

The DIY Guide to HOME INSPECTIONS



**Detect structural problems early,
save on repairs and protect your
biggest investment.**



SOLUTION FOR CONSTRUCTION

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DIY - Home Health Checklist

Building Component	Condition			
<u>Roof</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Poor</u>
<u>Exterior:</u>				
Roof Sag - Look for signs of sagging or distortion				
Roof Gutters - Any obvious holes or evidence of water leaks from surrounding gutters				
Antenna - Any external TV antenna				
<u>Interior:</u>				
Sarking - Is a silver foil visible (might be blue or brown) across the top of the roof? The foil (sharking) is an insulation component, and it also acts as a barrier during heavy rain conditions.				
<u>House Exterior</u>				
<u>External Brick Walls:</u>				
Wall Cracks - Look for signs of cracking to external brick walls particularly above or below window and door opening. Check for gaps between the window frames and surrounding brickwork.				
Rising Damp - Check if the lower bricks are crumbling or have an excessively white powdery finish due to rising damp.				
Weep Holes - Check if there are any visible weep holes (drainage/ ventilation slots in every 3 rd or 4 th brick) to the external brick walls.				
<u>Cladding:</u>				
Bowing Walls - Check for signs of wall frame bowing, sagging or distortion. This might be visible on long straight sections of wall or around openings of windows and doors.				

Decay Damp - Check for signs of decay damage or crude patching.

Paint Finish - Is external paint deteriorating. Old houses may be lead-based paints that can prove potentially hazardous while sanding.

Fascia and Eaves:

Check for visible signs of decay particularly to the internal and external corners of the timber fascia or water staining to the soffit linings.

Building Grounds:

Sprinklers - Do lawn sprinklers spray on the building?

Vegetation - Are there vegetation making contact with the walls or foundation of the building? Vegetation can hold moisture in wood and masonry walls and foundations.

Grade - Does the ground around the building divert water toward or away from the foundation?

Downspouts - Check that downspouts have splash blocks to divert rainwater away from the base of the building.

Fences - Check for decay, corrosion or excessive movement to the perimeter fences. Deteriorating fences can be costly to fix and can involve conflict with some neighbours.

Verandas, Decks & Pergolas:

Movement - Does the veranda/patio structure move when you push against the roof or deck support posts?

Bounce - Does the deck structure feel bouncy when you walk across or jump on the deck?

Decay - Are there visible signs of decay to the handrails, decking, beams, and posts?

Gutter - Ensure there are a gutter and downpipe to the veranda roof.

House Interior:

Internal Walls and Ceiling:

Moisture - Check if the plaster on the walls or ceiling is damp. Note that common areas this can occur are below windows and diagonal stress cracks from the tops of window openings.

Water Infiltration/Stains - Check for wet stains on the ceiling, around windows or on lower walls. Are walls bulging or bubbling?

Floor & Doors:

Floor Sag - Are there any parts of the floor that sag. Some permanent deflection can be acceptable, but large amounts or progressive sags indicate structural failure or incorrect framing size.

Free Swinging Doors - Ensure doors open and swing freely on the hinges. Doors that feels like there is resistance may indicate uneven settling in walls/floors or pressure being exerted on interior walls from the roof.

Carpets - Check condition of carpets. Particularly around windows and door openings as sunlight can cause considerable damage to the carpets around the glazing areas.

Floor Tiling - Check for excessive cracking to the floor tile areas. It can indicate excessive movement to the concrete slab or timber floor structure below. Listen for tiles that crackle under your feet or sound hollow when walked upon.

Windows:

Cracks - Look for obvious cracks within the window glass.

Decay - Check for signs of decay around the internal timber window as this may be caused by water leaks.

Stairs:

Loose Hand Rails - Check the handrails to establish whether they feel secure and not loose.

Riser Heights - Check that stairs are easy to walk up and down. For example, even/matching rise heights to each step. Note that many spiral staircases do not comply with the building code and should not be replaced.

Basement and Crawlpace:

Moisture - Check walls and floors for signs of excessive moisture

Flooding - Any signs of periodic flooring?

Pests - Any signs of vermin infiltration or termites?

Ventilation - Are unheated basements/crawlspaces vented?

Insulation - Are floors above unheated basements/crawl spaces insulated?

House Interior Wet Areas

Bathrooms:

Exhaust Fan - Does it work?

Bath Tub - Is it rusting?

Loose Tiles - Check for cracks, dislodged tiles or movement.

Vanity Moisture Damage - Open the vanity cupboard doors and look for signs of water staining, decay or leaking plumbing.

Silicone seal - Check that the splash back tiles above the bath and vanity cupboard are correctly sealed with silicone.

Shower Screen - Check for cracks

Toilets:

Leaks - Flush the toilet and watch for signs of leakage behind the toilet pan. Before flushing; lift the toilet lid to see whether the toilet cistern is continuously leaking water into the toilet pan.

Loose Toilet Pan - Push the toilet pan slightly on each side with each knee to establish whether the toilet pan is loose or well secured on the floor.

Kitchen:

Moisture Damage - Check for signs of moisture swelling to the benchtop particularly around the sink or cupboard doors. Also look inside under sink cupboard for apparent signs of leakage, water staining or decay.

Stove and Oven - Check the functionality of the stove and oven.

Exhaust Fan - If there is an exhaust fan above the stove. Check if it is ducted externally to see whether there is an exhaust vent pipe projecting through the roof tiles or through the external wall.

Laundry:

Wash Tub Rust - Check for corrosion particularly around the base of the wash tub cabinet.

Splash Back Tiles - Ensure splash back tiles are installed on the wall around the top of the washtub cabinet.

Floor Drain - Check if there is a floor waste drain in the middle of the laundry floor. Building code does not require it, but it is handy if your washing machine hose burst accidentally.

Plumbing:

Leakage - Are there any evidence of leakage from supply or waste pipes?

Pipe Material - Check the material of the supply pipe. Copper and Brass are okay. Galvanised steel or iron will not last. Lead poses potential health risks.

Operation - Check that faucets, drains and floor drains are working properly.

Heating and Ventilation

Steam Heat:

Leakage - Ensure no leakage in boiler tanks or pipes. Look for stains and foot on the floor around pipes. Leaking can be caused by rusted pipes, broken traps or valves, and pipes clogged with mineral scale build-up.

Hot Water Unit:

Age of Hot Water Unit - Check if hot water unit appears to be old or if there are any signs of corrosion or water leakage.

General:

Heat - Ensure heat is distributed evenly and that there are no sudden changes in temperature around areas of the house.

Thermostats - Check if thermostats work correctly to control room temperature.

Electrical

Electrical Service:

Main Service - Check if the main electrical service to the building is adequate. 100 amps are the minimum by modern standards.

Wires - Check if insulation is rayed on existing wires or if there are bare wires exposed in any unsafe locations.

Switches - Ensure all the lights are operated by a proper wall switch.

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