

6 REASONS YOU SHOULD NEVER SKIP A HOME INSPECTION

In a land full of multiple offers and fierce bidding wars, many homebuyers are waiving all contingencies – including home inspections - to get a leg up on the competition. Sure, an offer with no contingencies does make for a strong bid and sweetens the deal for the seller. But here are 6 reasons to not skip the home inspection:

1. IT PROVIDES AN “OUT”

Ever heard of “lipstick on a pig”? Whether it's a property that's been flipped, updates by a DIY homeowner, or the interior design/staging is magazine quality, it's best to always take a closer look. If a buyer isn't comfortable with the findings of the home inspection, it usually presents one last opportunity to back out of the offer to buy.

2. SAFETY

A home inspection can detect safety issues like radon, carbon monoxide, and mold, which all homes should be tested for. Make sure that your home-buying contract states that should such hazards be detected, you have the option to cancel the offer to buy.

3. REVEAL ILLEGAL ADDITIONS OR INSTALLATIONS

A home inspection can reveal whether additions, garages or basements were completed without a proper permit, or did not follow code, which affects the insurance, taxes, usability and most of all the overall value. Even new homes with systems that were not installed to code will become the new homeowners' financial “problem” to fix (and finance).

4. INSURANCE

For pre-existing issues or damage that occurred before purchase, insurance companies typically don't cover these items. An inspection can identify many of these costly issues, so you don't get stuck paying for them out of pocket.

5. NEGOTIATING TOOL

Home inspections gives an opportunity to ask for repairs, a price reduction, or possibly a credit from the seller. We can help you understand what requests can and should be made to negotiate a better deal.

6. PEACE OF MIND

For better or worse, a home inspection provides a better picture of the home's condition while helping you understand exactly what you are buying. Not knowing the details of the home's condition can bring additional uncertainty and anxiety to the already stressful process of buying a house. But by completing an inspection, you at least know what you're getting into.

Real Estate Snapshot Omaha/Lincoln Metro Area



Active Listings

367

Median List Price **\$293,670**

Listings Under Contract **1,185**

Median Sold Price **\$347,376**

Total Closings **1,823**

Days on Market **13**

TAXES ALREADY?!

4 HOME IMPROVEMENTS TO ASK YOUR TAX PROFESSIONAL

With tax season just around the corner, you may just qualify for a tax deduction for those home improvements you made. Typically, you can't write off most home improvements, but like everything in life, there are exceptions, so be sure to do your research or speak to your tax advisor.

1. ENERGY-EFFICIENT HOME IMPROVEMENTS

Energy-efficient home upgrades, which include energy-efficient windows, doors, skylights, roofs, and insulation, can make you eligible for a tax deduction. Other upgrades include air-source heat pumps, central air conditioning, hot water heaters, and circulating fans may give you a tax credit depending on the improvements made. Renewable energy improvements such as geothermal heat pumps, small wind turbines, solar energy systems, fuel cells, and biomass fuel stoves may also be eligible for a tax credit.

2. HOME IMPROVEMENTS RELATED TO MEDICAL CARE

Home upgrades that are medically required for you or any family members who live with you might also qualify as tax-deductible. This includes widening doorways, installing ramps or lifts, lowering cabinets, and adding railings.

3. HOME IMPROVEMENTS THAT INCREASE RESALE VALUE

You can potentially deduct any remodeling or renovations made to increase your home's resale value—but you can only claim it the year you actually sell the home. It may be possible to benefit by adding the costs of the improvements to the home's basis, which could potentially minimize any capital gains tax due if and when you sell the home.

4. HOME OFFICE IMPROVEMENTS

If your home is your primary place of work, you can deduct improvements to your home office. To qualify as a deduction, your home office must be in regular and exclusive use, and the principal place of your business, according to the IRS's standard rules for home office deduction. Writing off upgrades to your home office sounds especially great at a time when so many of us are working remotely, but there's a catch: If you are a W2 employee who works from home, you are not eligible for tax deductions on improvements to your home office space.

Love It OR Hate It: Throw Pillows

This is a pretty hot topic. Marriages, families, roommates, sisters, you name it... Many relationships have fallen victim to the argument of: THROW PILLOWS.

Centuries ago, pillows were originally created for comfort for the royalty or the wealthy. More pillows meant more affluence, which ties directly to Victorian-era Britain, where the idea of decorative pillows spread like cholera. These pillows are supposed to serve both an aesthetic and a functional purpose and are commonly used to tie in color accents within a room or used to add casual vibe by looking as though they were tossed onto a piece of furniture.

It's baffling that throw pillows are still a thing amidst the current War on Clutter. Let's be honest... Throw pillows do nothing but provide discomfort, clutter, and a huge trip-hazard (I can't be the only one).

Whether you're a pretty fluffer or they're the bane of your existence, when it comes down to it, you only need a good bedtime pillow. And throw pillows are definitely not a good bedtime pillow.

Nebraska mortgage and refinance rates today (APR)

3.25% 30-year fixed **2.375%** 15-year fixed **2.375%** 5/1 Adjusted Rate Mortgage (ARM)



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