

# 100+ Questions

To Ask Before Buying Your New Home





Buying a new home can be an overwhelming process. There are many parties involved: the seller, the realtor, the lender, appraiser, home inspector, attorneys, and service contractors. There's also the emotional aspect involved, for both the buyer and the seller. And of course, hundreds of pages of contracts to sign. While we can't eliminate any of these steps, we can assist in making the process a little easier.

As you tour future homes, use this form to assist you in evaluating their condition. Don't try to fill it out for every home during your first walk through. Instead, wait until your second or third tour, when you know you are interested in the property. This will help you concentrate on specific elements of the home.

Every building is going to have minor issues, instead focus more on the bigger ticket items. You should also examine the portions of the home that you are most able to judge acceptability such as quality of floor coverings, interior wall finishes, etc.

You don't need to answer every single question on this form, if you are feeling overwhelmed just take notes as you walk through. Keep your analysis as simple as possible. Use check marks or "Y" (yes) and "N" (no) to fill in columns. You can also rate areas to help quantify the information (For example, 0-5 or 1-10).

When this form is completed, you will have a good understanding of the condition of the homes you are considering. Keep in mind that no building is perfect. You want to keep things in proper perspective and note your major concerns.

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BASIC INFORMATION	Home #1	Home #2	Home #3
Street Address			
City			
Approx Square Footage			
Number of Bedrooms			
Number of Bathrooms			
Additional Buildings			
Age of Home			
<b>Comments:</b>			

EXTERIOR		1	2	3
1	Material used for exterior? (brick, wood, etc.)			
2	Is it properly installed and in good condition?			
3	What is the condition of the trim and sidewalls?			
4	Is weather-stripping installed?			
5	What is the condition of gutters and downspouts?			
6	Do windows and doors have insulated glass or storm windows?			
7	Are they in good condition?			
8	Are the windows caulked?			
9	Are the sash cords or chains in a serviceable condition?			
10	Are the exterior walls insulated?			
11	Are decks and porches in good condition?			
12	Are fences and retaining walls in good condition?			
13	Is the ground sloped away from the foundation?			

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14	Is there any standing water on the property?			
<b>Comments:</b>				

STRUCTURE		1	2	3
15	Is the home built on filled in land?			
16	What material is used for the foundation? (concrete, block, etc.)			
17	Is the foundation in good condition?			
18	What materials are column and girder supports? (steel, wood, etc.)			
19	What is the size and spacing of floor joists?			
20	**Are there sufficient rows of bridging and are they nailed properly?			
21	**Will the floors support heavy loads? (piano, etc.)			
22	Are there any sloping floors in the home?			
23	What is the condition of the roof framing?			
24	What is the condition of the framing around the chimney?			
25	Is the attic area insulated?			
26	Is it properly installed?			
27	Is there an attic floor?			
28	**Is it strong enough to support required loads for storage/living?			
29	Is any portion of the attic inaccessible?			
30	Are there louvers for ventilation and to prevent condensation?			
31	Is there an attic fan for ventilation?			

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32	Is it on a thermostat control?			
<b>Comments:</b>				

WOOD DESTROYING INSECTS & RODENTS		1	2	3
33	Is there evidence of wood destroying insects? (exterior or interior/carpenter ants, powder post beetles, etc.)			
34	Are there six inches between earth and the wood on house to offset easy entry?			
35	Is there evidence of rodent activity?			
36	Is there evidence of insect or rodent treatment? (mouse or ant bait stations)			
37	Is the house protected with an exterminator service contract?			
<b>Comments:</b>				

ROOF		1	2	3
38	What type of roof covering? (asphalt shingles, etc.)			
39	Is it in good condition?			
40	Are any repairs required?			
41	Is there evidence of leaks? (attic, other areas)			

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**Comments:**

CONSTRUCTION		1	2	3
42	Is the workmanship acceptable?			
43	Are there any signs of settlement or cracking in the foundation?			
44	Is there a crawl space?			
45	Is it accessible?			
46	Is there a basement?			
47	Is the basement floor in good condition?			
48	Is there a drain and/or sump pump in the basement and/or crawl space?			
49	Are there any signs of water entry in the basement and/or crawl space?			
50	Is there ventilation in the basement and/or crawl space area?			

