



WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE INSPECTING

A client guide to preparing for your North Carolina home inspection

Grounded Home Inspections

Quick note

- This guide is intended to help you prepare for inspection day and understand the general scope of a North Carolina home inspection.
- Your signed inspection agreement controls the specific services, limitations, and terms for your inspection.
- Optional services such as radon testing, water quality testing, WDIR/termite inspections, septic inspections, and indoor air quality testing are separate services unless specifically ordered.

1. The Big Picture

A home inspection is a visual, non-invasive evaluation of readily visible and readily accessible installed systems and components at the time of inspection.

The purpose of the inspection is to help you better understand the condition of the home. It is not a pass/fail test, not a warranty, and not a guarantee that every issue will be discovered. Homes can have hidden, intermittent, concealed, or future conditions that are not visible or present during the inspection.



Visual and non-invasive The inspection is based on visible conditions and normal operating controls. We do not take apart finished surfaces or perform destructive testing.	At the time of inspection Conditions can change after the inspection due to weather, use, leaks, repairs, occupancy, or system failures.
Readily accessible areas Obstructed, unsafe, locked, buried, concealed, or inaccessible areas may be limited or not inspected.	Not technically exhaustive The inspection is not an engineering evaluation, code compliance inspection, environmental assessment, appraisal, or warranty.

2. How Clients Should Prepare

The best inspection happens when the home is accessible, utilities are on, and important systems can be operated safely.

	Item	Why it matters
☐	Sign the inspection agreement before the appointment	The inspection cannot be performed without a signed agreement.
☐	Make sure all utilities are on	Electric, water, gas/propane, and fuel supplies must be on for systems to be operated.
☐	Confirm access to the home and all buildings	Provide lockbox access, keys, gate codes, garage access, and access to detached structures included in the inspection.
☐	Clear access to major systems	Electrical panels, HVAC equipment, water heaters, attic hatches, crawlspace doors, and plumbing cleanouts should be reachable.
☐	Clear under sinks and around appliances	This helps us see plumbing, leaks, drains, supply lines, and appliance connections.
☐	Secure pets	Pets should be crated, removed, or safely contained so doors, gates, crawlspaces, and rooms can be accessed.
☐	Make sure appliances are empty and ready to operate	Dishwashers, ovens, ranges, built-in microwaves, and disposals are inspected when installed and safe to



Grounded Home Inspections

Peace of Mind Starts Here

		operate.
☐	Do not schedule repairs during the inspection window	Contractors, cleaners, movers, or active repairs can limit access and create safety concerns.
☐	Tell us about known concerns	Known leaks, prior repairs, odors, moisture, electrical concerns, or areas of concern help us focus attention where it matters.
☐	Plan for enough time	Inspection length varies by home size, age, condition, occupied status, and additional services ordered.

Seller/listing-side preparation helps everyone

- Unlock interior doors, garages, crawlspace doors, attic access, gates, and electrical panel areas.
- Replace burned-out bulbs where practical so lighting can be evaluated more accurately.
- Remove stored items from around attic access, crawlspace access, electrical panels, water heaters, HVAC equipment, and plumbing areas.
- If the home is vacant, confirm utilities are active before the inspection appointment.



3. What an NC Home Inspection Generally Covers

North Carolina home inspections follow the NC Home Inspector Licensure Board Standards of Practice and focus on installed, readily visible, readily accessible systems and components.

Structural components Foundation, floors, walls, columns/piers, ceilings, roof structure, basements, crawlspaces, and attics where accessible.	Exterior Wall cladding, doors, representative windows, decks, porches, stairs, railings, eaves, soffits, fascia, driveways, walkways, grading/drainage as related to the building, and garage door operation/safety controls.
Roofing Roof coverings, visible roof drainage systems, flashings, skylights, chimneys, and roof penetrations using the inspection method determined safe and appropriate.	Plumbing Interior water supply/distribution, visible drain/waste/vent piping, fixtures, faucets, functional flow/drainage, leaks, water heating equipment, fuel storage/distribution, and sump pumps.
Electrical Service entrance, service equipment, grounding equipment, panels where safe, branch circuits at panels, representative lights/switches/receptacles, GFCI protection in required inspected areas, and smoke/CO alarms where applicable and readily accessible.	Heating and cooling Permanently installed heating and cooling equipment, normal operating controls, distribution systems, filters, registers, and visible vents/flues when weather and conditions allow safe operation.
Interior Walls, ceilings, floors, stairs, railings, counters, representative built-in cabinets, representative doors and windows, and visible signs of water penetration or abnormal condensation.	Insulation and ventilation Insulation/vapor retarders in unfinished spaces, attic and foundation ventilation, kitchen/bathroom/laundry venting systems, and readily accessible attic ventilation fans when temperature permits.
Built-in kitchen appliances Basic operation of installed dishwashers, ranges/cooktops/ovens, trash compactors, disposals, range hoods/ventilation equipment, and installed microwave ovens.	

