

HOME BUYER'S CHECKLIST

The following checklist will help you to evaluate and compare the quality of houses that you are considering for purchase. ON THE LEVEL Home Inspections will inspect the major components of the house, and will provide you with a complete and detailed report. The following checklist considers a number of items which are normally beyond the scope of a real estate inspection, but are important factors to consider when purchasing a home. Make your own inspection before you decide to make a purchase offer, even if you are not exactly sure what to look for. Make a list of things that you are not familiar with or that just don't look right, so that you can ask the seller or home inspector about them later.

OK	NEEDS ATTENTION	
LOCATION, ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBORHOOD		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluate the community and neighborhood. Visit the site both during the day and at night.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	What is the age, condition and value of the house compared to others in the neighborhood?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the site free from flooding? In a 100 year flood plain?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the house conveniently located near your place of employment, schools, shopping, library, medical care, park & ride, church, etc.?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	What are the local zoning laws or deed restrictions?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	How do local property tax rates and services compare with other similar areas?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are adequate fire and police services provided nearby?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Check the surrounding neighborhood for possible hazardous waste sites, air and/or noise polluting industries, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is there heavy street traffic, noise from airports, train tracks, etc. that would be unacceptable?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the house old enough for lead paint, asbestos, lead soldered pipes etc. to be present? (Houses built before 1978 may have lead based paint.)
LOT, DRAINAGE AND GENERAL CONDITIONS		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	What is the condition of walkways, driveways and steps? Any trip hazards?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the lot have good drainage? Any yard or downspout drains?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is there any indication of water ponding next to the house or ground contoured to slope toward the house? (Detrimental to the foundation.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the home oriented for maximum benefit and protection from sunlight, wind, rain etc.? (A north-south orientation is generally more desirable.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the yard fenced? In good condition?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the yard have adequate privacy? Room for kids to play? For pets?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has the landscaping been well maintained?
HOUSE - FOUNDATION & EXTERIOR		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has the house been remodeled, added on, or had any foundation repairs performed? Does the seller have building permits, warranty information, or other documentation?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	What is the overall condition of paint, brick or siding?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is there a potential for foundation damage from tree roots or shrubs which have been planted too close to the house?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has the house, garage, or any other structures on the property been built without proper setbacks or built on utility easements, right of way, etc.? Check your survey.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are all openable windows screened?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is adequate exterior lighting provided at entry, porches, driveway?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do exterior doors open and close without dragging or sticking?

OK	NEEDS ATTENTION	ROOF AND ATTIC
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the age and condition of the shingles comparable to others in the neighborhood?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	What is the average life expectancy of this type of roofing material? _____ yrs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If multiple layers of roof are present, how many? (3 layers maximum)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the roof sag?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the attic well ventilated? Are attic vents screened and in good condition?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Type, condition and thickness of insulation? (Modern homes have 6 to 8 inches of insulation.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are water pipes in attic insulated?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do bath or kitchen exhaust vents terminate in the attic, where they could cause potential moisture problems?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any indication of past or present insect, bird or rodent infestation in attic?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is storage space available in attic?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the attic easily accessible?

OK	NEEDS ATTENTION	HOUSE - INTERIOR AND FLOOR PLAN
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluate the floor plan by walking through the house as if going about your daily routine. (Versatility of floor plan and serviceability.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the house have enough bedrooms and bathrooms? (Homes with less than 3 bedrooms or only one bath may be difficult to resell.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate room sizes and storage space? (Measure if in doubt.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does placement of windows and doors allow for a variety of furniture arrangements?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do windows provide good cross ventilation and adequate natural illumination? Emergency egress?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	What is the general condition of carpets and hard surfaced floors?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	What is the general condition of drywall, wallpaper, paneling and any wall tile in baths or kitchen?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	What is the general condition of cabinets, vanities and countertops?

