

Q: Why is it a good idea for homebuyers and homeowners to get a Home Inspection?

Buying a home without a professional inspection is a major mistake. Doing so can have costly consequences. Although sellers and real estate brokers are required to disclose known defects, no one can provide the defect disclosure of a professional, full-time faultfinder. It is also in homeowners best interest to periodically (every few years), especially after major renovations, to have their home inspected.

The main reason, a home inspection will save money by helping the buyer and homeowner to understand specific maintenance needs of a particular house.

Preventive maintenance will generally prove more cost-effective than repairs done after a breakdown or failure occurs.

A home inspector will check things such as the heating, plumbing, electrical and structural aspects of the home. The inspector will also check problems such as roof leakage and deterioration and then let the customer know how to prevent these problems.

The majority of home inspections are conducted as a part of the real estate purchasing process. It is important that the homeowner obtain a home inspection from a qualified professional.

Take the following quiz to determine whether a home inspection is needed:

1. **Was the home inspected when purchased?** If not, an inspection is warranted regardless of how long you’ve been in the home, even if it was new construction.
2. **Have you been in the home three to five years?** If the answer is “yes,” a home inspection is a good idea since homes and home systems age and deteriorate, even with proper ongoing maintenance.
3. **Are you planning on doing major remodeling or renovation work?** Whether it’s a do-it-yourself project or a contractor will be involved, now is a good time to determine whether there are any problem areas requiring attention that may have been overlooked.
4. **Have you recently undergone a major remodel or renovation?** It never hurts to have an objective opinion about the work that has been done to ensure there are no remaining issues or needed repairs.
5. **Are you an older homeowner planning to remain in your home as you age?** Elderly homeowners may have more difficulty addressing ongoing maintenance concerns or inspecting hard to reach areas. American Society of Home Inspectors suggests that a professional home inspector be brought in to point out maintenance or safety issues and recommend when to hire outside help for specific problems.
6. **Are you a first-time homeowner that doesn’t know the first thing about maintaining your home?** Especially if a home inspection was not performed during the purchasing process, or the buyer was not present, a professional home inspection can be a valuable educational experience for the new homeowner.
7. **Do you have small children or a baby on the way?** New parents have special concerns about safety in the home and a home inspector can help point out problem areas that could cause harm to a growing family.

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