



# Preparing for a Home Inspection

## **Helpful Hints**

Having the property pre-inspected by a licensed real estate inspector at the beginning of the sale process will provide a list of specific defects, which can then be addressed by the homeowner (seller) as they prepare the home for showing and eventual sale.

Many of the items on this checklist can be handled with little or no cost. Alleviating these defects prior to the buyer's inspection will indicate to the inspector and buyer that the house has been properly maintained and give the Buyer confidence in making the purchase.

## **A. Exterior**

### **1. Foundation**

- a. Touch up all mortar cracks in foundation and brick veneer.
- b. Seal post tension cable port ends.
- c. Remove crawlspace vent covers.
- d. Add soil to any exposed slab footing.
- e. Make sure soil is not pulling away from foundation

### **2. Grading & Drainage**

- a. Soil line should have a positive slope away from foundation.
- b. Remove or grade soil or bedding material away from contact with siding or brick (Industry standard is 4"-6" of clearance).
- c. Eliminate area where water can pond near foundation.
- d. Gutters should be clear of debris, secured to home and have a positive slope that moves water to downspouts.
- e. Gutter downspouts should be pointed and extended to move water away from the home and out of flower beds.
- f. Make sure all gutter components are attached.
- g. Use gutter splash guards if you notice soil erosion.

### **3. Roof**

- a. Lower any raised flashing.
- b. Caulk any exposed nails.
- c. Remove any debris
- d. Cut back any tree limbs 5 feet from roof.
- e. Repair any damaged shingles.

### **4. General**

- a. Caulk any separated window/door frames.
- b. Caulk all vertical joints.
- c. Caulk missing/deteriorated expansion joints.
- d. Seal any pest entry points.
- e. Seal all openings in exterior walls to prevent water penetration (AC lines, clean outs, hose bibs, vents, electrical receptacles, etc.)

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- f. Repair or replace any wood rot (window & door trim, siding, chimney trim, fascia & soffit, etc.)
- g. If brick veneer, are weep holes free of obstruction?

## **B. Interior**

### **1. Attic**

- a. Is blown insulation even, level and covering all air condition space?
- b. Replace any missing/falling vertical batt insulation.
- c. Is batt insulation installed correctly (paper facing air conditioned space).
- d. Clear insulation away from Water Heater & HVAC vent pipes, Chimney vent pipe and canister lights if present.
- e. Make sure you have 1 inch clearance at roof decking for Water Heater and HVAC vent pipes.
- f. Remove any pest nest.
- g. Make sure all hardware is present, not damaged and tight on attic access ladder.
- h. Make sure attic access ladder is cut to the proper length.
- i. Is attic access ladder secured with the proper fasteners (must be 16D nail or 3 inch lag screw).
- j. Do you have any open splices in attic? If so, they need to be contained in an electrical junction box.
- k. Replace/repair any broken purlins or braces.
- l. Make sure firestops are in place around Fireplace Chimney and wall voids.

### **2. Doors and windows**

- a. Ensure that all windows, doors & garage doors are in proper operating condition. This includes:
  - Make sure all window & door locks are in working order.
  - Repair any doors/windows that do not latch or stick in the frame.
  - Repair any missing or damaged parts to windows or doors.
  - Make sure window security magnets are caulked and sealed.
  - Replace any missing or damaged window screens.
  - Repair any damaged or missing door weather stripping.
  - Unseal any painted windows.
  - Replace any broken, cracked or thermo pained windows that have lost their seal.
  - Repair/replace any damaged or mission window screens
  - Adjust or repair safety reverse mechanism for garage door opener.
  - If electric garage door is present, manual door lock should be removed or disabled.
  - Are all components of garage door present, tight & in good working order?

### **3. Walls, Floors and Ceiling**

- a. Seal and paint any cracked or water damaged sheetrock.
- b. Stop/seal off any water penetration points.
- c. Repair/replace any water damaged window sills.
- d. Repair any damaged or missing sheetrock.
- e. Repair any damage to flooring under kitchen sinks and lavatories due to water leaks.

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#### **4. Plumbing**

- a. Repair any leaking or dripping fixtures.
- b. Repair any leaks at kitchen & lavatories connections and traps.
- c. Clear any slow or clogged drains.
- d. Replace any broken knobs or drain stops that do not hold water.
- e. Check that toilets are secure to the floor.
- f. Repair any leaking or rusted interior toilet bowl components
- g. Caulk or re-grout any cracks in bath or shower.
- h. Check bathroom/utility room exhaust fans to ensure that they are in working order and are vented to an exterior location.
- i. Have exterior hose bibs been upgraded to anti-siphon?
- j. Repair any hot/cold lines that are reversed at kitchen sink, lavatories, shower or bathtubs (hot is always on the left).

