

# DIY Inspection Checklist

## General

- Windows: Check that they open and close easily. Any broken panes?
- Doors: Check that they open and close completely. Do they stick? Lock? Scrape the floor at any point?
- Floors: Any creaking? Obvious unevenness? Place a marble on the floor and see if it rolls to check for slant. (Do the marble test in multiple locations in the house.)
- Walls: Any holes?
- Trim: Any damage or missing pieces? Animals can be brutal to wood trim, and matching old trim is almost impossible.
- Lights: Turn on every light switch to make sure they work. (Note: If the home is unoccupied and the power is turned off, this won't be possible.)
- Stairs: Walk up and down the stairs and touch every spindle on the railing. Do they seem sturdy or wobbly? Do the stairs creak? Are any parts missing?
- Outlets: Get a voltage tester at your local big box home improvement store for less than \$20 and test every single outlet.
- Furnace: Look at the furnace. Are there any stickers that indicate installation date?
- Water Heater: Check for water around the base of the water heater. Any stickers on this to indicate installation date?

## Kitchen

- Cabinets/Drawers: Open every cabinet and drawer, then close again. Do they move smoothly? Does anything prevent any of the doors or drawers from easy use?
- Oven: Open and inspect the oven. Does the door open slowly, indicating the springs still work? What is the condition of the oven? Turn on the oven to make sure it works.
- Stove: Turn on each burner on the stove. If gas, turn on and turn off before turning the next one on to make sure they all turn on by themselves, rather than catching the flame from an adjacent burner. If they all work individually, turn them all on to make sure they all work at the same time. If electric, just turn them all on.
- Fridge: Open the refrigerator/freezer doors. Do they open easily? Note: DoNOT do this if the home is vacant and appears to have been vacant for some time. Trust me on this one. Assume it must be replaced.
- Dishwasher: Open and inspect the dishwasher. Do the springs work on the dishwasher door?
- Faucet: Run the water in the sink. How is the pressure?
- Garbage Disposal: Does the garbage disposal run? (Don't forget to turn on the water before you test it.)
- Cabinet Interiors: Take a good look at the cabinets. Is there adequate storage? Do you have enough drawers? (I once bought a condo that had one drawer in the kitchen. Sigh.)
- Microwave: Open up the microwave and take a peek inside. Turn it on to see if it works — but don't let it run for very long. That's not good.
- Hood: Turn on the range hood fan and light to make sure they work. Peek underneath to check for filth — this is a commonly overlooked area for cleaning.
- Stone Countertops: Look at the stone countertop and check for chips and cracks.

- Formica Countertops: Check the Formica countertop for chips.
- Tile: Check the floor for cracked tiles.
- Windows: Open and close all windows.

## Bathrooms

- Plumbing/Drainage: Flush the toilet. Fill up the sink and tub and then let the water run out to test for backups or poorly performing drains. Check for leaks from all faucets.
- Flooring: Any broken tiles?
- Toilet: Does it rock or is it solidly on the floor?
- Tub: Any cracks or chips?
- Vanity: Check the condition. Make sure to open it up and check the inside, too.
- Ventilation: Does the fan work? Is there a window? Does it open and close easily?

## Bedrooms

- Closets: Do closets have doors? Do they open and close easily?
- Windows: Open and close all windows.
- Flooring: Check the state of the flooring — does carpet have stains, wear spots, etc? Is the hardwood scratched and damaged?

## Living/Dining/Family Room

- Doors: Any doors? Do they open and close easily?
- Flooring: What is the state of the flooring?
- Walls: Are there any holes or other damage in the walls?
- Windows: Do the windows work? Are they vinyl, wood, aluminum?

## Basement

- Odor: What does it smell like? An overpowering odor can be mold or mildew.
- Walls: Do the walls have any cracks? Small, hairline cracks are not so concerning, but large cracks — especially horizontal cracks — can be an indicator of bigger foundation problems.

## Exterior

- Sprinkler: Turn on the sprinkler system.
- Lights: Turn them on.
- Outlets: Test them.
- Fence: Walk the fence to check for loose boards and the overall sturdiness of the fence.
- Siding: What is the condition of the siding?
- Roof: Go to the South side of the house and look at the shingles. The South side gets the most sun, and curling or buckling can be an indication that the roof needs work.
- Garage Door: Does the garage door(s) open and close easily?
- Lawn: What does the grass look like?
- Yard: Are there any dead trees?