



# SECURITY

---

## HOME INSPECTIONS



## A Buyer's Guide to the Home Inspection

**What Is A Home Inspection?**

**Who are the Key Players?**

**Selecting a Home Inspection Company**

**What is Inspected by the Home Inspector?**

**What Services to Order from your Home  
Inspection Company.**

**Should the Buyer Attend?**

**What to Expect from the Home Inspector.**

**New Construction Homes.**

**What Happens After the Home Inspection?**

**Re-Inspections.**

**After the Closing.**



13277 Illinois Street, Suite 120, Carmel, IN 46032 - Indianapolis/Carmel - (317) 848-1744

Toll Free - (800) 878-1744 - Lafayette - (765) 420-7200 - Fax - (317) 573-2089

Visit us on the web at: [www.securityhomeinspection.com](http://www.securityhomeinspection.com)

## ***Dear Buyer,***

*It used to be that you could buy a house on a handshake, trade homes with your neighbor or better yet, pass the home down through the generations. Those were the “good old days”. In fact, most of us can’t even remember or even fathom that as a reality. But it was.*

*Today, we know that the process of buying and selling real estate should be left up to the professionals. Transferring or acquiring real estate is so complex, it should be done with the education and knowledge of professionals in the industry.*

*This booklet is designed to address the home inspection process, as it relates to you, the Buyer. It focuses on timelines, what happens and when, what to expect from the professionals, and how to make the most of the information you obtain.*

*We hope that you find this booklet informative and helpful. We welcome any comments and sincerely wish you the best in locating the home that is just right for you and your family.*

*~ Phil Thornberry, President*

---

## ***What Is A Home Inspection?***

A home inspection is performed typically for the buyer of a property. Its purpose is to report the general condition of the structural and mechanical components of the home, as well as to check for the presence of termites and radon.

A typical home inspection takes between 2-1/2 and 3-1/2 hours to complete (in some cases more depending on the square footage).

The Inspector should:

- Enter all accessible attics and crawl spaces
- Operate appliances, furnace, air conditioner, and water heater
- Open windows and doors
- Run all plumbing
- Inspect all interior spaces
- Remove electrical panel cover and check lights and receptacles
- Traverse roofs when possible

The inspection should be performed by a licensed home inspector. Most inspectors also carry other certifications and designations and are members of various professional organizations.

Buyers are encouraged to attend the inspection and are normally present. REALTORS® are also present in many cases.

---

## *Key Players*

The key players in a real estate transaction are the Buyer, Seller, REALTOR®, Appraiser, Mortgage Lender, Title Company, Home Inspector, and Home Warranty Provider. Below are definitions to help you understand their part in a real estate transaction.

<b>BUYER</b>	A person who is in the market and ready to purchase real estate.
<b>SELLER</b>	A person who currently owns property and has made it known they are ready to sell.
<b>REALTOR®</b>	A real estate agent who is a member of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR).
<b>APPRAISER</b>	An licensed independent person trained to provide an unbiased estimate of property value.
<b>MORTGAGE BROKER</b>	An individual or company that brings the lender and borrower together.
<b>TITLE COMPANY</b>	A company that specializes in examining, insuring, and transferring titles to real estate.
<b>HOME INSPECTOR</b>	An independent, state licensed person trained to evaluate the structural and mechanical components of a property.
<b>HOME WARRANTY PROVIDER</b>	A company that provides a policy to the Buyer or Seller as protection against unexpected mechanical breakdowns.



## *Licensing, Certifications, and Membership*

When interviewing a home inspection company, you may ask about any licenses, certifications, or designations that the Inspector may have. These credentials inform you about the Inspector's commitment to continuing education and what services he/she is able to provide. Below are some examples of different licenses/certifications which your home Inspector should/may have.

<b>HOME INSPECTOR</b>	Any person performing home inspections for hire in Indiana must be licensed. You can learn more about Indiana licensing requirements at <a href="http://www.in.gov/pla">www.in.gov/pla</a> .
<b>WOOD DESTROYING INSECT (WDI)</b>	To perform what is known as a wood destroying insect report, the Inspector must be licensed by the Indiana State Chemist office.
<b>PRIMARY RADON TESTER</b>	Testing companies must be licensed by the state of Indiana. Testing companies can only be licensed by Indiana after they have become certified by the National Radon Proficiency Program (NRPP).
<b>INDOOR AIR QUALITY ASSOCIATION (IAQA)</b>	You can learn more about IAQA at <a href="http://www.iaqa.org">www.iaqa.org</a> .

The Home Inspector may also be a member of one or more organizations. Leading organizations in the home inspection industry are:

- 🏠 The American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI).
- 🏠 The National Association of Home Inspections (NAHI).
- 🏠 International Association of Certified Home Inspectors (InterNACHI).

Members are required to complete continuing education and work under a strict code of ethics and standards of practice.



