



# *Understanding* HOME INSPECTIONS

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A home inspector's role is not to create a repair list for the seller, nor is the seller obligated to fix everything found in the report. Sellers are not required to present a flawless home. Instead, the inspection identifies **potential health and safety concerns** to help you make an informed decision.

A skilled Realtor® is invaluable during this phase, helping you interpret the report and navigate any potential negotiations with the seller.

## **New Construction Homes Need Inspections Too**

Even with a brand-new home, an inspection is recommended. Unlike existing homes, cosmetic defects in new construction may hold greater importance since you're paying for a pristine property.

## *Key Things to Keep in Mind About Inspections*

- **No home is perfect** – Expect some minor issues.
- **Some problems only appear over time** – A few hours of inspection can't catch everything
- **Homeownership comes with maintenance costs** – Budget accordingly.
- **Minor issues may be overlooked** – Inspections focus on major concerns.
- **Contractors may have differing opinions** – One may suggest minor repairs, while another recommends full replacement.
- **The "Last Man In" Theory** – Some contractors hesitate to make small repairs due to liability concerns, preferring full replacements instead.



## *Why Inspectors May Miss Issues*

Understanding these factors helps set realistic expectations and ensures you're prepared for homeownership. Trust your Realtor® to guide you through the process and make informed decisions.

- **Changing conditions** – Snow, storage, or lack of access can limit visibility.
- **Time constraints** – Inspections take hours, not days.
- **Generalists vs. specialists** – Inspectors provide broad evaluations, not expert diagnoses.
- **Hidden problems** – Some issues only appear after removing carpets, cabinets, or fixtures.
- **Inspections reduce risk, but don't eliminate it** – They improve your odds of identifying issues but aren't a guarantee against surprises.

## *What to Expect*

A home inspection helps identify potential issues before you buy. Here are key areas that should always be examined:

- **Structure** – The foundation and framing should be strong enough to withstand weather, gravity, and surrounding soil.
- **Exterior** – Includes sidewalks, driveways, windows, doors, siding, trim, and drainage. Also covers porches, decks, and balconies.
- **Roofing** – The inspector will check the roof's age, drainage, shingles, gutters, skylights, chimneys, and potential for water pooling.
- **Plumbing** – Covers water supply, drainage systems, water heater, sump pumps, and fuel storage. Issues like poor pressure or rust may signal bigger problems.
- **Electrical** – Includes service panels, breakers, fuses, wiring, and outlets to ensure safety and functionality.
- **Heating & Cooling** – The inspector will assess the HVAC system, flues, vents, chimneys, water heater age, energy rating, and capacity.
- **Interior** – Walls, ceilings, floors, stairways, cabinets, and garage systems are checked for leaks, insect damage, rot, or construction defects.
- **Ventilation & Insulation** – Attics, crawl spaces, and unfinished areas should have proper insulation and ventilation to prevent mold and moisture damage.
- **Fireplaces** – Vents, flues, and fuel-burning appliances should be inspected for safety and efficiency.