

Preparing for a home inspection:

A do-it-yourself checklist for sellers

Consider a few steps you can take on your own to ensure a smooth inspection. If there's anything on the list that's above your DIY comfort level, consider calling in an expert.



1 Clean and declutter inspection access points

- Clean furnace filter
- Clean stove and oven
- Empty storage from attic
- Organize any closets that are access points to your attic or crawl space
- Clear at least 4 to 6 inches of space around the perimeter of your home's exterior

2 Test functionality of the items a home inspector will check

- Open and close windows and test locks and seals
- Flush all toilets and run all faucets
- Run any ceiling or bathroom fans
- Try all light switches
- Open and close garage doors manually and with the remote, then test the reverse safety setting
- Confirm weather stripping on doors is intact
- Ensure that downspouts are properly diverting water away from the home
- Check to make sure heating ducts are connected in crawl space
- Check that fan ducts are properly venting out of the attic

3 Take basic safety and security precautions

- Replace batteries in smoke detectors
- Test carbon monoxide detector
- Have a fire extinguisher available
- Cap gas lines or chimney entry points
- Exterminate bugs or rodents

4 Make necessary repairs to the property

- Replace light bulbs
- Re-caulk around bathtubs and sinks
- Repair any water damage in bathrooms
- Remove any drain clogs
- Update any dingy grout
- Replace torn screens and cracked windows
- Replace any missing roofing
- Replace damaged insulation in attic and crawl space
- Cover crawl space with 6 mm plastic sheeting

5 Complete exterior home improvements

- Sweep debris off the roof (or pressure wash if needed)
- Trim trees that are near or hanging over the roof line
- Clean out gutters
- Clear debris from around the A/C compressor, downspout drainage, and foundation vents
- Slope soil away from the home for water runoff

6 Make last-minute preparations for your inspection

- Plan to leave your home an hour early
- Take pets with you
- Leave remotes for garage door, ceiling fans, lights, etc.
- Leave keys for gates, outbuildings, and electrical boxes
- Turn on pilot light for gas-fired appliances, including the water heater
- Make sure all utilities are on
- Take laundry out of the washer and dryer
- Remove dishes from the sink and dishwasher
- Leave a sketch identifying the location of a well or septic tank
- Leave paperwork for any maintenance, repairs, or insurance claims