## *Selecting a Home Inspection Company*

Choosing the right inspection company is an important first step. The company should be qualified in a technical sense, not biased in any way, and have the proper equipment to perform a thorough inspection. The Inspector should also be licensed and/or certified in the appropriate fields. The following are questions that you, the Buyer, might ask when interviewing a home inspection company:

**Q. Are you, the inspector, licensed?**

As of July 1st, 2005 all home Inspectors in Indiana must be licensed.

**Q. Are you a member of a professional organization?**

“Yes” is a sign that the Inspector is committed to continuing education as well as professionalism. A code of ethics is part of the ASHI, NAHI, and InterNACHI programs.

**Q. How long have you been in the business?**

While there is no right or wrong answer, an Inspector who has experience is what you are looking for.

**Q. How many inspections have you performed?**

See same answer as above. Some states require a certain amount of inspections be performed and/or State board approved courses/exams be taken. Go to [www.in.gov/pla](http://www.in.gov/pla) and look up more information under the professional licensing agency.

**Q. Are you licensed or certified to do termite and radon inspections?**

If the answer is “yes”, this eliminates the need to set up additional appointments. Also, this indicates the Inspector’s commitment to full service.

**Q. Do you perform repairs?**

“No”. If an Inspector also performs repairs, he or she may not be considered objective. This may be a conflict of interest.

**Q. May I attend the inspection?**

“Yes”. It is highly recommended.

**Q. Do you walk on the roof to inspect it?**

“Yes, when possible”. Realize that some roofs cannot be walked on due to material, pitch, or safety hazards such as the weather.

**Q. What does your inspection include?**

Please see “What is covered by an Inspection”.

**Q. What is your price?**

While price is a consideration, it should not be the determining factor. Also consider knowledge, performance, accuracy and number of inspections performed. There are add-ons that may be included at no charge - make sure to compare apples to apples.

After this brief interview, most buyers will be able to narrow the list down to one or two companies. Since most Buyers are unfamiliar with home Inspectors, a REALTOR® is a good source for a list of reputable companies.

## ***What May Be Covered by the Home Inspection?***

The structural and mechanical inspection covers the following: *Please note that all inspections are visual and this list is not all-inclusive, but is designed to give a general understanding of the scope of an inspection.*

- **Basement Structure** – Water penetration, water damage, structural integrity of walls, structural integrity of support system for first floor, window condition, floor condition, finished wall, and ceiling condition.
- **Crawl Space Structure** – Water penetration, water damage, ventilation, structural integrity of walls, insect damage, structural integrity of support system for first floor and insulation.
- **Slab Structure** – Water seepage into ducts (under slab), settlement, and cracks.
- **Furnace** – Heat exchanger, burners/elements, blower fan, ducts, air flow, filter, flue pipe, humidifier, and thermostat.
- **Electrical System** – Amp rating, volts, breakers, fuses, main panel, sub-panel(s), main service wire, branch wire, switches and receptacles, light fixtures, doorbell, and smoke detectors.
- **Plumbing System** – Water lines, waste pipes, vent pipes, fixtures and faucets, caulking and grouting, drainage, sump pump, water pressure, water heater, and gas pipes.
- **Interior** – Walls, ceilings, floors, steps/stairs, railings, fireplace, doors, and windows.
- **Attic** – Structure, roof decking, insulation, water penetration, and ventilation.
- **Appliances** – (Not all companies inspect appliances.) Range, oven, exhaust fan, refrigerator, dishwasher, disposal, and trash compactor.
- **Exterior** – Walls, soffits and fascia, gutters, roof, flashing, skylights, and chimney(s).
- **Grounds** – Walkways/steps, driveway, patio, porch, retaining walls, railings, balconies, and grading and drainage.

## *What to Order from your Home Inspection Company*

Every inspection company offers a variety of services. What each Buyer orders depends upon the house purchased. Below is a typical menu of a full-service home inspection company:

- Full Structural and Mechanical Inspections.
- Wood Destroying Insects (termite inspections)
- Well and Septic Inspections.
- Water Analysis (bacteria, nitrates, nitrites, and lead).
- Radon Testing.
- Roof Inspections.
- Partial Inspections.
- Mold Inspections/Testing.
- FHA/VA Certifications.
- Winterizations and De-Winterizations.

To start with, a **full structural and mechanical inspection** should be ordered. Items included are the crawl space, basement, heating system, cooling system, electrical components, plumbing, interior structure, fireplace, attic, doors, windows, appliances, exterior, and roof.

In addition to the full structural and mechanical inspection, houses in Indiana should be inspected for **wood destroying insects**. This is commonly called a termite inspection (or “WDI”) and should report any active infestations and/or visible damage as a result of wood destroying insects.

**Radon** gas is a possible health risk and, therefore, a test should be considered. Testing companies must be certified by the state of Indiana. Testing companies can only be certified by the state of Indiana after the testing company has become a member with the National Radon Proficiency Program (NRPP). [www.aarst-nrpp.org](http://www.aarst-nrpp.org). For more information on radon, please visit [www.epa.gov/radon](http://www.epa.gov/radon).

