



Home Inspection Checklist



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Viewing a house can feel a lot like trying to guess the contents of a present without taking off the wrapping paper. Potential homeowners tend to view houses when they are newly spruced up, clean and very presentable. However, a multitude of problems could be hiding behind the fresh whitewash or in the closed cupboard under the stairs.

When buyers put in an offer, there is the option to insert a home inspection clause. By hiring a professional home inspector, you can save yourself time, extra expenses and stress by identifying potential issues with the home. The cost to hire a home inspector is minimal by comparison of the purchase price, and you can use the results to assist with the negotiating of the final price. Your real estate agent has access to a team of trusted home inspectors.

While viewing your potential home, the key is to not be afraid to open a few cupboards, look behind the curtains and check the basement and attic for yourself. If the house is occupied, politely ask before these tasks are undertaken. However, if the homeowner refuses permission, as a potential buyer, you are encouraged to consult with your agent and question why.

When carrying out the inspection, consider the following areas and possible problems:



Start at the Bottom

Outside

- Check for any trees/roots that might interfere with the foundation.
- Look for cracks at the base of the exterior walls.

Inside

- Check the base and ceilings for cracks that might suggest movement in the foundation.

Check Around the Edges

- Assess the number and quality of drainage systems.
- Do the drains from the house flow properly?
- Is there much ground water or soggy patches that suggest rain water could accumulate?

Don't Forget to Look Up

- When was the roof last replaced and what is its current condition?
- Find out what materials the roof is made from and check if ventilation points can be seen.
- Are there any trees, wires or cables that overhang the roof - do they pose any danger?

General Exterior Repair

- Do the exterior materials contain asbestos? Question whether they are safe and if they will need to be replaced soon.
- What is the condition of the house's exterior? When was it last painted, are there any major or imminent repairs that will need to be done? What is the potential cost of these?
- Have the gutters and downpipes been cleaned and regularly maintained?
- Are there loose wires anywhere on the exterior? If so, what are they and why are they there?

The Attic

- Check the ventilation systems in the attic space. If there are none, how much will it cost to install proper ventilation?
- Look at the internal structure of the roof. Are there any signs of damp, condensation or rot?
- Check for signs of leaks and smell and look for any mold.

The Basement

- Does the basement contain any insulation?
- Is there any indication of dampness? If it is a small space or has bad lighting, use smell to detect any signs of mold.

Is There a Shock in Store?

- Do all of the light switches work? If not, why?
- Is there anything obviously wrong with the wiring?
- Is everything grounded?
- Can additional appliances be added safely or would expansion of the system be required?

Water and Waste

- Run a tap and listen for unusual noises. Watch for stuttering or spurting water that may indicate a problem with supply or pressure.
- Ask when the sewers were last checked for cracks.

The Right Temperature

- How old is the heating and cooling system?
- When was it last inspected? Have there been any major problems with it?
- How often is it used to heat in the winter and cool in the summer?
- How efficient is the system?

General impressions

- Compare the property to the surroundings. Is there anything that makes it stand out: is it much lower or higher than other buildings, does it sit at the same angle? Buildings are rarely completely straight. But if the other houses are at a different angle or slope, it should raise questions.
- Look for unusual paintwork - if only parts of the room have been decorated question what it might be hiding.

Buying a home can often feel like detective work, so it is crucial to have a qualified agent, trained in spotting property flaws, present during all house viewings.

The seller will present the best possible picture of the house and it's up to the buyer and the agent to dive deeper and expose any hidden flaws.



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