

# Home Sellers: Free Home Inspection Checklist



OVER 18 YEARS EXPERIENCE  
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Surrey-North Delta-Richmond-Delta-South Surrey

This home seller's checklist will help you gain a clearer knowledge of your home's overall condition. Upon completion of the checklist, you will be able to make reasonably sound decisions regarding repairs and improvements that may increase your home's marketability. It will also give you peace of mind of its overall condition.

Remember, much like marketing your car, you wouldn't try to sell it without making it clean and ready. It just makes good sense! The biggest challenge will be being honest with yourself.

## 1) Check the major systems.

There are many concerns and objectives that a home purchaser is looking for when purchasing a home. Size, style and location are a home buyer's primary concern but the condition of the basic structure and major components/systems are next on the list. Many buyers may not want to be investing large sums of money to correct problems in such critical areas. A thorough investigation of the following major items should be made in order to determine if they are serviceable.

If you are unsure of some of the item requirements in this section then it may be appropriate to enlist the services of a professional home inspector to help you out.

### Roof structure and covering:

- this is an obvious concern for potential purchasers...

- what condition are the shingles/coverings in?
- are there missing or damaged shingles?
- How old is the roof covering?
- Are the gutters clean?
- Are the flashings, soffits and fascia in good condition
- Identify how much insulation there is in the attic
- Are there roof vents and are they in working condition?

## Foundation, basement, and/or crawl space

- sometimes hard to determine in a houses with a finished basement
- offset cracks in the outside foundation or basement floor
- water stains or evidence of water penetration
- gaps or openings that may allow insect or water penetration
- wood /earth contact (potential rot or insect infestation)

## Central heating and air conditioning systems

- are these systems in working order?
- When was the last time they were serviced?
- How old are they and are they near the expected lifespan?

## Electrical System

- are all the outlets and switches working?
- Do all the outlets and switches have face plates?
- Make sure that there is access to he electrical panel (do not attempt to do any modifications or repairs to an electrical panel unless you are a qualified professional)
- Replace all burnt out light bulbs
- Check all GFCI outlets (outside and in the bathrooms) to make sure that they trip

## Plumbing system

- look for any leaking pipes, sinks, taps
- make sure that all sinks have "P" traps
- how old is the hot water tank? Is it due for replacement?
- Make sure that your toilets are in good working order
- Are there waste vents coming through the roof or are they venting into the attic?

## **2) Maintenance & Improvements**

The maintenance improvements listed below are relatively easy and inexpensive to make, yet they can substantially improve a home's appearance, efficiency and comfort.

- Trim trees and shrubs which touch or overhang the house.
- Apply new caulking and weatherstripping as needed around windows and doors.

- Clean gutters of debris and leaves, repair or replace cracked or broken gutters, downspouts and extensions to ensure proper drainage
- Replace bathroom caulk or grout where necessary to prevent seepage and improve appearance.
- Ventilate closed basements and crawl spaces, or install a dehumidifier to prevent excessive.
- Regrade soil around the house to prevent ponding of water next to the foundation
- Replace dirty filters in the heating and ventilating systems
- Have the heating, ventilating and air-conditioning systems professionally serviced
- Have chimneys professionally cleaned & inspected, and install chimney hoods and caps as required. For wood-burning installations insist on a WETT Certified Technician.

### **Pay attention to details.**

Fixing even minor items can go a long way toward improving that important first impression of your home. Here are some improvements which you might consider:

- Repair leaky faucets
- Tighten loose door knobs
- Replace damaged screens
- Replace broken panes of glass - cloudy sealed-pane units can often be replaced inexpensively, and will drastically improve the appearance of a window or patio door.
- Replace burned-out light bulbs, and wherever possible, replace broken light fixtures
- Secure loose railings
- Patch small holes in walls and ceilings and repaint
- Repair or replace faded or peeling wallpaper
- Repair and coat the driveway

### **Take safety precautions.**

Pay attention to items relating to protecting the home and its occupants from danger. The following are important safety precaution which home buyers will appreciate, are relatively easy to implement and shouldn't cost a lot. And they'll create a great impression!

- Installing good quality smoke detectors
- Installing a good quality carbon-monoxide detector
- Ensure adequate outdoor lighting, especially in suburban and rural locales
- 'GFCI' outlets outdoors and in wet locations such a bath & laundry areas.
- Keep the stairwells tidy and free of debris and obstructions, and leave plenty of clearance around the garage door, electrical panel and furnace.
- Keep flammables and combustibles away from the furnace and other utility areas.
- If you have direct entry from the garage to the interior of the home, consider installing a hydraulic or other form of auto-closure device on the door.
- Check the 'down' tension on garage door openers, and ensure that the door reverses without an excessive amount of pressure.

## **Make cosmetic improvements.**

An attractive, clean and tidy appearance will enhance your home's appeal. In addition to making any necessary repairs, remember to:

- Keep the lawn mowed and the house 'picked-up'
- Clean the exterior walls & trim, and wash the windows squeaky clean.
- Open the shades and curtains to create a bright, inviting atmosphere.
- Pay particular attention to the cleanliness and comfort of the kitchen and bathrooms.

## **Prepare for the buyer's inspection**

More and more purchasers are requesting pre-purchase inspections. It's a good idea to assemble in advance, the various house records that can be used to answer questions from the purchaser and their inspector.

You should try to have on hand:

- Appliance receipts, service records and warranties
- Information on the age of major components such as the roof coverings, furnace, air-conditioner, etc.
- Major component warranties (e.g. roofing, siding, windows, carpeting furnace and other appliances)
- Heating, water and electric bills from at least the past 12 months

How did your house make out?

Hopefully, this home seller's checklist has helped you gain a clearer knowledge of your home's overall condition - from a buyer's perspective. Now you can make repairs or improvements will increase your home's marketability.

And remember, you ARE marketing your house - you probably wouldn't try to sell your car without making it clean and ready. It just makes good sense! Of course, even if your house is already in optimum condition, a professional home inspection can also be a good marketing tool. Just leave a copy of the report on the kitchen table for agents and purchasers to read.