

Complete Property Inspection Checklist

Your Essential Guide to Building & Pest Inspections

How to Use This Checklist

Print this checklist and bring it with you during property inspections. Tick off items as you check them, and make notes in the margins. Take photos of any concerns you identify.

Professional Tip: While this checklist is comprehensive, it doesn't replace professional building and pest inspections. Always engage qualified inspectors for properties you're serious about purchasing.

BUILDING INSPECTION CHECKLIST

EXTERIOR INSPECTION

Roof & Guttering

- Roof condition** - Check for missing, cracked, or damaged tiles/sheets
- Gutters & downpipes** - Look for rust, damage, or blockages
- Roof line** - Should be straight, not sagging
- Flashing** - Check around chimneys, vents, and roof joints
- Solar panels** - Note condition and installation quality
- Satellite dishes/antennas** - Check mounting and condition

Red Flags: Sagging roof lines, extensive rust, missing tiles, water stains

Walls & Structure

- External walls** - Check for cracks, especially around windows/doors
- Paint condition** - Look for peeling, bubbling, or fading
- Render/cladding** - Check for damage, loose sections
- Brickwork/stonework** - Look for cracking, missing mortar
- Window frames** - Check for rot, damage, proper sealing
- Door frames** - Ensure they're square and well-maintained

Red Flags: Large cracks, bulging walls, extensive weathering

Foundation & Ground Level

- Foundation visible** - Check for cracks, settling
- Ground clearance** - Adequate space between ground and timber
- Drainage** - Water should flow away from house
- Retaining walls** - Check for leaning, cracking

- Driveway/paths** - Look for major cracks, settling
- Landscaping** - Trees too close to house foundations

Red Flags: Foundation cracks, poor drainage, subsidence signs

Outdoor Areas

- Decking/patios** - Check structural integrity, railings
 - Fencing** - Note condition and boundaries
 - Pool/spa** - Equipment condition, safety compliance
 - Sheds/garages** - Structural condition, electrical safety
 - Garden taps** - Water pressure, leaks
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INTERIOR INSPECTION

Structural Elements

- Ceilings** - Check for cracks, water stains, sagging
- Walls** - Look for cracks, especially around doors/windows
- Floors** - Test for bounce, squeaking, level surfaces
- Stairs** - Check handrails, step condition, structural integrity
- Internal doors** - Should open/close properly, check frames
- Windows** - Test operation, check seals and locks

Red Flags: Bouncy floors, large wall cracks, water damage stains

Electrical System

- Switchboard** - Modern safety switches (RCD), labeling
- Power points** - Test with phone charger, check GFCI in wet areas
- Light switches** - All working, no crackling sounds
- Light fittings** - Secure mounting, working globes
- Ceiling fans** - Secure mounting, smooth operation
- Smoke detectors** - Present in required locations

Red Flags: Old switchboards, non-working outlets, exposed wiring

Plumbing & Water

- Water pressure** - Test taps, showers throughout house
- Hot water system** - Age, condition, adequate size
- Toilets** - Flush properly, no leaks around base
- Sinks/basins** - Drain well, check for leaks underneath
- Showers/baths** - Water pressure, drainage, tile condition
- Laundry taps** - Working condition, adequate connections

Red Flags: Poor water pressure, visible leaks, old hot water systems

Kitchen Inspection

- Cabinets/drawers** - Open/close smoothly, check hinges
- Benchtops** - Check for damage, proper sealing
- Appliances** - Test operation if connected
- Splashback** - Proper installation, no loose tiles
- Plumbing** - Check under sink for leaks
- Ventilation** - Range hood or window for cooking

Bathroom Inspection

- Tiles** - Check for loose, cracked, or missing tiles
- Grout** - Condition, signs of mould
- Waterproofing** - No water damage signs around wet areas
- Ventilation** - Exhaust fan working
- Fixtures** - Taps, shower heads, toilet seats
- Storage** - Adequate and functional

Heating & Cooling

- Air conditioning** - Test operation, check filters
- Heating systems** - Gas, electric, or ducted heating
- Insulation** - Check ceiling access if possible
- Ventilation** - Natural airflow, exhaust fans
- Fireplace** - Condition, safety compliance

PEST INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Termite Inspection

Interior Signs

- Mud tubes** - Look along walls, foundations, corners
- Hollow timber** - Tap wooden frames, skirting boards
- Buckling floors** - Especially near wet areas
- Tight-fitting doors** - Doors suddenly hard to open/close
- Small holes** - In walls, furniture, wooden fixtures
- Frass (droppings)** - Small pellets near wooden areas
- Wings** - Discarded wings near windows, lights

