; we don't ever want to do anything injurious to the planet."

Sometimes the home site itself will need a Feng Shui makeover, Stark says. "If land under a house is compromised, for instance sometimes underground water is flowing beneath the home, then the home is under geopathic stress. Also magnetic fields and radiation can cause geopathic stress." This form of stress on a structure can additionally be caused by highway construction or nearby railroads.

To optimize the Feng Shui of an entire property, Stark says rice blessings, literally grains of rice, can be scattered in the yard and



gardens, while interior space clearing is done with higher grades of incense, the sound of bells, or by dispersing powdered minerals inside or outside. "Old buildings always had cornerstones made of granite which contains quartz. The quartz protects a home or building from geopathic stress. Today, builders will often bury mineral quartz or granite throughout the home to keep the energy positive."

If you are thinking of hiring a Feng Shui consultant to help sell a home, Stark says that it is most helpful in challenging cases. "Feng Shui is really useful when you run into trouble; it's useful in difficult conditions or market downturns," he notes. Every home and every property is unique, so solutions are customized. "There really is no such thing as generic Feng Shui," he adds. *For more detailed information, visit [alexstark.com](http://alexstark.com).* ■

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