

TIP SHEETS - Your Final Walkthrough Inspection – A Complete Guide

This guide is designed for your **Final Walkthrough**—the crucial inspection you perform 24 to 48 hours before closing. Since you have already had a professional home inspection, the goal here is to ensure agreed-upon repairs were completed, the sellers did not cause damage while moving out, no new issues (like a burst pipe or fresh roof leak) have arisen, and all major systems are still fully operational.

What to Bring

- **A phone charger or small nightlight:** To test electrical outlets.
- **A strong flashlight:** For dark corners in basements, attics, and under sinks.
- **Your original inspection report & repair agreement:** To verify requested fixes.

1. Kitchens

The kitchen is a high-liability area for plumbing and electrical issues.

- **Plumbing:** Turn on the **faucets** (both hot and cold). Check for **proper water flow** and pressure. Engage the **drain stoppers**, fill the basin slightly, and release to ensure **proper drainage**. Look under the sink with your flashlight for any active drips.
- **Surfaces:** Inspect the **floors, walls, and ceilings** for scuffs or gouges caused by moving appliances.
- **Electrical:** Test the **outlets** (especially GFCIs near the sink) with your charger. Turn all light switches on and off.
- **Windows & Doors:** Open and close **windows**, checking the locks.
- **Appliances:** Turn on the oven, stove burners, microwave, and dishwasher (run a short rinse cycle). Open the fridge and freezer to ensure they are cold.

2. Bathrooms

Water damage can happen overnight, so test every fixture.

- **Sinks:** Run the **faucets**, check the **drain stoppers**, observe the **water flow**, and watch for **proper drainage**. Check the trap underneath for leaks.
- **Tubs & Showers:** Turn them on. Feel for hot water. Test the shower diverter valve (ensure water goes to the showerhead and doesn't just pour out the tub spout). Watch the drain to ensure it doesn't back up.
- **Toilets:** Flush every toilet. Wait for it to refill and listen to ensure the running stops. Press your knee gently against the front of the bowl to ensure it is firmly secured to the floor (a rocking toilet means a broken wax ring).
- **Ventilation:** Turn on the exhaust fans to ensure they rattle to life.
- **Room Checks:** Inspect the **floors, walls, ceilings, and windows**. Test the GFCI **outlets** and lights.

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3. Bedrooms & Hallways

These areas are most prone to move-out damage.

- **Surfaces:** Carefully check all **floors, walls, and ceilings**. Look for large holes left by removed TVs or artwork, and check floors for deep scratches from dragged furniture. Look at ceilings for any fresh, brown water stains.
- **Fixtures:** Open and shut every interior door to ensure they latch properly.
- **Windows:** Open all **windows**, verify the glass isn't cracked, and ensure they lock securely.
- **Electrical:** Plug your charger into the **outlets** and test all wall switches/ceiling fans.

4. Basements

- **Moisture Check:** Look closely at the **floors** and base of the foundation **walls** for puddles, dark damp spots, or a fresh musty smell.
- **Surfaces:** Inspect the **ceilings** (especially under first-floor bathrooms) for plumbing leaks.
- **Sump Pump:** If there is one, lift the float switch to ensure it kicks on.
- **Debris:** Ensure the seller has not left behind trash, old paint cans, or broken furniture.

5. Garages

- **Doors:** Open and close the main garage doors using both the wall switch and the remotes (ensure the seller left them). Break the invisible beam of the safety sensors near the floor with your foot while the door is closing to ensure it automatically reverses.
- **Surfaces & Electrical:** Check the **floors** for massive new oil spills. Inspect the **walls, ceilings, and windows**. Test the **outlets** and lights.
- **Cleanliness:** Like the basement, confirm all personal items and hazardous waste have been removed.

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6. Mechanical Systems Check

You must verify that the home's vital organs are still functioning.

A. Heating Systems

Go to the thermostat, switch it to "Heat," and turn the temperature up 5 degrees above the current room temperature.

- **For Hot Air (Forced Air Furnace):** Go to the floor or ceiling registers. Within a minute, you should feel warm air blowing out with good force. Check the furnace area to ensure the filter cover is in place and there are no strange burning smells.
- **For Hot Water (Boiler/Baseboard/Radiators):** Listen for the boiler to fire up in the basement. Walk to the baseboards or cast-iron radiators and carefully feel for heat. *Note: Boilers take longer to heat up than forced air. Give it 10–15 minutes.* Inspect the area around the boiler for fresh puddles.
- **For Heat Pumps (Minisplits or Ducted):** Heat pumps take a few minutes to reverse their internal valves. Wait 3–5 minutes, then feel the indoor air handlers or vents for warm air. Walk outside and ensure the exterior compressor fan is spinning and clear of debris or snow.

B. Cooling Systems (Central A/C or Heat Pumps)

Wait at least 5 minutes after testing the heat before testing the cooling. Go to the thermostat, switch it to "Cool," and drop it 5 degrees below room temp.

- Feel the registers or air handlers for cold **proper air flow**.
- Check the exterior condenser unit to ensure it is running and not making violent rattling noises.
- *Warning:* If the outside temperature is below 60°F (15°C), **do not test the A/C**. Running an air conditioner in cold weather can destroy the compressor.

C. Domestic Hot Water (Water Heater)

- Go to the faucet furthest from the water heater (usually a second-floor bathroom). Turn on only the hot water. It should get hot within a minute or two.
- Go to the water heater tank. Inspect the base and the floor around it for rust flakes or fresh puddles.

7. Other Areas

- **Attic:** Pop your head into the attic hatch with a flashlight. You do not need to walk around, but scan the underside of the roof deck for any daylight shining through or active dripping from recent rains.
- **Exterior:** Walk the perimeter of the house. Check that the siding wasn't damaged during the move. Ensure gutters are still attached. Check that the seller didn't dig up and remove any landscaping (shrubs, small trees) that were permanently attached and supposed to convey with the property. Test exterior spigots (if it is not freezing weather).