



The Home Inspection

If you are planning to sell your home, then there is a good chance that it will be inspected once you have it under contract. There are some things that you as the homeowner can do to help the buyer to get a more positive inspection report. Obviously, a better report will help the buyer to see the home in a more positive light and, therefore, will increase the likelihood of the sale. Many issues with a home can be easily corrected and can be done practically at the last minute, while others are things that you need to do well in advance of the inspection. It is up to you to decide how much you want to do. Just keep in mind that the more you do, the better the inspection report will be when the buyer receives it.

During the inspection, the inspector will need to access the roof, attic, crawlspace, breaker panel, front and back yards, and all rooms in the home. Also, all built-in appliances will be inspected. Accordingly, all of these need to be accessible.

Interior

- Make sure any burned out light bulbs have been replaced.
- Ensure your smoke detectors are working - and that you have them in all areas where they are required. (They are required in all bedrooms, in hallways adjoining multiple bedrooms, and on all levels of the home.)
- Check under all of your sinks and make sure the drain lines are not leaking. If you see a leak, it is often as simple as tightening up the fittings on the drain line.
- Make sure all sinks and tubs drain well. Use some drain cleaner or take apart and clean the drain trap on any drains that are slow.
- Fix any leaking faucets.
- Caulk around tubs and showers as small cracks commonly form over time — especially in the corners.
- Check your commodes. If they are loose or rock, tighten the bolts or use shims to tighten them.
- Replace any broken windows, and replace missing or damaged screens.
- Make sure all windows open and close easily. Many people do not use their windows at all, and after years of non-use, they are often difficult to open.
- Adjust doors to make sure they open and close easily.
- Replace damaged weather stripping on exterior doors.
- Ensure that you have a clean filter in place on your HVAC system

Exterior

- Clean debris off of the roof. Replace any damaged shingles. Trim any tree limbs that are touching or close to touching the roof and exterior walls.
- Clean out your gutters. Fix any areas where the gutters are loose or sagging. Reattach or replace any missing or loose downspouts. Add downspout extensions, if necessary, to ensure that the water drains away from the home's foundation.
- Repair or replace rotted or damaged wood on the home.
- Scrape any loose or peeling paint on the siding and trim. Touch up any bare wood with new paint.
- Seal cracks in the brick veneer with a silicon-based exterior-grade caulk. You do not want to use a non-flexible mortar or concrete for this as it can cause further damage if the cracks try to close up at some point in the future.

Last Minute Details

As the time for the inspection approaches, there are some last-minute items that need to be taken care of.

These include:

- Clean your house. While home inspectors do not inspect the cleanliness of homes, they can be affected by the cleanliness or non-cleanliness of a home. It is only human for us to assume that a clean house is better maintained than a dirty home is, so in some ways, a clean home can result in a better inspection report.
- Make sure there is clear access to the attic, the electrical panel, the crawlspace under the home (if there is one), and the furnace.
- Leave the sink and the dishwasher empty since both of these will be inspected.
- Make sure the oven is empty as it will be turned on and inspected.
- If the home is vacant, ensure that all utilities are on and that all pilots are lit.

Day of Inspection

Plan to be gone from home during the inspection. (normally 2-3 hours)

- Take pets with you or secure them. Putting them in the backyard will not work as the inspector will have to go into the backyard.
- Leave keys to outbuildings, locked rooms, and closets since these will need to be inspected.

By doing these things, you will not eliminate every possible deficiency, but you will help to ensure that the inspection goes more smoothly and that fewer deficiencies are found. You may also want to consider having a pre-listing inspection done before or soon after listing your home. This inspection will identify the items that a prospective buyer's inspector would also find. This pre-listing inspection would give you the opportunity to correct the deficiencies before they potentially become issues for your buyer.