

Preparing for Your Home Inspection

These buyers have bought your house from among all the ones on the market. You don't want the inspection to make them doubt their decision. Here are some suggestions for preparing your home for that inspection. These are all items that a home inspector will be checking. Anything that can't be fixed can be excluded from the contract upfront, or a financial allowance made either upfront or at settlement. These are all also good maintenance tips for any home.

1. Make sure earth and/or mulch are graded away from the house and are several inches below any siding.
2. Clean out dirty gutters and any debris on the roof.
3. Divert all water away from the house; downspouts, condensate lines, sump pump discharge, etc. Clear any basement entry drains.
4. Trim trees, roots and bushes and vines away from the foundation, roof, siding and chimney.
5. Paint any weathered exterior trim and caulk around trim, windows, siding, doors, chimneys.
6. Seal asphalt driveways if cracks are appearing.
7. Seal and/or point up masonry chimney caps. Install metal flue cap.
8. Clean or replace HVAC filter. Clean dirty air returns and plenum. Have ducts cleaned.
9. Point up any failing mortar joints in brick or block.
10. Test all smoke detectors and install CO detectors if needed.
11. Update attic ventilation if little or none is present.
12. Clean and service chimney, fireplace or woodstove, and have a copy for the buyers.
13. Seal masonry walls in basement if any moisture is present.
14. Don't do cheap, quick repairs like filling areas of rotten wood with caulk.
15. Have all windows and doors in proper operating condition, working smoothly, replace any cracked glass, re-hang and insulate doors if necessary. Repair doors or windows that have broken seals.
16. Have plumbing fixtures - toilet, tub, shower, sinks - in good working condition.
17. Install GFCI receptacles in all appropriate areas; test current GFCIs & replace if needed.
18. Check sump pump and basement drains for proper operation.
19. Replace any burned out light bulbs.
20. Move any firewood or rotting wood from around house for a distance of 6'.
21. Grade under deck, install landscape cloth and gravel.
22. Caulk (only if you can do it well) - exterior wall penetrations, tub & shower, bathroom floors and tile walls, shower enclosures. Remove old caulk and clean area before re-caulking.

23. Check that any crawlspace is dry and install ventilation if not.
24. Check that bath fans and vents are operating correctly, and venting outside the house.
25. Remove paints, solvents, gas, etc. from basement, crawlspace, attic, anywhere in the house.
26. Check that toilets are secured to the floor.
27. Install window wells and/or covers for any windows below ground level.
28. Remove earth and mulch that is blocking vents.
29. Have clear access to all attic, crawlspace, HVAC systems, garage, and any areas that will need to be inspected. Open access panels that have been painted shut.
30. Make sure all utilities are on, and plumbing valves and electric breakers are open.

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