

## 10 Frequently Asked Home Inspection Questions

**1. How do I find a home inspector?**

Don't go with the home inspector recommended by your real estate agent. Instead, ask your friends who they use, or look in the phone book or online. If you do ask your agent, ask for multiple names.

**2. Should I write a home inspection into the offer?**

When making an offer to purchase, you can write that the offer is subject to a home inspection, but you can also write in contingency numbers. In other words, if the home inspector finds more than \$400 of flaws, you can back out of the deal and get all your money back. Obviously, the lower this contingency number, the better for you and the worse for the seller.

**3. What does a home inspector do?**

The home inspector walks through the house with a flashlight and clipboard and looks for flaws, like cracks in the foundation, water damage, etc. After the inspection, he gives you a detailed report of his findings.

**4. If the inspector says the house is okay and I move in, but the place falls apart two months later, can I sue him?**

In this day and age, you can sue anyone. There are a number of people you can sue in a botched real estate transaction. If the seller or seller's agent didn't disclose or incorrectly disclosed something, you may be able to sue. You may be able to sue the builder, especially if it's new construction. While the home inspector does a thorough job, he's going through with a clipboard and a flashlight, not an X-ray machine. He is reasonably priced, likely just a few hundred bucks, depending on the size of your house, and he adds that extra level of comfort, even if it's just psychological, on a big transaction. Typically, it is hard to sue a home inspector for these reasons.

**5. How much will an inspection set me back?**

The cost is usually from \$300 to \$500, depending on the size of the house, but it's also usually worth it.

**6. If all the inspector uses is a flashlight and clipboard, can't I just do the inspection on my own?**

You can turn on faucets, flush toilets, and examine closet ceilings for water damage, but an inspector is still highly recommended, because the inspector will know what to look for. You, as a secretary, accountant, teacher, truck driver, or vascular surgeon, do not.

**7. If the inspector finds something wrong, will he fix it for me?**

No! Beware of the contractor posing as a home inspector, the one who takes

your \$300 for the inspection and then tells you he can repair the foundation for \$3,000. Home inspectors *inspect*, and that's it. Let someone else do the repairs, and never take a referral for an inspector's friend. It is best to find your own contractor if repairs must be made.

**8. How can you be sure they are qualified in residential home inspection?**

Typically, home inspectors need to be licensed. Ask for a copy of their qualifications. Also ask if they are a card-carrying member of the American Society of Home Inspectors ([www.ashi.org](http://www.ashi.org)) or the National Association of Home Inspectors ([www.nahi.org](http://www.nahi.org)).

**9. How long will a home inspection take?**

It typically takes two to three hours, depending on the size of the home.

**10. Should I join the inspector?**

You should absolutely attend. Since you will pay for the inspection yourself, you might as well squeeze an educational session out of it.