OK	NEEDS ATTENTION	HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	What is the age of the furnace and air conditioning system? _____ yrs. Is it efficient? (Older conventional furnaces may be only 60% efficient.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has the heat and air been serviced annually?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the A.C. properly sized? (Rule of thumb is 1 ton per 550 square feet.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are filters adequately sized and located where they can be easily replaced or cleaned?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is ductwork in good condition?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are there air registers in every room? (Older homes may not have registers in bathrooms.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is equipment located where it can be easily serviced, and is protected from physical damage?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is there excessive dirt or mildew around ceiling vents? (This results from filters not being changed or improper sizing of ducts and equipment.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is equipment located where normal noise levels will not be objectionable or annoying?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is there a separate disconnect switch for the compressor, if located out of sight from the breaker panel?

OK	NEEDS ATTENTION	ELECTRICAL
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the house have <i>at least</i> 100 amp service? Are the service entrance wires located at least 10 ft. above grade level or higher if over a driveway? Away from pool or other possible hazards?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the house wired with aluminum wiring? Some houses built from the mid 60's to early 70's may have dangerous wiring.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is exterior wiring installed properly with weatherproof outlet covers, switches and fixtures? Is exposed wiring installed in conduit?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are adequate electrical outlets provided in every room? (Any point along a wall should not be more than 6 feet from an outlet.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are light switches conveniently located at the entrance of each room, at both ends of hallways and at top and bottom of stairs?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the service panel located where easily accessible, or is it in a clothes closet, bathroom, pantry, or other potentially hazardous location?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are circuits labeled?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	For older homes: Are electrical outlets grounded? Are G.F.C.I. (shock saver) outlets provided in baths, kitchen, exterior and garage locations?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any handy man ("bootleg") or do-it-yourself type modifications to wiring?

OK	NEEDS ATTENTION	PLUMBING
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	What type of piping does the house have? Galvanized pipe can corrode or buildup mineral deposits. Copper pipe may be soldered with lead based solder (houses built before 1989). Polybutylene pipe has a history of coupling related failures.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is there a main shut off valve to the house, and do fixtures have individual shut off valves for servicing and repairs?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	How old is the water heater? Heaters become inefficient with age due to mineral buildup. (Normal life expectancy is 10-15 years.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	What is the distance from the water heater to the fixtures which will be used most often? (Water temperature drops approximately one degree per 1 ft. of piping.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the house have a main sewer drain clean-out?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are sinks and tubs free from rust, chips etc.?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If the house has a tiled shower, is there any indication of previous leaking or heavy caulking around the drain or base tiles? This could be an indication of a leaking shower pan, which can be expensive to repair.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any staining or rotted flooring around toilets, which could indicate leakage?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are washer and dryer hookups conveniently located?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is there an access panel to inspect the tub plumbing and drain?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If the house has a private well, has the water quality been tested? How far is the well from the septic system if present? How deep is the well?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the seller have a copy of the "well log?"
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If the house has a septic system; how large is the tank? When was it last serviced or pumped out? Where is the drainage field or seepage pit located?

OK	NEEDS ATTENTION	FIREPLACE
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any indications of previous smoking or not drawing properly?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the damper work?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is there a buildup of creosote in the flue? Has the fireplace ever been cleaned?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the top of the chimney have a rain cap/spark arrester?

OK NEEDS ATTENTION

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CRAWL SPACE OR BASEMENT

Is it dry? Any indications of previous water penetration? Any indication of previous plumbing leaks or poor drainage?
 Has adequate ventilation been provided?
 Is there adequate crawl space for inspections and repairs?
 Has the foundation been leveled or additional supports added?
 Any history of termite infestation or wood rot?

OK NEEDS ATTENTION

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

WOOD DESTROYING INSECTS

Has the house been previously treated for termites, carpenter ants or other wood destroying insects? If so, when? _____ What type of chemical was used? _____ Is the home under contract? Company and renewal date. _____
 Is soil in flower beds built up above the slab or weep holes providing easy access for termites or other pests?
 Any rotted wood on house? Any wood forms imbedded in slab or wood debris in crawl space? Any wood to ground contact? Any excessive moisture conditions? (These are common conductive conditions.)

