

Complete Home Inspection Checklist By: Waypoint Property Inspection

The Complete Home Inspection Checklist

Exterior

On my home inspections, I like to start on the exterior and work my way counter-clockwise, starting at the front door. Here's what you should look for.

- Doorbell Function
- All Doors Operation/Seal/Locks
- Siding Condition - is it failing, damaged, or has evidence of repairs?
- Paint Condition - is it failing, damaged, or has evidence of repairs?
- Garage Door Exterior - Any signs of damage or repairs?
- Soffits - Any signs of damage or signs of repairs? This includes painted soffits as that can limit airflow.
- Window Conditions/[Seals](#) - [Weep hole check](#).
- Fascia Condition
- Grading - Is the Earth sloped away from the home?
- Vegetation/Mulch - Is the vegetation too close to the home?
- Screen Enclosures - Damaged screens, condition of seals, operations of doors.
- Outlet/Electricity Function/Safety - Check for [proper polarity](#), [GFCI protection](#), and exterior covers to keep water out.
- Hose Bibs - Does water flow? Any leaks/dripping faucets?
- Structure - Are there any signs of [structural settlement](#)? (typically this is a concern of aged homes: 1950's and older)
- Were there any signs of structural repairs, enclosures, or additions?
- Gutter presence & condition - Downspouts, elbows, and extensions present.

Roof

Next, I like to make my way onto the roof and start at the bottom. I walk counter-clockwise in a spiral making my way up so I can view every inch of the roof. You should only do this if you are experienced and can safely walk on the roofing material. [Learn how to inspect your own roof in more detail.](#)

- When was the last permit of the roof? Is this roof permitted?
- Shingle/Tile/Metal Condition - Any signs of damage, rust, broken tiles, missing shingles/tiles, or repairs?
- Ventilation - Are there proper ridge vents or offset ridge vents? Are they properly secured?
- Exposed Nails - Any exposed nails that should be tarred over?
- Plumbing Stacks - Are they protruding at least 6 inches off of the roofline? Any damaged flashing?
- Gooseneck Vents - Are they all clear of debris and have proper flaps/screens? The dryer vent should not have a screen, only a flap. The dryer vent is typically clogged.
- Visible Flashing Condition
- What is the estimated life expectancy of the roof? ...Be sure to keep in mind when you should start budgeting for a roof replacement.
- Are there any signs of damage, repairs, or manufacturer defects?
- Are there any active leaks? If so, is the plywood decayed? (this is the wood your shingles rest on to be secured.)

Garage

Next, I like to work in the garage. I start by taking a good overview, then examine the garage counter-clockwise from the right side near the garage door. I examine the wall, floors, and ceilings.

- Garage Electric - Are the garage outlets on [GFCI](#) and functional with proper polarity?
- Garage Door Opener Function/Condition - signs of damage/aging.
- Sensors - check the sensors for garage door reversing when something is placed in front. Also, the sensors should be a max of 6-inches from the ground.
- Reversing with Resistance - Does the door reverse with resistance? Simply try to hold the door from continuing to go like by emulating a car in the way. Be careful not to do this too hard as you may break the door.

- Fire Rating - Every part of the garage should be fire-rated. No plywood at openings into the attic or a window door leading into the house. The door to the house should be self-closing.
- Walls/Floors/Ceilings - Any signs of damage or repairs?

Relevant Articles

- [How to inspect your garage door](#)

Electrical System

Typically, I check the electrical system when I am walking the exterior or in the garage as most electrical panels in Florida are there. However, for the organization of this checklist, I made it into its own category. I think this goes without saying to be sure to use an abundance of caution when evaluating electrical panels. Do not take off electrical panel covers unless you are a professional, but if you don't listen to me, at least turn off the main breaker. Pro Tip: fingers or tools should never enter the box.

- Panel Type - What's the brand of the panel? Is it a [circuit breaker panel or fuse box?](#) Look for [FPE](#), [GTE](#), [Challenger Panels](#).
- Wiring Type - What type of wiring does the home have? Be on the lookout for [cloth](#) or [aluminum](#), or [knob and tube wiring](#).
- [AFCI](#) - Check for AFCI breakers at bedroom circuits. Test the AFCI breakers.
- [GFCI](#) - Check for GFCI breakers/outlets at all bathrooms, kitchens, and exteriors. Test GFCI outlets/breakers.
- [Grounding](#) - Are all outlets/wiring properly grounded. Check for [ground/neutral connection at subpanels](#).
- Is there any exposed or unsafe wiring?
- Any signs of scorching/overheating or arcing?
- Check for proper circuit breaker size/wiring size for each appliance/room.
- Check circuit breaker operation by turning on/off each breaker.
- How old is the electrical system?
- When was the system last updated?
- Relevant permits.

