



Was Your Last Home Inspector Blind?

Learn Seven Things You Must Know To Avoid Hiring the Wrong Home Inspector

1-Make Sure Your Home Inspector Is Experienced:

You don't want the biggest investment of your life to be left in the hands of an inexperienced home inspector. The safety of you and your family is your first concern. An inexperienced home inspector could miss significant health and safety hazards that could cost a life.

Your inspector should be a full time inspector, not a weekend warrior.

It takes a full-time inspector at least 100 inspections to develop the eyes, ears and nose for hunting down problems. Part-time home inspectors simply don't have the time in the field to develop that radar. Be sure to ask how many inspections the inspector conducts annually and how many years he/she has been doing them.

A quality full-time home inspector conducts between 300 and 500 inspections annually - blind inspectors conduct 50 to 100 inspections annually.

Conducting 200-400 inspections each year requires extensive referrals, by prior clients, lenders, real estate agents and others -- so there is a much greater chance the inspector is not blind!

2. Education & Training:

Being a contractor is very different from being a Professional Home Inspector. Just being a contractor and knowing how to build a house or a specific system does not make a good home inspector. Home inspectors are responsible for evaluating all of the systems and components of the home -- not just one aspect such as the brick or the framing. To be able to provide a competent evaluation of all of these elements takes formal education and plenty of hands on training by a more experienced home inspector.

Did the inspector attend one of the top home inspection schools? Did he get mentored by an experienced inspector? How many ride-alongs did he do with a professional prior to inspecting on his own? Important questions to ask.

Comprehensive, continuing education and training is a must!

3. Certifications:

While certifications are certainly important, it's the combination of Experience, Education and Training that make the difference in the competency of your next home inspector.

Certified Inspector designation by a top home inspector organization like (ASHI) American Society of Home Inspectors or (CREIA) California Real Estate Inspection Association is of utmost importance. These are the benchmark home inspection organizations. There are many other smaller organizations that are much easier to become certified in and don't require the amount of yearly continuing education.

Maintaining membership with these organizations requires ongoing education and training through Monthly meetings, yearly conferences, tool box seminars etc. Building codes change all the time and it's important to stay abreast of current code changes.

Professional organizations provide Standards of Practice. These are a minimum standard which the home inspector will adhere to. Your inspector should provide a copy of these.

Along with these Standards of Practice and professional home inspector will have you sign a Pre-Inspection agreement which clearly defines what standards are adhered to as well as the limitations, exceptions and exclusions. This should be read and signed by you prior to the inspection appointment.

4. Fully Insured:

Nobody is perfect and every home inspector misses something once in a while. If your home inspector is not fully insured with Errors and Omissions insurance as well as General Liability, you may get left holding the bag and the cost of repairs. The top home inspectors understand the importance of this type of insurance, not only to protect themselves but to protect you and your asset. The inspector should have a minimum of \$500,000.00 E&O insurance and 1 million in liability.

5. The Inspection Report:

The top home inspectors in today's business don't produce handwritten reports. A professional inspector will provide at least a 30+ page narrative report, and not some little 10-15 pages that you can't read because he writes like your doctor.

You should want the report to be written in plain English, not some "Techno Jargon" - that only the home inspector can understand.

The report should include digital photos pointing out the findings especially if you aren't onsite at the time of the inspection.

The report should have numbered lines and a summary. This helps give you a quick idea of what are the most important issues, what needs repair but aren't a big issue, what is a recommended upgrade and maybe something the inspector just wants you to bring to your attention. The numbered lines makes your agent's job easier. When sending a request for repairs to the seller, your agent can refer to a certain line in your report. This eliminates your agent having to rewrite and filter what he or she thinks you are talking about.

Ask for a sample of an inspection report so you'll know what you can expect for your time and money. After all, you are the client!

6. How Long Has The Inspection Company Been In Business?

Is the inspection company locally owned and operated or are they some far away faceless corporation" where no one is monitoring and evaluating the quality of their work? If you are dealing with a multi-inspector firm, how long has the inspection company been in business? Does the inspection company have dedicated employees serving as customer service representatives to schedule appointments and provide any needed follow up assistance?

7. Ask To See What Other Home Buyers Have Said About The Inspector:

Quality Professional Home Inspectors request feedback from their clients. Because you cannot improve what you do not measure, professional home inspectors want to know what they are doing right, as well as what may need some improvement. If the inspector cannot or will not provide client referrals, he/she may be blind in more ways than one!

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You can see what our clients are saying by visiting our website <http://www.hawkeye-homeinspect.com>

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Trust the Hawk - Your Home Inspection Specialist