

Your SIS Home Inspection Checklist

This checklist is a basis in which we do parts of our inspection. This can be helpful to be used as a preliminary review of the home but should not be used in place of a home inspection as you do not have the background and expertise in which to conduct the evaluation. This list can be used in conjunction with the home inspection and assist in you coming up with your own list of things you want to get accomplished or resolved and associated expenses. This list is not to nitpick with cosmetic deficiencies that the average person can see more to look for defects and aging that could cost unexpected fees. This typically requires a trained eye.

Basic Checklist for the Grounds

The basic principle here is water control to help keep the basement dry, condition of material, and safety. Keep this in mind when checking these areas and the basement, crawlspace, or slab.

- Driveway (material condition and drainage)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Grading against the house (assure it pitches downward away for at least 3')

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Gutter Leader extensions (assure water is draining out at least 3')

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Vegetation (trimmed away from the house at least a foot)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Walks and steps (trip hazards and proper railings)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Retaining walls (proper drainage, improper pitch, and condition)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

Basic Checklist for the Exterior Envelope

The main principle for the exterior envelope is to prevent water entry into the walls and interior areas. So, when looking at these areas, think long term and *will* these areas protect the interior long term. Many damages can be hidden so look for the signs—this typically takes a trained eye.

- Roof surfaces (missing, aging, and damaged areas of the surface material)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Roof penetrations, valleys, and ridges (aging, damage, debris)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Gutters (all homes need gutters! Clean, pitched, no sags, all connected)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Siding and trim (decay, loose, damaged)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Foundation (cracks, discoloration, movement, concerns)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____



Front

Basic Checklist for the Exterior Structure

In this section of the home, we need to really think safety. The wrong type or size fastener, bracket or support can cause injury from collapsing decks, porches, and balconies. Make sure you understand what components work with what and what is needed for strength and stability.

- Decks, porches, and balconies (brackets, fasteners, footings, columns, carrying structure, railings, safety, stability, rot, pitch, and sealant all need to be evaluated)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- House side walls and roof lines (check the structure for bows and unevenness)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Door and window frames (look for stability, under bow windows, and square framing)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Proper clearance from grade to siding (if not check for rot, some can be hidden)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Masonry Chimneys (Cracks to bricks or mortar, gaps, missing or worn crown, missing flue cap, branches over chimney, level 2 flue inspection)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____



Rear

Basic Checklist for the Attic

Every house has an attic. This is the space between the ceiling joists and the roof sheathing. Sometimes it is not accessible yet sometimes it is, but a hatch was not installed. You need to know the difference and if possible, gain access to this area for review. If there is no floor it is strongly recommended you not walk in this space as it can be dangerous. This area has a lot of structure that takes a well-trained person to know if it is installed properly and performing as intended. Over 70% of the homes built do not have proper ventilation so this is a key here.

- Attic access (large enough to get into attic to work, no cables or wires near opening, proper framing, safe and working pulldown stairs)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Roof sheathing, rafters, studs, joists (visible staining from water or potential mold, cracks, movement, disconnected areas bowed, or missing collar ties, damage)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Proper ventilation (cannot have soffit, gable end and ridge – Either gable end or soffit and ridge, is ventilation open all the way through)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Insulation (Vermiculite may contain asbestos, type, amount, condition, gaps, recessed lighting, attic opening insulation kit)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Electrical (lights, outlets if needed, cables, recessed lights)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- HVAC unit/furnace (working space, lighting, filter, Condensate system, Line set, connectors, bracing, case condition, aging)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Ductwork (insulation, bracing, connectors, No kinks, condition)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

Basic Checklist for the Interior Rooms

The interior rooms typically have most of the cosmetic concerns but not usually a structural impact. This area, when furnished, has limitation from the furniture to see the surfaces beyond them. Do your best to look at each room as if it does not have anything in it. Check all surfaces, and components, but as the standards say do not move any personal belongings. Cracks can be common, and you will not know if they are related to structural concerns without the training.

- Surfaces (walls, ceilings, floors, doors, windows, and built -ins, check inside closets, closet doors, check walls and floors for sloping, and ceilings for sagging)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Stairs (railings, risers, treads, trip hazards, level, lighting, deflection, support)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Masonry Fireplaces (check for cracks, missing mortar, stains on wall above FP, damper, flue, firebrick, cleanout)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Gas Fireplaces (check for shutoff, "C" clamp, damper, gas line, fire log, improper staining)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Electrical (this can be tricky so stay with the basics and let a trained person do the rest, check light switches and outlets for operation, look for exposed wires and cables)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- GFCI/AFCI circuits (check them by pressing the test button and make sure they trip and reset. Know where the reset is before testing)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Plumbing (run water and check for sounds, slow drains, hot water, and leaks below)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Appliances and exhaust fans (check interior conditions, gaskets, basic effectiveness with unit in operation, aging, and if you want to replace calculate that in)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Garage (rot & operation of overhead doors, safety stops, rot or damage to frames, water, and potential mold staining, GFCI, floor slope, insect damage, fume barrier, fire door)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

Basic Checklist for the Basement/Crawlspace

The basement/crawlspace typically has many systems to it. Break them down and do just one system at a time. 1st structure, next plumbing, then HVAC and electrical last as laid out in this check list. Always start at the stairs and end at the stairs to not miss anything. Take it slow and do not get sidetracked with more than one system. If you do not know something but it looks strange make a note and move on. The biggest expenses in the basement are foundation, water control and structural. These often take someone fully trained to assess.

- Foundation (look for water/efflorescence staining, cracks to walls, discoloration, bowing or movement, check sill and rim joist, if visible for insect damage, water stains, rot)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Sump pump/pump grinders (check pump operation, drainage at least 3 feet from foundation on exterior for sump pump, proper sealed cover, electrical, check valve, bracing, water staining)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Wood framing (check floor joists, beam, columns for rot, movement, temporary supports, or changes made, insect infestation, water damage)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Stairs (railing, treads, risers, stringers, fasteners, top support)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Plumbing (Drain lines for aging, leaks, pitch, Supply pipes for corrosion, pitting, leaks, proper supports, and shutoff valves)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Boiler heat (check fuel supply, burner, firebox, check for leaks, corrosion, last time serviced and call company, check circulating pumps, bleeder valves, exhaust, damper, casing condition, aging)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Furnace heat (check fuel supply, burner, firebox, check fan, filter, casing, ductwork, connections, dampers)
Opening a firebox can cause burns, let the pros do this even though it is important.

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Fuel supply (look for buried oil tank supply lines, check condition of fuel lines, if oil make sure lines are protected, check for leaks, check oil tank if present, preform ultrasound test on tanks older than 18 years per EPA)

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

- Electrical (check for open electrical boxes, exposed splices, damaged cables, loose cables, GFCI circuit, missing cover plates) NOTE: **Only an electrician or licensed inspector should remove the electrical panel cover as it can cause arcing and severe shock, let the pros handle this.**

NOTES: _____

Location: _____

This is not at all a full list of all the systems and components a licensed inspector will inspect. It is a quality list that can assist you in getting to know the house more and even walking through with your inspector. Have this list handy to use as a working sheet. Also make notes on things that are important to you even if it is not part of this list such as paint condition. Paint can be an expense even if it is a cosmetic concern and may be worthy of noting.