Relevant Articles

- [Electrical Category](#)

Plumbing

As with electrical, I typically check these systems as I get to them in the garage or while inspecting the interior. But again, for the sake of organization, I made it into its own section.

- Supply Piping Type/Condition - CPVC, Copper, Pex, [Polybutylene](#)? Any signs of leaks or repairs?
- Water Heater Type [Brand/Age](#) - Any signs of damage/rust/leaks.
- Drain Piping Type/Condition - PVC, [Cast Iron](#), [Orangeburg](#)? Any signs of leaks or repairs?
- Drain Types & Condition - Check for P-Traps at every drainage point. A note on [S-Traps](#).
- Water Pressure - Issues with [low water pressure](#).
- Any signs of [water hammering](#)?
- [TPR Valve & Discharge Tube Condition](#)
- Gas Units - Check for [sediment trap](#).
- Any signs of gas leaks or gas safety hazards?

Relevant Articles

- [Plumbing Category](#)

HVAC - Air Conditioning

I typically check the air conditioning when I come to the systems at the exterior and in the garage or interior, however, I have put it into its own section for the checklist. Be sure to start the air conditioner when you arrive at the property so you can test it fully.

- Brand/Age - [How long does an HVAC system last?](#)
- [Any signs of damage/leaks or mold?](#)
- Is the system in good working condition? Check for air temperature differential of 14-24 degrees. This is the temperature of the air going into the unit (return) versus the temperature of the air coming out of the unit (supply).
- Ductwork Condition
- Is a float switch present at the air handler?
- Is there a pan under the air handler?

- Air handler filter - condition and presence.
- Evaporator Coil Condition
- Turn on the Heat and check for operation.
- Gas Units - Check for [sediment traps](#) and that the flames inside the heater are a blue-ish color.
- Any signs of gas leaks or gas safety hazards?
- Appears to operate well throughout (good airflow on forced hot air systems).
- Flues: no open seams, slopes up to chimney connection
- Air filter(s) clean
- No asbestos on heating pipes, water pipes or air ducts.
- Separate flues for gas/oil/propane and wood/coal
- No combustion gas odor

Relevant Articles

- [HVAC Category](#)

Attic

I typically inspect the attic after the garage. Only inspect the attic if you can safely walk around. You can get seriously injured if you fall through the attic floor.

- Insulation - Check for condition and amount.
- Trusses - Any signs of damage or alterations?
- Roof Leaks - Any signs of leaking?
- Electrical - Any signs of exposed wiring?
- Vents - Do all [vents discharge through the roof properly?](#) Check [dryer vent](#).

Relevant Articles

- [Attic Issues](#)

Interior & Appliances

My last item is the interior. I typically start the front door and work my way room by room, counter-clockwise. I check every outlet with an outlet tester for proper polarity, open every window, operate every faucet/fan/shower/toilet/switch/etc.

- Any signs of moisture intrusion?

- Window conditions/seals.
- Any electrical issues at the outlets or lights?
- Sink drainage
- Faucet operation - check for hot water/pressure.
- Toilet operation - see if the toilet is loose on the floor or [signs of leaking](#).
- Shower operation - check for hot water/pressure.
- Does the interior of the home have any safety issues such as improper steps?
- Do all of the appliances function properly?
- Doors
- Walls, Floors, Ceilings - Condition
- Air Registers and Return Vent - Operation.
- Handrail at stairs

Concluding

A home inspection is critical when you purchase a home. You should always hire a professional home inspector when buying a home. You can even consider a [pre-listing inspection](#) when you sell your home.

This complete home inspection checklist should include almost everything your home inspector will evaluate. Feel free to use it alongside your home inspection, but it should not be used a substitute.

Be sure to use the above list and take notes on any of your findings so you can ask questions later. Like any person/company working in the Real Estate industry, we want you to feel comfortable with the purchase and ensure all your questions are answered!

We will update this article frequently as we see fit. If you believe we missed something or have a question, comment below!

Visit the full article at <https://waypointinspection.com/home-inspection-checklist/>.

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