4. What Is Not Included Unless Separately Ordered



Some important services are outside a standard home inspection and may need separate specialists, separate testing, or separate agreements.

Environmental conditions Mold, air quality, asbestos, lead, toxins, contaminants, noise, and similar environmental concerns are not determined in a standard inspection.	Pests and wood-destroying organisms Termite/WDIR inspections, rodents, insects, and pest evaluations are separate services.
Radon, water quality, wells, and septic Radon testing, water quality testing, private well evaluation, and septic evaluation are separate unless specifically ordered.	Code compliance and permits The inspection is not a municipal code inspection and does not verify permits or compliance with all codes or ordinances.
Concealed or inaccessible areas Items behind walls, under finishes, behind stored belongings, underground, locked, unsafe, or otherwise inaccessible may not be inspected.	Cosmetic conditions Cosmetic wear, paint, wallpaper, window treatments, carpet, and similar finish items are generally outside the required scope unless related to a defect or moisture concern.
Cost estimates or repair methods The report does not provide repair pricing, engineering calculations, design opinions, or detailed repair methods.	Future performance The inspection does not predict how long a system will last or guarantee future operation.

Optional services to consider

- Radon testing may be recommended because radon levels cannot be determined by a visual inspection.
- Water quality testing is important for private wells and may also be requested for peace of mind.
- WDIR/termite inspections, septic inspections, and specialized contractor evaluations may be needed depending on the property, loan, and concerns.
- Indoor air quality testing or mold-related sampling is separate from the standard home inspection.



5. What Happens on Inspection Day

Every home is different. Inspection flow may change depending on weather, access, safety, utilities, occupancy, and property conditions.

	Item	Why it matters
☐	Arrival and setup	We confirm access, review the property, and begin inspecting visible and accessible systems.
☐	Exterior and roof evaluation	The roof may be inspected from the ground, ladder, roof edge, windows, or by walking the roof only when safe and appropriate.
☐	Interior systems and rooms	Accessible rooms, built-in appliances, plumbing fixtures, receptacles, windows, doors, and safety devices are evaluated within the inspection scope.
☐	Attic, crawlspace, basement, and mechanical areas	These areas are inspected when access is available and conditions are safe enough to enter.
☐	Limitations are documented	If areas or systems cannot be inspected, the report will identify the limitation when required and practical.
☐	Questions are welcome	We are happy to answer questions about the report and observed conditions. We cannot provide legal, appraisal, engineering, or negotiation advice.

Can I attend the inspection?

- Clients are welcome to attend when allowed by the property access arrangement, but it is often best to arrive near the end for a summary conversation.
- Please avoid entering unsafe areas, climbing ladders, entering crawlspaces, or operating systems during the inspection.
- For occupied homes, please be respectful of the seller's belongings and privacy.

6. Understanding the Report

The report is the product of the inspection. Read the full report, not only the summary.



The summary is not the whole report The summary highlights important findings, but the full report contains additional context, photos, limitations, maintenance items, and recommendations.	Photos are examples Photos help document findings, but they may not show every occurrence of a defect or every affected area.
Recommendations matter When the report recommends evaluation or repair by a licensed contractor or specialist, that should be completed before closing when possible.	Normal wear is expected The report focuses on conditions that are defective, unsafe, not functioning as intended, need monitoring, or need further evaluation.
Questions are encouraged After reading the report, reach out with questions. It is better to ask for clarification than to guess what a finding means.	Use the report wisely Discuss repairs, credits, negotiations, and contract deadlines with your real estate agent or attorney as appropriate.

7. Client Reminders Before Closing

The inspection is one piece of due diligence. Use it together with specialist evaluations, seller disclosures, repair receipts, and final walkthrough observations.

Review the full report promptly Deadlines matter in real estate transactions, so read the entire report as soon as it is available.	Ask questions soon Clarify anything you do not understand before your due diligence or repair request deadline.
Get qualified evaluations Use licensed contractors or appropriate specialists for major defects, safety concerns, and further evaluation recommendations.	Verify repairs before closing Receipts are helpful, but repairs should be visually verified when possible and appropriate.
Complete a final walkthrough A walkthrough helps identify changes in condition, new leaks, missing items, or incomplete repairs after the inspection.	Keep the report The report can help with maintenance planning after you move in.



Peace of mind starts here

- Our goal is to provide a clear, useful, and honest inspection so you can make informed decisions about the property.
- The inspection will not make the home perfect, but it should help you better understand what you are buying and what may need attention.
- Thank you for choosing Grounded Home Inspections.

Grounded Home Inspections | Peace of Mind Starts Here

This guide is general pre-inspection information and does not replace the signed inspection agreement.