



How to Prepare for a

Home Inspection

Just like there is no perfect person, there are no perfect houses. However, it is important that you are attentive to addressing any flaws of your home prior to your home inspection date. Some “easy fixes” can end up costing you hundreds to thousands if a buyer request that you hire a licensed contractor or remediation specialist to complete the inspection items. Use the checklist below to take a quick inventory of what your home may need help with. Once you complete the checklist, let's review to see what will be necessary to address.

Grounds

- Proper grading drainage away from house
- No evidence of standing water
- No leaks from septic tank or leech field
- Yard, landscaping, trees and walkways in good condition
- No branches or bushes touching house or overhanging the roof
- Exterior structures (fences, sheds, decks, retaining walls, detached garages) in good condition, no evidence of termite damage or rotted wood
- Railings on stairs and decks are adequate and secure
- Driveways, sidewalks, patios, entrance landings in good condition, and pitched away from structure
- Downspout drainage directed away from structure

Structure

- Ridge and fascia board lines appear straight and level
- Sides of house appear straight, not bowed or sagging
- Window and doorframes appear square (especially bowed windows)
- Visible foundation in good condition - appears straight, plumb, with no significant cracks

Exterior Surfaces

- ___ Adequate clearance between ground and wood siding materials (6" minimum); no wood-to-earth contact
- ___ Siding: no cracking, curling, loose, rot or decay
- ___ Masonry veneers: no cracks in joints, no broken, spalling or flaking components ___ Stucco: no large cracks (discuss all stucco cracks with a professional inspector)
- ___ Vinyl or aluminum siding: no dents, damage, no bowing or loose siding
- ___ No vines on surface of structure
- ___ Exterior paint or stain: no flaking or blisters
- ___ No stains on exterior surfaces

Windows, Doors and Wood Trim

- ___ Wood frames and trim pieces are secure, no cracks, rot or decay ___ Joints around frames are caulked
- ___ No broken glass (window or storm panes) or damaged screens, no broken double-paned, insulated window seals.
- ___ Muntin and mullion glazing compound in good condition
- ___ Storm windows or thermal glass used
- ___ Drip caps installed over windows

Roof

- ___ Composition shingles: no curling, no cupping, no loss of granulation particulate, no broken, damaged or missing shingles, no more than two layers of roofing
- ___ Wood shingles or shakes: no mold, rot or decay, no cracked/broken/missing shingles, no curling
- ___ Flat roofs: no obvious patches, no cracks or splits, minimal blisters/"alligatoring" and wrinkles, no silt deposits (indicates improper drainage), sealed tar at flashings
- ___ Flashing around roof penetrations
- ___ 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 bending or sagging, no sections of gutter or downspout missing, gutters clean, no mud deposits

___ Chimneys: straight, properly flashed, no evidence of damaged bricks or cracked joints, mortar/cement cap in good condition

Attic

___ No stains on underside of roofing, especially around roof penetrations ___ No 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

Interior Rooms

___ Floors, walls and ceilings appear straight and plumb and level

___ No stains on floors, walls or ceilings

___ Flooring materials in good condition

___ No significant cracks in walls or ceilings

___ Windows and exterior doors operate easily and latch properly, no broken glass, no sashes painted shut, no decay; windows and doors have weather-stripping, "weep holes" installed

___ 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, no evidence of back-drafting (staining on fireplace façade), 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

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

Miscellaneous

- ___ Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors where required by local ordinances

- ___ Stairway treads and risers solid

- ___ Stair handrails where needed and in good condition

- ___ Automatic garage door opener operates properly, stops properly for obstacles

Basement or Mechanical Room

- ___ No evidence of moisture
- ___ Exposed foundation; no stains no major cracks, no flaking, no efflorescence

- ___ Visible structural wood: no sagging, no damage, no decay, no stains, no damage from insects, sills attached to foundation with anchor bolts

- ___ Insulation at rim/band joists

Crawl Space

- ___ Adequately vented to exterior
- ___ Insulation on exposed water supply, waste and vent pipes
- ___ Insulation between crawl space and heated areas, installed with vapor barrier towards heated area
- ___ No evidence of insect damage
- ___ No evidence of moisture damage

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
- ___ Hot water temperature between 118 - 125 degrees Fahrenheit

Electrical

- ___ Visible wiring: in good condition, no "knob-and-tube" wiring, no exposed splices, cables secured and protected
- ___ Service panel: adequate capacity, all cables attached to panel with cable connectors; fuses or breakers are not overheating
- ___ No aluminum cable for branch circuits

Heating/Cooling System

- ___ Appears to operate well throughout (good air flow on forced hot air systems)
- ___ Flues: no open seams, slopes up to chimney connection
- ___ No rust around cooling unit
- ___ No combustion gas odor

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- 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



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