#### **5. Electrical**

- a. Replace any burned out light bulbs.
- b. Label circuit breakers in panel box if they are not labeled.
- c. Replace or install any missing or damaged receptacle or switch covers.
- d. Tighten any loose receptacle or switch outlets
- e. Test all GFCI receptacles if present.

#### **6. Heating and Air Condition**

- a. It is recommended to have the HVAC system cleaned and serviced by an HVAC company prior to inspection. Provide receipt of work performed to verify.
- b. Replace any dirty or missing filters and clean any dirty air supply/return registers.
- c. If gas heater. Gas flex line should not enter cabinet. Hard pipe to the exterior, then attach flex line.
- d. Operate both systems; is the condensing unit outside noisy, blower noisy?
- e. Do you have proper clearance for ventilation around exterior unit?
- f. Is outside HVAC unit level?
- g. Is exterior unit level?
- h. Are the exterior units fins clean?
- i. Make sure suction line is insulated all the way to unit.
- j. Make sure there is no water standing in secondary drain pan.
- k. Remove any debris in secondary drain pan.
- l. Repair any rust in secondary drain pan.

#### **7. Water Heater**

- a. Repair/replace any corrosion at pipe connections with a dielectric union.
- b. If gas and contained in a closet, does it have upper and lower combustion air vents?
- c. If located in garage or room that opens to the garage, it must be at least 18 inches off the floor (gas or electric).
- d. Is the T&P line plumbed to the exterior?
- e. Is there a drain pan located under the water heater and is it plumbed to the exterior?
- f. Remove any debris located in pan.
- g. Repair/replace a loose or missing fire collar.

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- h. Make sure flue pipe is secure to top of Water Heater.
- i. No storage items in a gas Water Heater closet.

### **8. Fireplace/Chimney**

- a. Install damper stop if you have artificial logs installed.
- b. Repair any cracks in the firebox.
- c. Starter bar should be caulked.
- d. Have cleaned if dirty.
- e. Make sure all fireplace components are in working order, damper, screen, doors, etc.
- f. Make sure starter bar is caulked.
- g. Touch up masonry chimney caps.

## **C. Appliances**

### **1. Oven, ranges & cook-tops**

- a. Are all burners working?
- b. Replace/repair any damaged or missing control knobs, reflector pans, lights, etc.
- c. Does range have an anti-tip device installed?
- d. Does oven work in bake & broil settings?
- e. Is the oven gasket damaged?
- f. Is the inside of oven clean?
- g. Make sure grease filter on the exhaust fan is present and clean.

### **2. Dishwasher**

- a. Does it complete a full cycle and water drains?
- b. Make sure all baskets are present with no visible rust and rollers are not broken.
- c. Does spray arm operate, does soap door open, and does drying elements work?
- d. Is dishwasher secured to cabinet?
- e. Any signs of leaks?
- f. If food disposal present is there a air gap or high loop installed?

### **3. Food Disposal**

- a. Is disposal free of debris?
- b. Repair any signs of rust or corrosion.
- c. Is it noisy or vibrates bad?
- d. Is disposal supplied with a appliance cord (not direct wired) and properly secured?
- e. Is the splash guard present and not damaged?
- f. Make sure the drain line does not have a kink in the line.

### **4. Dryer Vent**

- a. Make sure dryer vents to exterior.
- b. Make sure dryer vent cap is free of lint.
- c. Make sure dryer vent cap has a flapper instead of a screen.

### **5. Smoke Detectors**

- a. Make sure one is installed in each sleeping room, outside of each sleeping room in the general area and one on each floor.
- b. Make sure batteries are charged.

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**NOTE:** This checklist is for educational and guidance purposes only. This checklist is designed to empower the homeowner in preparing their home for inspection by a perspective buyer and then a licensed real estate inspector. This list is not designed nor does it replace the need for inspection of the property by a licensed real estate inspector. This list does not represent a complete representation of items inspected by a licensed real estate inspector. This checklist, while designed to be helpful in identifying defects common in a home, is not a complete checklist of possible defects that may occur in any given property.

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