SASKATOON BUYER GUIDE

UNDERSTANDING YOUR HOME INSPECTION

A practical guide to what an inspection covers, how to evaluate the findings and when additional professional advice may be appropriate.



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A home inspection helps you better understand the visible condition of a property before making a final decision. It can identify significant concerns, routine maintenance needs and areas that deserve closer review.

This guide will help you read the report, organize the findings and ask the right questions before your inspection condition deadline.

UNDERSTAND THE PROPERTY - THEN DECIDE.

Use the inspection to replace uncertainty with informed questions and a clear plan.

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KNOW THE PURPOSE

What an Inspection Usually Covers

A standard inspection is generally a visual review of accessible components. The exact scope depends on the inspector, the property and the inspection agreement.

1 Structure and exterior

The inspector may review visible foundation components, walls, grading, drainage, roofing, flashing, siding, windows, doors, decks and other accessible exterior elements.

2 Major building systems

Accessible plumbing, electrical, heating, cooling, ventilation and insulation components are commonly observed for visible condition and operation within the agreed scope.

3 Interior and safety items

The review may include floors, ceilings, stairs, railings, fixtures, installed appliances and visible signs of moisture, damage or unsafe conditions.

4 Report and recommendations

The written report records observations, limitations and suggested follow-up. It should help separate important concerns from maintenance and smaller defects.

WHAT AN INSPECTION CANNOT PROMISE

- It cannot reveal every hidden, intermittent or future problem.
- Finished walls, stored belongings, snow, weather and unsafe access can limit visibility.
- It is not a warranty, appraisal, code-compliance certificate or environmental assessment.
- Items outside the agreed scope may require separate inspections or specialist testing.

READ THE REPORT WITH CONTEXT

How to Evaluate the Findings

A long report does not automatically mean a poor property. Focus on significance, timing, uncertainty and the effect each finding could have on your decision.

1 Safety or active damage

Give priority to hazards, active water entry, overheating, unsafe installations, structural movement and other issues that may need prompt attention or further investigation.

2 Major systems and lifespan

Consider the condition and likely remaining service life of roofing, heating, cooling, plumbing, electrical and other expensive components. Age alone does not confirm condition.

3 Repair scope and uncertainty

Ask whether the cause is understood, whether the concern is isolated or widespread and whether cost or access remains uncertain. A small symptom can sometimes require broader investigation.

4 Maintenance and cosmetics

Routine upkeep and cosmetic defects still matter for budgeting, but they should be distinguished from findings that affect safety, function, insurability or the property's major systems.

FOUR QUESTIONS FOR EACH IMPORTANT FINDING

- What was actually observed, and what could not be inspected?
- Is the issue active, potentially unsafe or likely to worsen if delayed?
- Who is qualified to investigate it, and is an estimate needed before the deadline?
- How does this finding affect my budget, comfort level and willingness to proceed?

KNOW WHEN TO GO FURTHER

Specialists, Estimates and Decisions

The home inspector identifies observations within the inspection scope. Other professionals may be needed to diagnose causes, confirm risk or estimate repairs.

1 Ask the inspector first

Clarify the finding, its urgency, the inspection limitation and the reason specialist review was recommended. Make sure you understand the written report rather than relying only on memory.

2 Consult the right specialist

Depending on the concern, useful advice may come from an electrician, plumber, roofer, HVAC contractor, structural engineer, sewer specialist, lawyer, insurer or another qualified professional.

3 Obtain useful estimates

When scope or cost could affect the decision, request written information that explains the work, assumptions and urgency. A quick verbal estimate may not capture hidden conditions.

4 Review your contract options

Your choices depend on the signed agreement, the inspection condition and applicable deadlines. Discuss possible responses with your REALTOR® and seek legal advice when appropriate.

POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

- Proceed because the findings fit your expectations and budget.
- Request clarification, specialist review or estimates before deciding.
- Discuss a contractual response that fits the agreement and circumstances.
- Decide not to proceed if the contract permits and the risk is not acceptable to you.

TURN INFORMATION INTO A PLAN

Your Inspection Review Checklist

Use this page to organize the report, follow-up advice and your decision before the inspection condition deadline.

BEFORE MAKING THE DECISION

- ☐ **Read the full report, including limitations and inaccessible areas**
- ☐ **Identify safety concerns, active damage and expensive near-term repairs**
- ☐ **Ask the inspector to clarify findings or recommendations you do not understand**
- ☐ **Complete any specialist review or estimates needed before the deadline**
- ☐ **Review the findings against your budget, plans and tolerance for uncertainty**
- ☐ **Discuss contractual options with your REALTOR® and legal advice when appropriate**

MY PRIORITY FINDINGS

- Safety or active damage
- Specialist review required
- Major near-term expense
- Maintenance to budget for

MY FINAL QUESTIONS

- What remains uncertain?
- What needs action first?
- What could the work cost?
- Am I comfortable proceeding?

REVIEW THE FINDINGS WITH A PLAN.

Understand the report, complete the follow-up and make a decision you can support.

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