VERTEX PROPERTY INSPECTIONS

THREE HOMES BUYER CHECKLIST

New, lived-in or flipped, every home can be a great home, and every one has a blind spot. Use this checklist to fall in love with the house and still know the whole house.

From **Joe Worthy, Certified Master Inspector®** · Arizona licensed home inspector

EVERY HOME

- [ ] Book your inspection as soon as you're under contract, so results land well inside your inspection period.
- [ ] Choose a licensed Arizona home inspector who works for you, not for the seller or builder.
- [ ] Plan to attend the inspection in person. Walk the house and ask questions.
- [ ] Read the full report, not just the summary. Ask your inspector about anything you don't understand.
- [ ] Send repair items to a licensed Arizona ROC contractor for evaluation before your inspection period ends.
- [ ] Ask the age of the big four: AC, roof, water heater and electrical panel. Age tells you what to budget for.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

WHY IT SHINES
Built to today's energy standards, everything new, and a builder warranty behind you.

THE BLIND SPOT
The city inspects for the city, and most mistakes get hidden behind drywall within days.

- [ ] Ask the builder up front whether you can bring your own inspector at each stage. Get the answer in writing.
- [ ] Pre-drywall inspection: framing, plumbing and wiring while they're still in the open.
- [ ] Final inspection before your walkthrough with the builder's rep. Bring the written report to the walkthrough.
- [ ] Don't skip an inspection because the city already inspected. City sign-off is not a home inspection.
- [ ] Read your builder warranty. Note what it covers and the date workmanship coverage ends.
- [ ] Schedule an 11-month warranty inspection before that coverage ends, and submit the findings to the builder in writing.
- [ ] Keep copies of every report, warranty request and builder reply.

RESALE

WHY IT SHINES
Established neighborhoods, mature shade trees and a track record you can read.

THE BLIND SPOT
Systems don't fail loudly. They wear out quietly, and the owners stop noticing.

- [ ] Read the Seller's Property Disclosure Statement (SPDS), then read it again next to your inspection report.
- [ ] Ask how old the AC, roof, water heater and electrical panel are, not just whether they work.
- [ ] On a tile roof, ask about the underlayment beneath the tiles. That's the layer that wears out.
- [ ] When the disclosure says something was "replaced" or "redone," ask exactly what was replaced, where, and by whom.
- [ ] On older homes, get a sewer scope. It's the one pipe in the house you will never see.
- [ ] Ask for receipts and warranties for any past repairs or replacements.
- [ ] Ask your inspector which areas were blocked by furniture or storage, and check those areas at your final walkthrough once the home is empty.

FLIP

WHY IT SHINES

Move-in ready, modern style in an established neighborhood, and someone else already lived through the renovation.

THE BLIND SPOT

New finishes can sit on top of old bones. Updated is not the same as replaced.

- [ ] Ask the seller for permits, receipts, warranties and the names of every contractor who worked on the home.
- [ ] Look up each contractor's license on the Arizona Registrar of Contractors website (roc.az.gov). It's free and takes two minutes.
- [ ] Check with the city or county for permits pulled on the address, and compare them to the work you can see.
- [ ] Ask which systems were actually replaced: roof, AC, water heater, electrical panel and plumbing. Get the year for each.
- [ ] Inspect a flip like the older home it may be underneath. On older homes, add a sewer scope.
- [ ] Be cautious when no permits or contractor names can be produced for major work.
- [ ] At the inspection, make sure every fixture is run with water. Leaks often hide inside walls and under floors.

INSPECTION DAY

- [ ] Arrive for the walkthrough with your inspector and bring your questions.
- [ ] Ask your inspector to show you the main water shutoff, the electrical panel and the AC filter location.
- [ ] Take your own photos of anything you want to remember.
- [ ] Ask: "If this were your house, what would you fix first?"
- [ ] Use the report as an education, not a reason to panic. Every home has a list.

FALL IN LOVE WITH THE HOUSE.
JUST MAKE SURE YOU KNOW THE WHOLE HOUSE.

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This checklist is general guidance for home buyers and is not a substitute for a professional home inspection.