

What is a Property Inspection?

A property inspection is a professional, objective, visual evaluation of the current condition of the property and its major systems, and does not include cosmetic improvements. It is important to understand that a property inspection is not a guarantee of any kind, nor a municipal code inspection. Property inspection reports may also indicate areas of preventative maintenance for the buyer's information. These maintenance items are not typically a reason to renegotiate contract terms.

There is No Perfect House

Buyers and sellers involved in the transaction should be aware that existing houses are less than perfect. Talk to your REALTOR® about what and what not to expect, to prevent mistrust and loss of valuable time.



Liability Limitations

The home inspection is normally conducted for the buyer and is the property of the person paying for the inspection. It is a report of the condition of the home on the day of the inspection and is not meant to be a warranty or guarantee of the systems of the home.

The inspection is the educated and experienced opinion of the inspector of the visible and readily accessible portions of the house or systems inspected. Limits of the inspection are detailed in the inspection contract or disclaimer.

Types of Property Inspections

- Mechanical*
- Structural*
- Foundation*
- Roof*
- Fireplace and Chimney*
- Whole house
- Synthetic stucco
- Septic/Well
- Pool/Spa
- Lawn sprinkler system
- Wood destroying insect infestation/wood rot
- Environmental – Radon, Lead, Asbestos

* Items normally included in a whole house inspection.

The Inspector's Role

The inspector's role is to inspect the condition of the property and the home's major systems. The inspector checks that systems are:

- Installed properly
- Functioning as intended
- Operating in a safe manner

The inspector may advise the buyer of the potential life of certain major systems in the home and may make recommendations so that the buyer may budget for maintenance or replacement.

The inspector should not be expected to comment on the REALTORS® role or to give an opinion regarding the market value of the home.

Homeowner's Warranties

Limited home protection plans are available for purchase.

These plans may commence at the time of listing or closing, usually last one year from the date of closing, and give limited protection on many working components of the home. Check with your REALTOR® for more information.

Property Inspection Guidelines For Buyers & Sellers



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Buyer's Responsibility

• When to Inspect?

Buyer inspections should be done as soon as possible, but no later than the date stipulated in the contract. Limits of the inspection are detailed in the inspection contract or disclaimer.

• Who chooses the inspector?

It is the buyer's responsibility to choose the home inspector.

• Who should attend?

It is important that the buyers attend the inspection. The REALTORS® may also be present. The seller may be present; however, we recommend that interaction be minimal. Length of time varies with the type of inspection.

• Cost and payment of buyer inspections

The price of inspections varies according to the type of inspection and size of property. Payment is the responsibility of the buyer, and should be made no later than completion of inspection.



Homebuyer's Checklist

• Inspection reports

The buyer can expect to receive a copy of the inspection report within 48 hours of the inspection, or as arranged with the inspecting company. In the interest of facilitating the transaction, and with the permission of the buyer, duplicate copies may be furnished upon request to all parties involved in the transaction.

• Seller's Disclosure

It is the responsibility of the buyer to read and sign a seller's disclosure statement regarding the property, if one is available, within the time limit set by the contract. The seller is not obligated to repair defects disclosed in such statement unless specified and agreed to in the purchase contract and/or addendum to the contract.

• Qualification of inspectors

The buyer is responsible for determining the qualifications and experience of inspectors. Areas that should be checked are education background, licenses and/or other credentials, references, and professional societies or organizations, such as the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI), and Society of Professional Property Inspectors (SPPI).

Seller's Responsibility

• Seller's Disclosure

The seller may furnish a signed, detailed disclosure statement regarding the condition of the property.

• Utilities

In order for an inspection to be done, sellers are to have the utilities (i.e., gas, electricity, water) on before the house and systems are inspected.

• Accessibility

Access to interior foundation walls, furnace, hot water tank, electrical panel, attic, crawl space, and garage walls all need to be made ready to allow for a thorough inspection.

• Seller's prelisting inspection

It is recommended that the seller have the home inspected prior to putting the home on the market. This will help identify typical deficiencies, which could appear on a buyer's inspection report. Correction of these problems may increase the home's appeal and stability, and could help identify unknown problems. Payment of this inspection is the responsibility of the seller, and should be paid at the time of inspection completion.

Homeseller's Checklist

Check major systems:

• Mechanical

Furnace/Air Conditioning
Plumbing supply and drainage
Electrical outlets and switches

• Structural

Foundation
Walls and floors
Windows and doors
Roof covering
Gutters and drainage
Fireplace chimney and wood burning stoves

• Pay attention to the small items:

Leaky faucets
Burned out lights, etc.
Loose doorknobs and latches
Stains on ceiling
Replace furnace filter
Cracked window panes
Missing screens
Mow the grass and pull weeds
Cut down dead trees

• Make cosmetic improvements

