
[OK] [NEEDS ATTENTION]

LOCATION, ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBORHOOD

- Evaluate the community and neighborhood. Visit the site both during the day and at night.
- What is the age, condition and value of the house compared to others in the neighborhood?
- Is the site free from flooding? In a 100 year floodplain?
- Is the house conveniently located near your place of employment, schools, shopping, library, medical care, park & ride, church, etc.?
- What are the local zoning laws or deed restrictions?
- How do local property tax rates and services compare with other similar areas?
- Are adequate fire and police services provided?
- Check the surrounding neighborhood for possible hazardous waste sites, air and/or noise polluting industries, etc.
- Is the house old enough for lead paint, asbestos, lead soldered pipes etc. to be present? (Houses built before 1978 may have lead paint.)

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LOT AND GENERAL CONDITIONS

- What is the condition of walkways, driveways and steps? Any trip hazards?
- Does the lot have good drainage? Any yard or downspout drains?
- Is there any indication of water ponding next to the house or ground contoured to slope toward the house? (Detrimental to the foundation.)
- Is the home oriented for maximum benefit and protection from sunlight, wind, rain etc.? (A north-south orientation is generally more desirable.)
- Does the yard have adequate privacy? Room for kids to play? Room for pets?
- Has the landscaping been well maintained?

[OK] [NEEDS ATTENTION]

HOUSE - FOUNDATION & EXTERIOR

- Has the house been remodeled, added on, or had any foundation repairs performed? Does the seller have building permits, warranty information, or other documentation?
- What is the overall condition of paint, brick or siding?
- Is there a potential for foundation damage from tree roots or shrubs which have been planted too close to the house?
- Has the house, garage, or any other structures on the property been built without proper setbacks or built on utility easements, right of way etc.? Check your survey.
- Are all openable windows screened?
- Is adequate exterior lighting provided at entry, porches, driveway, etc.?
- Do exterior doors open and close without dragging or sticking?

[OK] [NEEDS ATTENTION]

ROOF AND ATTIC

- Is the age and condition of the shingles comparable to others in the neighborhood?
- What is the average life expectancy for this type of roofing material? _____ yrs.
- If multiple layers of roof are present, how many? (3 layers maximum) Does the roof sag?
- Is the attic well ventilated? Are attic vents screened and in good condition?
- Type, condition and thickness of insulation? (Modern homes have 6 to 8 inches of attic insulation.)
- Are water pipes in attic insulated?
- Do bath or kitchen vents terminate in the attic where they could cause potential moisture problems?
- Any indication of past or present insect, bird or rodent infestation in attic?
- Is storage space available in attic?
- Is the attic easily accessible?

[OK] [NEEDS ATTENTION]

HOUSE - INTERIOR & FLOOR PLAN

- Evaluate the floor plan by walking through the house as if going about your daily routine. (Versatility of floor plan and serviceability.)
- Does the house have enough bedrooms and bathrooms?
- Adequate room sizes and storage space? (Measure if in doubt.)
- Does placement of windows and doors allow for a variety of furniture arrangements?
- Do windows provide good cross ventilation and adequate natural illumination?

- What is the general condition of carpets and hard surfaced floors?
- What is the general condition of drywall, wallpaper, paneling and any wall tile in baths or kitchen?
- What is the general condition of cabinets, vanities and counter tops?

[OK] [NEEDS ATTENTION] **HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING**

- What is the age of the furnace and air conditioning system? _____ yrs. Is it efficient? (Older conventional furnaces may be only 60% efficient.)
- Has the heat and air been serviced annually?
- Is the A.C. properly sized? ("Rule of thumb" is 1 ton per 550 square feet.)
- Are filters adequately sized and located where they can be easily replace or cleaned?
- Is ductwork in good condition?
- Are there air registers in every room? (Older homes may not have registers in bathrooms.)
- Is equipment located where it can be easily serviced, and is protected from physical damage?
- Is there excessive dirt or mildew around ceiling vents? (This results from filters not being changed or improper sizing of ducts and equipment.)
- Is equipment located where normal noise levels will not be objectionable or annoying?
- Is there a separate disconnect switch for the compressor, if located out of sight from the breaker panel?

[OK] [NEEDS ATTENTION] **ELECTRICAL**

- Does the house have at least 100 amp service? Are the service entrance wires located at least 10 ft. above grade level or higher if over a driveway? Away from pool or other possible hazards?
- Is the house wired with aluminum wiring? Some houses built from the mid 60's to early 70's may have dangerous wiring.
- Is exterior wiring installed properly with weatherproof outlet covers and switches? Is exterior wiring installed in conduit?
- Are adequate electrical outlets provided in every room? (Any point along a wall should not be more than 6 feet from an outlet.)
- Are light switches conveniently located at the entrance of each room, at both ends of hallways and at top and bottom of stairs?
- Is the service panel located where easily accessible, or is it in a clothes closet or other potentially hazardous location?
- For older homes: Are electrical outlets grounded? Are G.F.C.I. (shock saver) outlets provided in baths, exterior and garage locations?
- Any "handy man" or do-it-yourself type modifications to wiring?

