

Barcelona Property Buyer's Checklist

The following items need to be checked off your list before finalizing your purchase of any property in Spain.

1. Obtain the **Land Registry Extract** which is available from the Colegio de Registradores. This document tells you the legal status of your proposed property. Get the document translated into English so that you can check the following:
 - The property is described accurately
 - The registered owner is the person you are seller negotiating with.
 - There are no outstanding debts, fines, fees, charges on the property, for example a mortgage.
 - The property is not involved in any legal proceedings due to non-compliance with land planning laws.
2. **Check the town hall records** to see that the existing building has all the required planning permission, permits, licenses and that the building was constructed legally. This includes finding out from the town hall if the property is on land registered as rural for building, rural not for building or urban. This will let you know what your construction rights are for the future.
3. For **off-plan property purchases** check with the town hall that the property has been issued a certificate of completion by a registered architect and that it is registered as a new building with the Land Registry. Ask at the registry for details of the developer's insurance against structural defects. There are a number of levels of insurance that should be on record with the registrar in case of unforeseen structural defects. These insurance states which party will be responsible for which kind of defect and within which period of time after completion of construction.
4. **For purchases from a private owner** who built his house within the last ten years then he must provide you with details of the insurance against constructional defects.
5. Check the town plan in the **Town Planning Department** (urbanismo) of the town hall to see that no rezoning or new municipal or industrial construction is planned near your property. For example if your new home is in an area soon to become part of a Green Zone then you will have building restrictions and if you will soon have a highway running along the border of your property.
6. Have a **property survey** performed by a chartered surveyor. (not obligatory but recommended)
7. **Know the cadastral value** of the property – the value of your property as calculated by the Town Hall. This is the amount used to calculate local taxes and not the value of the property which you paid in the purchase.

8. Check how much your **property tax** will be with the Regional Government's tax agency (online) by using your cadastral reference number.
9. **Get a paid-up tax receipt** from the previous owner showing that he has paid the previous year's property tax. To be sure that no taxes are owed on the property get a certificate from the Town Hall showing there are no outstanding rates.
10. Get the **Catastral Certificate** which states the exact boundaries and size of your property. The Castaral record is linked to the Land Registry by the Castaral reference number and the description of the property in both the Castaral Certificate and Land Registry records should be identical.
11. Get the **Habitation Certificate** from the Town Hall. This license of first occupancy is needed in order to get amenities like electricity and water.
12. Get proof from the seller that all **utility payments** are up to date.
13. It may be necessary (depending where your property is) to get a document from the **President of the Community of Property Owners** attesting that there are no debts outstanding on the property. If you discover after the purchase that there were outstanding debts then you will be responsible for paying them(for at least the current year and previous year).
14. Obtain an **Energy Efficiency Certificate** from the previous owner. If he has none to show you then ask at the Town Hall.
15. Check the **property deed description** of the property is accurate.
16. **Register the property in your name** at the land Registry to protect your rights as the owner. This can be done by the notary immediately after the public deed is signed.