**Water quality** tests: In some areas, water is supplied by a private well. The well should be inspected and a water sample analyzed for the presence of bacteria (total count of E- coli and Coliform). Most inspection companies offer this service and lenders may require these reports before closing. Some lenders may require additional testing (lead, nitrites/nitrates.) Make sure to ask your lender which tests are required.

**Septic Systems:** The sewage disposal system, if not municipal, will be some type of septic system. An inspection of the septic system (which should include the use of septic dyes and probing) may be a condition of your loan.

The above items should be ordered if they apply to the home.

The following items are excluded from the general structural and mechanical inspection, but are optional and can be inspected for an additional fee.

. . . continued . . .



- |                      |                                  |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| ■ Radon              | ■ Irrigation Systems             |
| ■ Water Testing      | ■ Pools and Hot Tub              |
| ■ Well and Septic    | ■ Asbestos                       |
| ■ Security Systems   | ■ Lead Based Paint               |
| ■ Water Softeners    | ■ Mold                           |
| ■ Insect Infestation | ■ Other environmental conditions |

Since many variables exist between inspection companies, the Buyer should discuss specific coverage and exclusions with any prospective inspection company.

---

## *Attendance and What to Bring to the Home Inspection*

During the initial interview with the inspection company, the question should have been asked if the Buyer would like to attend the inspection. Hopefully, this was encouraged, and the date and time were set with this in mind. The inspection company will normally set the appointment, gain access, and will ask that all utilities be on.

### **Who should attend the inspection?**

Remember, this inspection is not a showing. Only the Buyer(s) or their representative should attend.

### **What does the Buyer need to bring to the inspection?**

This is up to the individual. The Inspector should have all of the necessary tools to perform the inspection. You may want a note pad and pen to write down concerns, measurements, and maintenance tips that most inspectors provide.

---

## *New Construction Homes*

**The “Three Phase” process** - There are phases in building a new home. Each phase represents the level of completion in the construction process and an inspection at each phase is recommended.

1. The first phase would be the **“foundation”** inspection. A foundation inspection is an inspection of the footings, foundations, and concrete floors. This should be scheduled to occur after these items have been poured, but before backfill (where dirt is pushed back into place) has taken place.
  2. The second phase would be the **“pre-drywall”** inspection or otherwise known as a **“rough-in”** inspection. A pre-drywall inspection covers the items that are normally inaccessible due to drywall. The Inspector will examine and report on electrical, plumbing, framing, and heating runs that will not be visible once the drywall is in place. This should be scheduled to occur immediately after all mechanicals have been installed and prior to drywall.
  3. The third phase would be the **“final”** inspection. The final inspection is the full mechanical and structural inspection. This should be performed prior to closing.
-



---

## *After the Home Inspection*

**Consulting your Home Inspector** - After you receive your home inspection report and before you respond to the Seller, you may want to ask questions of your Inspector.

**Consulting your REALTOR®** - What defects are the responsibility of the Seller? This is a question that the Inspector does not answer. The Inspector's job is to point out visible defects.

Once the inspection has been performed and a report generated, the Buyer meets with his/her REALTOR® and creates a Buyer's Response to the inspection report. The Buyer's Agent will then present the Buyer's Response to the Seller's Agent.

Once the Seller has signed the Buyer's Response and repairs have been made, the Buyer will want to see receipts of repairs made and then order a re-inspection.

---

## *Re-Inspections*

Whether the Seller makes repairs themselves or has a qualified contractor perform the work, it is a good idea to have a re-inspection.

- Re-inspections are highly recommended regardless of who performs the repair.
- It is a good idea to obtain all repair paid receipts from Seller prior to closing showing that the workmanship and any warranties are transferred to the Buyer. It also shows that the contractor was paid so there are no issues after closing.

---

## *After the Closing*

**Remember, even a house can change** - Once the Buyer has moved into the home, will he/she find things that the Inspector did not find? Remember, the home inspection is intended to be an overall, visual, and general condition inspection of the home, not an exhaustive list of defects.

**Home Warranties** - It is recommended to protect yourself against future breakdowns of mechanical systems by placing a home warranty on the property. Some warranties will also include roofs, sump pumps, wells, pools, appliances, and more. Each home warranty provider has their own policy and coverages. You should read them carefully, find the best and get coverage.





## **A Seller's Guide to the Home Inspection**

By Security Home Inspections, Inc.

13277 Illinois Street

Carmel, IN 46032

© 3/5/16 by Phillip B. Thornberry. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transcribed, in any form or by any means, without the prior written permission of the author.

---

13277 Illinois Street, Suite 120, Carmel, IN 46032 - Indianapolis/Carmel - (317) 848-1744

Toll Free - (800) 878-1744 - Lafayette – (765) 420-7200 - Fax – (317) 573-2089

Visit us on the web at: [www.securityhomeinspection.com](http://www.securityhomeinspection.com)