[OK] [NEEDS ATTENTION] **PLUMBING**

- What type of piping does the house have? Galvanized pipe can corrode or buildup mineral deposits. Copper pipe may be soldered with lead based solder (houses built before 1989). Polybutylene pipe has a history of coupling related failures.
- Is there a main shut off valve to the house, and do fixtures have individual shut off valves for servicing and repairs?
- How old is the water heater? Heaters become inefficient with age due to mineral buildup. (Normal life expectancy is 10-15 years.)
- What is the distance from the water heater to the fixtures which will be used most often? (Water temperature drops approximately one degree per 1 ft. of piping.)
- Does the house have a main sewer/drain cleanout?
- Are sinks and tubs free from rust, chips etc.?
- If the house has a tiled shower, is there any indication of previous leaking or heavy caulking around the drain or base tiles? This could be an indication of a leaking shower pan, which can be expensive to repair.
- Are washer and dryer hookups conveniently located?
- Is there an access panel to inspect the tub plumbing and drain?
- If the house has a private well, has the water quality been tested. How far is the well from the septic system if present? How deep is the well? Does seller have a copy of the well log?
- If the house has a septic system; how large is the tank? When was it last serviced or pumped out? Where is the drainage field or seepage pit located?

[OK] [NEEDS ATTENTION] **FIREPLACE**

- Any indications of previous smoking or not drawing properly?
- Does the damper work?
- Is there a buildup of creosote in the flue? Has the fireplace ever been cleaned?
- Does the chimney have a rain cap/spark arrestor?

[OK] [NEEDS ATTENTION] **CRAWLSPACE OR BASEMENT**

- Is it dry? Any indications of previous water penetration? Any indication of previous plumbing leaks or poor drainage?
- Has adequate ventilation been provided?
- Is there adequate crawlspace clearance for inspections and repairs?
- Has the foundation been leveled or additional supports added?
- Any history of termite infestation or wood rot?

[OK] [NEEDS ATTENTION] **WOOD DESTROYING INSECTS**

- Has the house been previously treated for termites, carpenter ants or other wood destroying insects? If so, when? _____
 What type of chemical was used? _____
 Is the home under contract?
 Company and renewal date. _____
- Is soil in flower beds built up above the slab or weep holes?
- Any rotted wood on house? Any wood forms imbedded in slab or wood debris in crawlspace? Any wood to ground contact?
 Any excessive moisture conditions? (These are common conductive conditions.)

[OK] [NEEDS ATTENTION] **SECURITY SAFETY AND CONVENIENCE**

- Is the front entrance visible from the street? Any shrubs or other places for attackers or burglars to hide?
- Are hose bibbs conveniently located?
- Are exterior doors of solid core construction with quality locks and hardware?
- If security bars are present, can they be opened easily in an emergency?
- Is the home equipped with U.L. approved smoke detectors?
- Are both gas and electric dryer hookups available? Dryer vented to the exterior?
- Does the neighborhood have street lights?
- Is mail delivered to the house or neighborhood mail distribution center?
- House or curbside trash pickup? Is heavy trash pickup available?
- Can you obtain copies of building plans, permits, and operating manuals for appliances?

APPLIANCES

APPLIANCES Check the condition of appliances included in the sale price:

APPLIANCE	AVERAGE LIFESPAN	ACTUAL AGE	COLOR	OPERATION
Refrigerator	16 years	_____	_____	_____
Range/Oven	16 years	_____	_____	_____
Dishwasher	10 years	_____	_____	_____
Washer	11 years	_____	_____	_____
Dryer	14 years	_____	_____	_____

ARE OTHER SYSTEMS OR ITEMS PRESENT AND INCLUDED IN THE SALE PRICE?

	Yes	No	Condition	Cost to install or repair
Security System	_____	_____	_____	_____
Garage door opener	_____	_____	_____	_____
Water Softener	_____	_____	_____	_____
Sprinkler system	_____	_____	_____	_____
Pool or Spa	_____	_____	_____	_____
Intercom	_____	_____	_____	_____
T.V. Antenna	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ceiling fans	_____	_____	_____	_____
Fireplace gas logs	_____	_____	_____	_____
Draperies	_____	_____	_____	_____
Storage buildings	_____	_____	_____	_____

Is a seller's disclosure available?

Make a list of questions to ask the seller, or to have your agent inquire of the seller.

What is the appraised value of the house? _____

What is the seller's asking price of the house? _____

Has the seller agreed to a dollar amount for repairs? _____

What is the estimated cost for repairs? _____

OTHER INFORMATION

School District: _____

Tax rate: _____

Utility District: _____

Tax rate: _____

In city or county? _____

Tax rate: _____

HOUSE HUNTING TIPS

Try not to see too many houses in one day. Looking at too many houses at one time can be confusing and exhausting.

Are there any special features or "must have" items that you are looking for in your new house? Make a list.

Be sure your real estate agent knows exactly what type of houses that you are looking for - - or at least as much as possible.

When looking at houses, always bring along a map. Preferably one that you can write or make notes on.

Bring along a camera or video recording equipment.

Be sure to bring a note pad and tape measure with you. Make sketches of the floor plans that you like.

When visiting houses, pick up a copy of the Seller's Disclosure Notice whenever possible. Also look for buyer information about special home features or recent improvements and repairs.

Use a small rubber ball, marble, or pocket level to check for sloping floors, counter tops, door frames, etc.

If you want to know what kind of utility bills to expect in your new house, you can call the utility company to get the highest and lowest bills for the last 12 months.

Check with the county appraiser to get a rough idea of how much the house is worth and what your taxes will be.

Flood insurance maps are usually available at the library.

Don't be afraid to ask questions. Only foolish buyers don't ask questions.

checklist courtesy of On The Level Inspections