



The Ultimate Home Inspection Checklist: Don't Miss These Key Details

Buying a home in Alabama is an exciting step — but under Caveat Emptor (“buyer beware”), it’s also one that calls for careful attention.

At Today’s Home Real Estate, we want every buyer to move forward with confidence, not uncertainty.

This checklist is your guide to understanding what to look for, what to ask about, and when to call in an expert.

Use it during your home tours, your inspection, or when reviewing your report — and always remember, you’re not alone. Our agents are here to help you ask the right questions and connect you with trusted local inspectors.

Because peace of mind shouldn’t come after the sale — it should come with it.

“Knowledge brings confidence — and confidence makes for better decisions.”

Note: Alabama operates under Caveat Emptor — which means the seller has limited obligation to disclose property defects. It's up to the buyer to investigate the property thoroughly.

-  1. Structure & Foundation Ask about or look for:
- Cracks in foundation, slab, or brick veneer
 - Uneven floors or sticking doors/windows (signs of settling)
 - Moisture intrusion or water stains in crawlspaces or basements
 - Previous foundation repairs or structural reinforcements
 - Termite or wood rot damage on sill plates, beams, or joists
-  2. Roof & Exterior Ask about or inspect:
- Age of roof and shingle condition
 - Evidence of past repairs or hail damage
 - Missing, curled, or damaged shingles
 - Soft spots, leaks, or sagging areas
 - Flashing and chimney seal integrity
 - Gutters and downspouts — clear and functional
 - Siding, trim, paint, and caulking condition
(If there is new siding, inquire about the old siding. Was the old siding damaged? Was it removed? Etc.)
-  3. Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC) Confirm and test:
- Age of unit(s) and maintenance records
 - Function of thermostat and ductwork
 - Clean filters and air returns
 - Signs of leaks or condensation around units
 - Verify adequate cooling/heating output
 - Ask if unit was serviced annually, or last time it was serviced
-  4. Plumbing Systems Inspect and ask:
- Water pressure and temperature consistency
 - Type and age of plumbing materials (galvanized, PVC, PEX, copper)
 - Leaks under sinks or around toilets
 - Condition of water heater (age, rust, pilot light)
 - Proper drainage at all fixtures
 - Sewer line type and last maintenance or inspection date
-  5. Electrical Systems Check or verify:
- Main panel size (should support modern load: 150–200 amps)
 - Breakers labeled and properly sized
 - Grounded outlets (GFCI in kitchens, baths, exterior)
 - No exposed or outdated wiring (especially in older homes)
 - Functionality of switches and fixtures
 - Age of electrical system upgrades or rewiring
-  6. Interior Spaces Observe:
- Door and window operation — no sticking or gaps
 - Signs of water stains, cracks, or ceiling sagging
 - Flooring condition — soft spots or unevenness
 - Wall integrity and paint condition
 - Functioning smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms
 - Attic access and insulation coverage

7. Kitchen & Appliances

Confirm:

- Stove, oven, and range hood work properly
- Dishwasher cycles and drains
- Garbage disposal functionality
- Refrigerator and ice maker connections
- Leaks under the kitchen sink
- Ventilation fan to exterior

8. Bathrooms

Check:

- Proper ventilation (fan or window)
- Water pressure and drainage
- Toilet stability and seal integrity
- Leaks or water stains on floors or walls
- Caulking and grout condition
- Hot water delivery time
- Mildew observed or discovered

9. Attic, Insulation & Ventilation

Inspect for:

- Sufficient insulation (R-value for Alabama zones)
- Proper ventilation (ridge/soffit vents)
- Signs of leaks, moisture, or pest activity
- Roof decking integrity
- Mold, mildew, or poor airflow

10. Pest & Termite Inspection

Ask:

- Is there a current termite bond or protection plan?
- Evidence of wood rot or bore holes
- Previous infestations or moisture damage
- Recommend WDO (Wood-Destroying Organism) inspection report

11. Drainage, Grading & Landscaping

Confirm:

- Proper slope away from foundation
- Standing water after rain
- Functioning French drains or swales
- Condition of retaining walls
- Trees or shrubs too close to foundation

12. Garage, Driveway & Outbuildings

Check:

- Garage door function and auto-reverse safety
- Cracks in slab or driveway
- Electrical outlets in garage (GFCI protected)
- Roof and structure of sheds or detached garages

13. Systems, Safety & Documentation

Request or verify:

- Permits for any additions or remodels
- Manuals for major systems and appliances
- Recent repair or maintenance receipts
- Smoke/CO detector placement and operation
- Security system or cameras — included or removed?

 **Pro Tip:** If something feels off during your home inspection tour, note it down – even small details can reveal bigger issues later.

Confidence Comes from Knowing What to Look For

Home inspections aren't about finding perfection — they're about protecting your investment and preparing for what's next.

Our agents at Today's Home believe informed buyers make the best decisions. We'll walk you through your inspection results, help you interpret what matters most, and connect you with qualified professionals if repairs are needed.

Because at the end of the day, buying a home isn't just about signing papers — it's about peace of mind, trust, and starting your next chapter on solid ground.

Download the Homebuyer's Roadmap,
Your Journey Home

Schedule a Discover Call to Begin Your Journey

"At Today's Home, we help buyers ask the right questions — before, during, and after the sale — because it's always more than just a house."

