

Tips for Choosing a Home Inspector



Example

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First Last

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A home inspector plays a vital role in your home transaction. A home inspector's report helps you make an informed decision about the home you're planning to buy. That's why it's important to choose an inspector from a reputable inspection company that has a track record nationally and can offer more than one type of home inspection. Here are questions to ask a prospective home inspection company before you schedule an appointment:



Does the inspector have experience reviewing the type of home I might buy?

Every home is different. Over the years, the way a home's owner maintained, upgraded or remodeled can turn a house built in one century into a hybrid of generations – a mix of building materials and structural elements both old and new. Inspectors should be able to inspect architecture across the ages and homes of all kinds, including single-family homes, condominiums, townhouses, custom homes, and also new construction – during buildout, as well as during the builder's one-year warranty period.

Can the inspector test for environmental hazards, too?

Throughout the United States, many home buyers and homeowners have grown concerned about mold, radon gas emissions, the presence of lead in paint or other parts of the house, and carbon monoxide emissions. It's wise to ask a home inspection company or individual inspector whether he or she can test for the presence of these materials or whether they can bring in outside experts who can. In addition, ask inspectors if they can help buyers of homes made from synthetic stucco (known as EIFS) determine whether it was correctly installed or not.

Is the inspector part of a national network?

If you frequently relocate, or if you have already lived in more than one part of the United States, working with a national company that has affiliated inspectors in multiple markets can be reassuring. That way you'll know that the same service and experience you received on one coast is available on the other, and many times you can arrange your inspections online or via a toll-free number.

Does the inspector have experience working with sellers and existing homeowners?

Buyers aren't the only folks who need to keep the name of a good inspection service handy. Homeowners frequently use inspectors to help provide an annual check-up on their home's condition or to monitor whether radon gas, carbon monoxide, mold or lead are present or pose health issues. Sellers use inspectors, too: the same detailed inspection report a buyer uses to evaluate a home's merit can become a marketing tool for proactive sellers who wish to make reports available for buyers' viewing.

Can the inspector provide a timely report so I can make an informed decision on my potential new home?

If you're buying a home, you need information as soon as possible so you can discuss a home's virtues and issues and reach a decision promptly. Ask if your home inspection report will be available within 24 hours of an inspector's visit so that the decision-making process will run smoothly – and on-track. Pre-offer inspection information should be available even faster.

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