

A home inspection is well worth the cost

When buying a home, how do you know what you're getting?



Most people probably only think of one or two questions to ask a home inspector: "How much is your fee?" and "When can you be there?" But these only scratch the surface.

Here's a list of suggested questions you might ask:

- What types of licenses do you hold
- What kind of training do you have?
- Do you belong to a professional inspectors' association?
- How long have you been licensed in Texas?
- Are you a full-time home inspector?
- How much do you charge?
- Do you also perform repairs? (If the answer is yes, that may indicate a conflict of interest)
- What will the inspection include? (Get specifics. It should include the electrical, heating, and central air-conditioning systems; interior plumbing; visible insulation; roof; walls; ceilings; floors; windows; doors; foundation; basement; and the visible structure of the house.)
- Do you inspect gas lines, swimming pools, spas, septic systems, and wells? (You can identify other atypical systems or items.) Do you charge extra for these?
- Do you charge extra based on the size of the home? Multiple AC units? Other items?
- How much would you charge if I ask for a reinspection after repairs are completed?
- Will you supply a written report? (The inspector should, and the report should not only detail the present condition of the house, but also what condition the house is likely to be in in two to five years.)
- Can I attend the inspection? (The home inspection is an opportunity for you to learn about your new home and ask questions. If the inspector says no, find another inspector.)
- Do you go up on the roof to inspect it?
- How long will the inspection typically take? (Anything less than two hours is not long enough for a thorough inspection.)
- Can I call you with questions that come up later?
- Can you give me names and phone numbers of three people for whom you've inspected homes recently?

The inspector may not inspect swimming pools, wells, septic tanks, and other systems and items, and many inspectors will not conduct environmental tests or wood-destroying insect inspections. You will likely need to arrange for these inspections separately.

You can find a blank copy of the standard inspector report form at www.trec.state.tx.us to give you an idea of what may or may not be covered in the inspection.