**Comments:**

GARAGE/OTHER		1	2	3
51	Is the garage in good condition? (roof, floor, etc.)			
52	Is the driveway in good condition?			
53	Is the size of the garage adequate?			

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54	Is there an automatic garage door operator?			
55	Does it have a safety reverse feature?			
56	Are there other buildings on the property?			
57	Are they in good condition?			

**Comments:**

INTERIOR		1	2	3
58	Are there cracks in the walls and/or ceilings?			
59	Has the interior been recently painted?			
60	Are the floors squeaky or springy?			
61	Is the interior trim in good condition? (baseboards, molding, etc.)			
62	What is the condition of the hardware? (door knobs, locks, etc.)			
63	Do the doors open and close properly?			
64	Are the kitchen cabinets installed properly?			
65	Are they in good condition?			
66	Do the windows operate properly?			
67	Are they in good condition?			
68	Are there exhaust fans in the kitchen and baths?			
69	Are they operating properly?			
70	Are they vented to the exterior?			
71	Is there a fireplace or wood stove?			

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72	Is it in good condition?			
73	Do the dampers open and close properly?			

**Comments:**

ELECTRIC		1	2	3
74	Is the incoming electric service properly installed?			
75	What is the service size in amps? (60, 100, 200)			
76	Is it adequate for your needs?			
77	Is the main electric panel easily accessible?			
78	Are all circuits properly identified in the panel?			
79	Are the number of electrical receptacles in each room adequate for modern living?			
80	Are there adequate light fixtures throughout?			
81	Are lighting fixtures installed at all exterior entrances?			
82	Do they operate properly?			
83	Are light switches convenient and adequate?			
84	Are ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI) installed? (kitchen, bath, exterior, etc.)			
85	Are they operating properly?			
86	Is there any aluminum wiring?			

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HEAT, AIR CONDITIONING, HOT WATER		1	2	3
87	What type of fuel is used for heat? (gas, oil, electric, etc.)			
88	What type of furnace or boiler is installed? (hot air, hot water, heat pump, etc.)			
89	How old is the furnace or boiler?			
90	Is it in good condition?			
91	Does the home have central air conditioning?			
92	Is the air conditioner in good condition?			
93	Are there heating/cooling outlets in each room?			
94	Is there a separate hot water heater?			
95	What fuel is used? (gas, electric)			
96	How old is the hot water heater?			
97	Is the size adequate for your needs?			
98	Is the water heater in good condition?			
<b>Comments:</b>				

PLUMBING		1	2	3
99	What is the source for water and sewer? (city, private, well, septic)			
100	What material are water and sewer pipes? (copper, PVC, iron, etc.)			
101	Are they in good condition?			
102	Are the sewer pipe clean-outs accessible?			

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103	What is the quality and quantity of the well water?			
104	Is the water pressure adequate?			
105	Do the plumbing fixtures work properly?			
106	Are they in good condition?			
107	Are there any faucet or fixture leaks?			
108	Are ceramic tile areas solid, grouted and caulked?			
109	Is there a lawn irrigation system?			

**Comments:**

ENVIRONMENTAL		1	2	3
110	Is there an underground storage tank (UST) on the property?			
111	Is there a radon mitigation system installed? (air and water)			
112	Are there any asbestos containing materials (ACM's) in the home?			
113	Does the home have lead-based paint? (Usually 1978 or before)			
114	Was lead-based solder used for the pipes?			

**Comments:**

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POOL/SPA		1	2	3
115	Is there a swimming pool or spa?			
116	Is the pool/spa in good condition?			
117	Is the mechanical equipment operating?			
118	Is the pool/spa adequately protected for safety reasons? (cover, fence, etc.)			

**Comments:**

Nice work! Now that you have made it to the end of the form, use this extra space to jot down any additional findings. When you are ready, we will inspect the home you are most interested in purchasing and your engineer will review your questions and address your specific concerns. And don't forget, you are invited to the inspection! Seize this rare opportunity to be one-on-one with your home inspection engineer. They will walk you through the property, giving you a unique understanding of your soon to be new home, roof to foundation, inside and out.

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