

# Open House Inspection Checklist

An open house is designed to sell you - not to show you everything. Use this checklist to stay sharp, look deeper, and catch the clues most buyers overlook. Bring it to your next showing to track what feels right - and what deserves a second look.

## Red Flag #1: Strong Scents or Fresh Paint

Sellers know smell triggers emotion. If a home is heavily scented or freshly painted - especially in the basement, kitchen, or bathroom - pause for a closer look.

- Heavy air fresheners, candles, or diffusers in key rooms.
- Fresh paint only in select areas or near plumbing fixtures.
- Closed windows or fans running without reason.
- Check corners, ceilings, and baseboards for stains or bubbling paint.

*Pro Tip: Good staging attracts - over-staging distracts. Trust your senses.*

## Red Flag #2: Uneven Floors or Sticky Doors

- Doors or windows that stick or don't close smoothly.
- Cracks above doors or window frames.
- Uneven floors or dips while walking through rooms.

If multiple areas feel off, schedule an inspection before making an offer. Cosmetic issues are fixable

- structural ones are not.

## Red Flag #3: Quick-Flip Renovations

- Mismatched flooring or inconsistent finishes.
- New fixtures installed on outdated plumbing or wiring.
- Sloppy paint lines or incomplete updates.

Ask for permits and contractor information. Legitimate renovations leave a paper trail. If the work

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looks rushed, assume corners were cut.

## Red Flag #4: Neglected Exterior Maintenance

- Gutters overflowing or disconnected.
- Peeling paint, standing water, or cracked siding.
- Missing caulking around windows and doors.

Curb appeal reveals care. In the Hudson Valley, freeze-thaw cycles make exterior upkeep critical. If the outside looks neglected, the systems inside may be too.

## Red Flag #5: Sparse or Vague Disclosures

- Missing or overly generic disclosure forms.
- Evasive answers about prior repairs or updates.

Ask directly about roof leaks, flooding, pests, or foundation repairs. Transparency builds trust - evasion is a red flag of its own.

## Bonus: Open House Smart Habits

- Take photos of each room - especially problem spots.
- Check cell reception in every room.
- Ask about utility costs and service providers.
- Visit at different times of day to gauge lighting and traffic.

*Pro Tip: The best buyers aren't negative - they're observant. When you know what to look for, confidence replaces caution.*