Home Inspection Checklist

A room-by-room and system-by-system home inspection checklist for buyers and homeowners.

Inspected by _____ Date _____

Unit / ID _____ Location _____

Exterior and Roof	OK	DEFECT	N/A
Walk the full perimeter and look for cracked, missing, or rotting siding, trim, and fascia.	☐	☐	☐
Inspect the roof from the ground with binoculars for curled, missing, or damaged shingles.	☐	☐	☐
Check gutters and downspouts for clogs, rust, sagging, and that water drains away from the house.	☐	☐	☐
Examine chimneys, flashing, and vents for cracks, missing mortar, or loose seals.	☐	☐	☐
Note the grading: soil should slope away from the foundation, not toward it.	☐	☐	☐
Inspect decks, porches, railings, and steps for rot, wobble, and secure fasteners.	☐	☐	☐
Test exterior faucets, look at the driveway and walkways for heaving cracks, and check fences and gates.	☐	☐	☐

Foundation and Structure	OK	DEFECT	N/A
Look for cracks in the foundation wider than a quarter inch, especially horizontal or stair-step patterns.	☐	☐	☐
Check basement and crawlspace walls for water stains, efflorescence, or active moisture.	☐	☐	☐
Note any musty smells that may signal mold or chronic dampness.	☐	☐	☐
Set a marble or ball on floors to spot sloping or uneven settling.	☐	☐	☐
Inspect support posts, beams, and joists for rot, sagging, or insect damage.	☐	☐	☐
Look for sticking doors and windows, which can indicate structural movement. Persistent sticking across many openings is more concerning than one door.	☐	☐	☐
Check sump pumps and drainage systems for proper operation and recent water marks.	☐	☐	☐

Plumbing	OK	DEFECT	N/A
Run every faucet, shower, and tub, checking water pressure and how quickly drains clear.	☐	☐	☐
Look under sinks for leaks, water stains, corrosion, and signs of past repairs.	☐	☐	☐
Flush all toilets and confirm they refill and shut off without running or rocking.	☐	☐	☐
Identify the water heater's age, capacity, and any rust, leaks, or corrosion at fittings.	☐	☐	☐
Note the pipe material; older galvanized steel or polybutylene may need replacement. Lead pipes or solder are a health concern—flag for professional testing.	☐	☐	☐
Locate the main water shutoff valve and confirm it is accessible and operable.	☐	☐	☐
Check for water stains on ceilings below bathrooms, which often reveal hidden leaks.	☐	☐	☐

Electrical	OK	DEFECT	N/A
Open the electrical panel cover and check for scorch marks, rust, double-tapped breakers, or a recalled brand.	☐	☐	☐
Test a sample of outlets in each room with an outlet tester for proper wiring and grounding.	☐	☐	☐
Confirm GFCI outlets in kitchens, baths, garages, and exteriors trip and reset correctly.	☐	☐	☐
Verify that light switches operate fixtures and that no bulbs flicker.	☐	☐	☐
Look for exposed wiring, overloaded extension cords, or amateur splices. Knob-and-tube or aluminum branch wiring warrants an electrician's review.	☐	☐	☐
Check that smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are present, correctly placed, and functional.	☐	☐	☐
Confirm the panel has adequate capacity and clear labeling of circuits.	☐	☐	☐

Heating, Cooling, and Ventilation	OK	DEFECT	N/A
Turn on the heat and air conditioning to confirm both cycle on and produce conditioned air.	☐	☐	☐
Check the furnace and AC unit ages, looking for rust, corrosion, or deferred maintenance.	☐	☐	☐
Inspect and replace dirty air filters, and note when the system was last serviced.	☐	☐	☐
Examine visible ductwork for disconnects, leaks, or missing insulation.	☐	☐	☐
Feel airflow at several supply registers to confirm balanced delivery.	☐	☐	☐
Verify that bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans vent outside, not into the attic. Improperly vented fans cause moisture buildup and mold.	☐	☐	☐
Check the thermostat operation and any heat pump or boiler for unusual noises.	☐	☐	☐

Interior, Kitchen, and Baths	OK	DEFECT	N/A
Scan walls and ceilings in every room for cracks, water stains, and patched repairs.	☐	☐	☐
Open and close all windows and doors, checking locks, screens, and seals.	☐	☐	☐
Walk floors listening for squeaks and feeling for soft, sloping, or springy spots.	☐	☐	☐
Test kitchen appliances—range, oven, dishwasher, disposal, and vent—for basic operation.	☐	☐	☐
Inspect countertops, cabinets, and backsplashes for water damage and loose fittings.	☐	☐	☐
Check bathrooms for caulk gaps, loose tiles, soft subflooring, and proper ventilation.	☐	☐	☐
Look for signs of pests such as droppings, nests, or chewed materials in corners and cabinets.	☐	☐	☐

Attic, Insulation, and Safety	OK	DEFECT	N/A
Access the attic and inspect for daylight, roof leaks, water stains, and adequate insulation depth.	☐	☐	☐
Confirm attic ventilation is unobstructed and free of mold or rotted sheathing.	☐	☐	☐
Check that insulation is present and even in the attic, walls, and any crawlspace.	☐	☐	☐
Test garage doors, auto-reverse safety sensors, and the fire-rated door to the living space.	☐	☐	☐
Verify stair railings, deck rails, and balusters are secure and at safe heights.	☐	☐	☐
Locate fire extinguishers, confirm detector battery dates, and plan two exit routes. Replace smoke and CO detectors older than ten years.	☐	☐	☐
Compile your notes and photos, then schedule a licensed inspector for anything you flagged as unsure.	☐	☐	☐

Notes / defects found