OK NEEDS ATTENTION

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECURITY SAFETY AND CONVENIENCE

Is the front entrance visible from the street? Any shrubs or other places for attackers or burglars to hide?
 Are hose bibs conveniently located?
 Are exterior doors of solid core construction with quality locks and hardware?
 If security bars are present, can they be opened easily in an emergency?
 Is the home equipped with U.L. approved smoke detectors?
 Are both gas and electric dryer hookups available? Dryer vented to the exterior?
 Does the neighborhood have street lights?
 Is mail delivered to the house or neighborhood mail distribution center?
 House or curbside trash pickup? Is heavy trash pickup available?
 Can you obtain copies of building plans, permits, and operating manuals for appliances?

APPLIANCES

Check the condition of appliances included in the sale price:

APPLIANCE	AVERAGE LIFE SPAN	ACTUAL AGE	COLOR	OPERATION
Refrigerator	16 years	_____	_____	_____
Range/Oven	16 years	_____	_____	_____
Dishwasher	10 years	_____	_____	_____
Washer	11 years	_____	_____	_____
Dryer	14 years	_____	_____	_____

ARE OTHER SYSTEMS OR ITEMS PRESENT AND INCLUDED IN THE SALE PRICE?

	Yes	No	Condition	Cost to install or repair.
Security System	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Garage door opener	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Water Softener	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Sprinkler system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Pool or Spa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Intercom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
T.V. Antenna	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Ceiling fans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

Fireplace gas logs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Draperies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Storage buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

Is a seller's disclosure available? Any particular areas of concern?
 Make a list of questions to ask the seller, or to have your agent inquire of the seller.

What is the appraised value of the house? _____
 What is the seller's asking price of the house? _____
 Will the seller agree to a specific dollar amount for repairs? _____
 What is the estimated cost for repairs? _____

OTHER INFORMATION

School District: _____ Tax rate: _____
 Utility District: _____ Tax rate: _____
 In city or county? _____

HOUSE HUNTING TIPS

- Try not to see too many houses in one day. Looking at too many houses at one time can be confusing and exhausting.
- Are there any special features or "must have" items that you are looking for in your new house? Make a list.
- Be sure your real estate agent knows exactly what type of houses that you are looking for -- or at least as much as possible.
- When looking at houses, always bring along a map. Preferably one that you can write or make notes on.
- Bring along a camera or video recording equipment.
- Be sure to bring a note pad and tape measure with you. Make sketches of the floor plans that you like.
- When visiting houses, pick up a copy of the Seller's Disclosure Notice whenever possible. Also look for buyer information about special home features or recent improvements and repairs.
- Use a small rubber ball, marble, or pocket level to check for sloping floors, counter tops, door frames, etc.
- If you want to know what kind of utility bills to expect in your new house, you can call the utility company to get the highest and lowest utility bills for the last 12 months.
- Check with the county appraiser to get a rough idea of how much the house is worth and what your taxes will be.
- Flood insurance maps are usually available at the library.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions. Only foolish buyers don't ask questions.

Call **281.858.0817** to have **ON THE LEVEL HOME INSPECTIONS** inspect your new home. A "do-it-yourself" inspection is a good basis for comparing several houses to make a final selection. It can also help you to feel more certain about the quality and condition of the house you choose. ON THE LEVEL HOME INSPECTIONS will provide you with a non-biased evaluation of the condition of the home. This evaluation, combined with the information that the seller can supply and your own observations, helps you to eliminate much of the guess-work involved in buying a home. Reassurance that you are buying a sound home will give you peace of mind.

HOUSE ADDRESS _____
 AGENT'S NAME AND PHONE _____

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