High-Risk Areas: Bathrooms, kitchens, laundries, subfloor areas

Exterior Signs

- Mud tubes** - On external walls, around foundation
- Damaged timber** - Fence posts, deck supports
- Trees/stumps** - Dead wood near house
- Moisture areas** - Around taps, air conditioning units
- Mulch/gardens** - Heavy mulch against house walls

Other Pest Indicators

Borers

- Small round holes** - In timber, furniture
- Fine sawdust** - Around holes or wooden surfaces
- Damaged timber** - Especially in older homes

Rodents

- Droppings** - In cupboards, corners, roof spaces
- Gnaw marks** - On cables, timber, food packaging
- Nesting materials** - Shredded paper, fabric
- Grease marks** - Along walls where rodents travel

General Pest Signs

- Wasp nests** - In eaves, wall cavities
- Ant trails** - Especially in kitchen areas
- Spider webs** - Excessive amounts may indicate other pests
- Bird nests** - In roof spaces, blocked gutters

SAFETY & COMPLIANCE CHECK

Safety Features

- Smoke detectors** - All bedrooms, hallways, living areas
- Pool safety** - Fencing, gates, CPR signage (if applicable)
- Stair safety** - Handrails, non-slip surfaces
- Balcony safety** - Railing height, structural integrity
- Window safety** - Locks, safety screens on upper levels
- Electrical safety** - Safety switches, proper earthing

Building Compliance

- Building approvals** - Ask about permits for extensions/renovations
- Certificate of occupancy** - If recently built/renovated
- Energy efficiency** - Star rating if available
- Accessibility** - Note any accessibility features/limitations

DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST

Before You Leave

- Take photos** - Any concerns or issues identified
- Note measurements** - Room sizes, storage spaces
- Check property boundaries** - Walk the perimeter
- Test all switches/taps** - Final functionality check
- Note any odours** - Dampness, mould, chemicals
- Ask questions** - About maintenance, issues, improvements

Information to Gather

- Age of major appliances** - Hot water, air conditioning
- Recent renovations** - When, permits, warranties
- Known issues** - Disclosed problems or repairs needed
- Utility costs** - Average electricity, gas, water bills
- Council rates** - Annual amount
- Insurance history** - Any claims, especially water damage

RED FLAGS - WALK AWAY INDICATORS

Structural Red Flags

- **Major foundation cracks** - Wider than 5mm or active movement
- **Severely sagging rooflines** - Indicates structural failure
- **Extensive water damage** - Multiple rooms, ceiling stains
- **Electrical hazards** - Exposed wiring, old switchboards
- **Serious pest damage** - Extensive termite damage

Financial Red Flags

- **Undisclosed renovations** - Work without permits
- **Multiple failed inspections** - Property has been on market long
- **Vendor reluctance** - Won't allow proper inspections
- **Insurance issues** - Property uninsurable or high premiums

PROFESSIONAL INSPECTION TIPS

What Professionals Check That You Can't

- **Structural engineering** - Load-bearing capacity

- **Electrical compliance** - Full system testing
- **Plumbing pressure** - Internal pipe condition
- **Pest species identification** - Specific treatment requirements
- **Building code compliance** - Current standards adherence

When to Engage Professionals

- **Serious about purchasing** - Always get professional inspections
 - **Older properties** - Pre-1990s homes especially
 - **Renovation projects** - Structural modifications needed
 - **Pest signs detected** - Professional species identification
 - **Insurance requirements** - Some insurers require professional reports
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NEXT STEPS AFTER INSPECTION

If Issues Are Found

1. **Document everything** - Photos, notes, measurements
2. **Get professional quotes** - Repair costs for negotiation
3. **Consult experts** - Builders, electricians, pest controllers
4. **Negotiate or walk away** - Based on severity and cost
5. **Factor into offer** - Reduce offer price by repair costs

If Property Passes

1. **Proceed with professional inspections** - Building and pest
 2. **Finalize financing** - Submit loan application
 3. **Arrange insurance** - Get quotes and coverage
 4. **Prepare for settlement** - Legal and financial arrangements
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FINAL REMINDERS

Remember: This checklist is a guide to help you identify obvious issues. It does **not** replace professional building and pest inspections, which are essential for any property purchase.

Time Required: Allow at least 60-90 minutes for a thorough inspection using this checklist.

Bring With You:

- This printed checklist
- Smartphone for photos

- Tape measure
- Small flashlight
- Phone charger (to test power points)
- Notebook for additional observations

Good Luck! A thorough inspection now can save thousands in repairs and stress later. Trust your instincts - if something doesn't feel right, investigate further or consult professionals.