

Your Comprehensive Guide To What a Home Inspector is Looking For

HOME

INSPECTION CHECKLIST



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NO HOME IS EVER PERFECT

NOT EVEN A BRAND NEW HOUSE THAT HAS NEVER BEEN LIVED IN. IT IS NORMAL AND EXPECTED TO FIND THINGS WRONG WITH A HOUSE THAT PEOPLE HAVE LIVED IN OVER THE YEARS.

THESE ARE THINGS THAT A PROFESSIONAL HOME INSPECTOR LOOKS FOR DURING AN INSPECTION.

LANDSCAPING

- ☐ Grading so that rain water runs away from the foundation.
- ☐ Evidence of standing water
- ☐ Evidence of leaks from septic tank (if applicable)
- ☐ Walkways in good condition
- ☐ Branches or bushes touching the house or hanging onto the roof
- ☐ Railings on stairs and decks meet code requirements and are not loose
- ☐ Driveways, sidewalks, patios, entrance landings in good condition
- ☐ Downspouts drain away from the house

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HOME STRUCTURE

- ☐ Sides of house appear straight, not bowed or sagging
- ☐ Window and doorframes appear square (*especially bowed windows*)
- ☐ Visible foundation in good condition - no significant cracks

HOUSE EXTERIOR

- ☐ Adequate clearance between ground and wood siding materials with no wood-to-earth contact
- ☐ Siding: no cracking, curling, loose, rot or decay
- ☐ Stucco: no large cracks (*stucco may require a separate inspection from a specialist*)
- ☐ Vinyl or aluminum siding: no dents, damage, no bowing or loose siding
- ☐ Vines attached to surface of house
- ☐ Exterior paint or stain: no flaking paint or large blisters
- ☐ Stains on exterior surfaces

WINDOWS, DOORS AND TRIM

- ☐ Wood frames and trim pieces are secure, no cracks, dry rot, or deterioration
- ☐ Joints around frames are caulked
- ☐ No broken glass (window or storm panes) or damaged screens, no broken double pane, insulated window seals.

ATTIC

- ☐ Stains on underside of roofing or indication of leaks
- ☐ Evidence of decay or damage to structure
- ☐ Sufficient insulation and properly installed insulation (*moisture barrier installed closest to the heated area of the house*)
- ☐ Adequate ventilation, clear path into attic for air entering through soffit vents, adequately sized gable end louvers, all mechanical ventilation operational
- ☐ No plumbing, exhaust or appliance vents terminating in attic
- ☐ No open electrical splices

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INTERIOR ROOMS

- ☐ Stains on floors, walls or ceilings
- ☐ Flooring materials in good condition
- ☐ Any significant cracks in walls or ceilings
- ☐ Windows and exterior doors operate easily and latch properly, no broken glass, no sashes painted shut, no decay
- ☐ Interior doors operate easily and latch properly, no damage or decay, no broken hardware
- ☐ Paint, wall covering, and paneling in good condition
- ☐ Wood trim installed well and in good condition
- ☐ Lights and switches operate properly
- ☐ Adequate number of three pronged electrical outlets in each room
- ☐ Electrical outlets test properly (spot check)
- ☐ Heating/cooling source in each habitable room
- ☐ Evidence of adequate insulation in walls
- ☐ Fireplace: no cracking or damaged masonry, damper operates properly, flue has been cleaned, flue is lined

KITCHEN

- ☐ Working exhaust fan that is vented to the exterior of the building
- ☐ Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter ("GFCI") protection for electrical outlets within 6 feet of the sink(s)
- ☐ Dishwasher: drains properly, no leaks, baskets, door spring operates properly
- ☐ No leaks in pipes under sinks
- ☐ Floor in cabinet under sink solid, no stains or decay
- ☐ Water flow in sink adequate
- ☐ No excessive rust or deterioration on garbage disposal or waste pipes
- ☐ Built-in appliances operate properly
- ☐ Cabinets in good condition: doors and drawers operate properly

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BATHROOMS

- ☐ Working exhaust fan that doesn't terminate in the attic space
- ☐ Adequate flow and pressure at all fixtures
- ☐ Sink, tub and shower drain properly
- ☐ Plumbing and cabinet floor under sink in good condition
- ☐ If sink is metal, it shows no signs of rust, overflow drain doesn't leak
- ☐ Toilet operates properly
- ☐ Toilet stable, no rocking, no stains around base
- ☐ Caulking in good condition inside and outside of the tub and shower area
- ☐ Tub or shower tiles secure, wall surface solid
- ☐ No stains or evidence of past leaking around base of bath or shower

PLUMBING

- ☐ Visible pipes: no damage, no evidence of leaks, no signs of stains on materials near pipes; drain pipes slope slightly down towards outlet to septic/sewage system
- ☐ Water heater: no signs of rust, vented properly, sized to produce adequate quantities of hot water for the number of bedrooms in the house.
- ☐ Water pump: does not short cycle
- ☐ Galvanized pipes do not restrict water flow
- ☐ Well water test is acceptable (*if property is on a well*)

ELECTRICAL

- ☐ Visible wiring: in good condition and up to code
- ☐ Service panel: adequate capacity, all cables attached to panel with cable connectors; fuses or breakers are not overheating
- ☐ No aluminum cable for branch circuits

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HEATING/COOLING SYSTEM

- ☐ Appears to operate well throughout (*good air flow on forced hot air systems*)
- ☐ No rust around cooling unit
- ☐ No combustion gas odor
- ☐ Air filter(s) clean
- ☐ Ductwork in good condition
- ☐ No asbestos on heating pipes, water pipes or air ducts
- ☐ Separate flues for gas/oil/propane and wood/coal

ROOF

- ☐ Composition shingles: no curling, no cupping, no loss of granulation particulate, no broken, damaged, or missing shingles, no more than two layers of shingles on roof
- ☐ Wood shingles or shake roof: no mold, rot or decay, no cracked/broken/missing shingles, no curling
- ☐ Adequate flashing
- ☐ No evidence of excess roofing cement/tar/caulk
- ☐ Soffits and fascia: no decay, no stains
- ☐ Exterior venting for eave areas: vents are clean and not painted over
- ☐ Gutters: no decay or rust, joints sealed, attached securely to structure, no sections of gutter or downspout missing, gutters are not clogged with debris
- ☐ Chimneys: straight, properly flashed, no evidence of damaged bricks, chimney cap in good condition

GARAGE

- ☐ Check the functionality of the garage door. See if it reverses when hit with resistance or if something is in front of the sensor.
- ☐ Check for water staining, and damaged walls/ceilings.
- ☐ Check the water heater for proper installation and for leaks.
- ☐ Check the Air Handler (if located here) for proper installation and leaks. A filter should be installed, the condensation line should be insulated, and there should be a float switch.

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