



How to Get Ready for a Home Inspection

Home sellers have an easier time by preparing for a home inspection in advance. Getting ready for a home inspection helps to prevent future problems, and prevention can stop surprises. The last thing a seller needs is for a home inspector to break a fixture or cause damage because the seller was ill-prepared.

Whether you're producing a seller's home inspection for the buyer or expecting the buyer's home inspector to show up on your doorsteps, it's best to be thoroughly prepared.

Clean the House

It sounds so simple, yet homeowners often overlook this tactic. Home inspectors are people first and inspectors second. As people, they carry preconceived ideas of how well a home has been maintained. Clean homes say you care and take care of the house. It's a good idea to make a good impression. Don't make the mistake of thinking they can see past stuff; they can't.

Be on Time Because the Inspector Will Be

Sometimes, home inspectors are early. If an inspector makes an appointment with you for 9:00 a.m., have the house ready for inspection at 8:30. Open all the shades and blinds so the inspector can access the windows and doors.

Leave the Utilities Connected

The home inspector will need to turn on the stove, run the dishwasher, and test the furnace and air conditioning, so leave the utilities on, especially if the house is vacant. It's impossible to check receptacles for grounding and reverse polarity if the power is turned off. Without utilities, the inspector will need to reschedule, which could delay the closing of your transaction and the removal of the buyer's home inspection contingency. Inspectors charge a buyer a reinspection fee to make a return trip, and that can cause ill will, too.

Provide Workspace Around Furnace and Water Heaters and other equipment

Remove boxes, bookcases, furniture, and anything else blocking access to your furnace, air conditioner, and water heater. The inspector will need three to four feet of working space to inspect these items.

Inspectors will not move personal possessions themselves, but if they don't have access, an inspector might not be able to inspect the item or system leaving the Buyers without the information needed to make an informed decision.

Keep Pilot Lights Ignited

Home inspectors will not light pilot lights because the inspector does not carry enough insurance to be covered for that type of liability or risk. If your pilot lights are not lit, then important items such as the water heater, gas stove, or furnace will not be inspected, and the buyer could delay closing until those inspections are completed.

Again, the inspector will probably charge the buyer extra to make a return trip.

Provide Access to Attics, basement/crawlspaces and Garage

The inspector needs to have access into your garage, basement and attic as well, so keep a path cleared. Move all boxes and stored items away from the walls by at least two feet.

Leave Keys for Gates, Outbuildings and Electrical Boxes

Leave the remote controls for your garage door opener or a key if the garage is unattached to the house. Unlock the covers for your sprinkler system and electrical box. Leave a key for exterior building and gate access. You can label these keys and leave them on a kitchen table.

Clear Away Brush from Exterior Inspection Points

Trim and cut down tree branches and clear brush from the foundation, water and electrical service. Move trash cans away from the house

Provide Repair or Remodel Documents to the buyer

Make available to the home inspector all invoices and documents regarding remodeling projects or new items such as a roof or furnace. If you've upgraded the electrical from ungrounded to grounded, installed a new dishwasher or repaired a leaky faucet, find the paperwork. It will give the buyer peace of mind to know those items were reinspected. Make sure you provide copies of permits for any remodel work performed.

Prepare to Be Away for Three Hours Minimum

Often the buyer will accompany the home inspector, and buyers feel uncomfortable asking questions if the owner is present. Try to schedule a time for the inspection when you can be out of the house, and take the children with you. Crate your pets if you cannot remove them from the premises.

Many inspections can take up to three hours to complete.