



TOUR A HOME LIKE A PRO CHECKLIST

Address

Date

Gut Feel

Price

1

Seller Background

It's important to know some basics about the seller and his/her motivation for selling, as this will help you make a smart offer down the road. You may feel uncomfortable asking these questions while you are touring a potential home, but your agent will know how to do so diplomatically. So don't hesitate to ask your agent to chase down this info.



2

Why is the seller moving?

How long have they lived there?

How much did they pay for the house?

How long has it been on the market?

Neighborhood

The old saying about "location, location, location" is true. No single thing will increase — or diminish — your home's value more than where it's located. So you should spend even more time inspecting the neighborhood than almost anything else.



3



Safe and quiet?

Do you feel good as soon as you step out of your car? Do people seem relaxed walking around? Would you feel good being outside at any time of day — or night? How much noise can you hear from highways, airplanes, trains, or other people?

Poor Average Good

Visit any potential neighborhood several times, at different times of day or days of the week. A peaceful, family area might suddenly morph into college-student party central depending on when you visit.



Walkability?

Even if you've chosen the deepest suburbs, you'll appreciate if there's at least a handful of local shops within walking distance. If there aren't shops, consider walkability to other things, like public spaces, such as parks or community centers, nature and wildlife, such as body of water or forest, or even nearby restaurants, or entertainment. Ideally there is at least a handful of things you can get to without getting in a car.

Poor Average Good

Type your potential address into www.walkscore.com to see how "walkable" it is and what's nearby worth walking to.



Good School District?

Even if you don't have kids, future buyers might. And living in a good school district virtually guarantees your home will be easier to sell in the future, or will maintain its value over time.



Poor



Average



Good

Type your potential address into www.GreatSchools.org to see how many schools in the area earn a favorable score out of 10 — the higher the better. But the rule of thumb is this: great school = great neighborhood.



Working Public Services?

Take a look around the street and people's yards. Are there garbage cans strewn about, or worse still, garbage? Do the electricity poles and boxes seem to be in decent working order? Are the roads in disrepair? Do ugly power lines criss-cross everywhere? Look carefully to make sure the public works actually work.



Poor



Average



Good



Street traffic and street parking?

Are there speed bumps or double yellow lines on the road in front of the house? That usually indicates a busy road and speeding traffic. How congested does it seem? Given that, would it be safe to allow children out front unsupervised? Will you – or your guests – have to fight for street parking?



Poor



Average



Good

Notes about Neighborhood: 

Handwritten notes area with horizontal lines.



Big Changes On The Way?

Ask your agent or contact city hall to find out whether there are any proposed changes in the area, like a new school, apartment building, and building complex. Depending on what it is, it may either increase or decrease your property value in the future.



Poor



Average



Good



Nice Neighbors?

Bad, argumentative neighbors can destroy not only your mood, but also the long-term value of your home. So don't be shy about knocking on the doors of at least a couple neighbors and striking up a friendly conversation. Explain that you're thinking of buying in the area and curious about their impression of the neighborhood. How they react to you in general, and to your question, will tell you a lot about whether you'll fit with that particular group of people.



Poor



Average



Good

Find out if there are any pre-existing and ongoing disputes with the neighbors that you may inherit.



Yard It's not just about "curb appeal", but whether the actual yard itself is safe, sound, and right for you.



Is there adequate privacy?

Can you see into the front windows from the street?



Poor



Average



Good



Is any fencing in good condition?

Is it sturdy and upright?



Poor



Average



Good



Is this front yard on a corner and situated such that pedestrians might regularly cut across it?

Could this easily be rectified?



Poor



Average



Good



Is landscaping in good condition?



Poor



Average



Good



To what extent are trees and branches kept away from the roof?



Poor



Average



Good



Has the soil been tested for lead? If so, is the amount of lead found considered safe?



Poor



Average



Good

Ask about any geologic issues that may be relevant now or in the future. Your homeowners insurance will go up if the property is near a fault line, or in an area with sinkholes, landslides, or erosion issues. Ask your agent to find out.

Notes about Yard: [Handwriting area with a pencil icon and horizontal lines]

Home Exterior

You'll need to double-check all this information with an inspector, but take a preliminary look at the following:



Does the roof appear to be in good condition?



Poor



Average



Good





Are the exterior walls in good condition?

Bricks crumbling? Wood splitting or discolored?

Poor

Average

Good



Has it been painted with lead paint? If so, is the paint stable and in good condition (no cracking, peeling, chipping)?

Poor

Average

Good



Does the foundation appear solid and intact?

Do you see any cracks or sloping?

Poor

Average

Good



Do the windows appear to be in good condition?

Poor

Average

Good

Notes about Home Exterior:

Handwriting lines for notes about the home exterior.

Home Interior

Carefully check the home interior. Don't be fooled by fresh coats of paint — really give the place a thorough look.



6



What's the overall impression the moment you walk through the front door?

Poor

Average

Good



Does the flow/layout feel right and make sense for your lifestyle? Enough space, enough bedrooms, etc?

Poor

Average

Good



What is the condition of the ceilings and the walls?

Any water spots? Buckling? Sagging?

Poor

Average

Good



Do windows and doors open and close easily?

Any sticking?

Poor

Average

Good

Notes about Home Interior:

Handwriting lines for notes about the home interior.



Is there adequate storage and closet space to suit your needs?

Poor

Average

Good

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Will the kitchen be easy to work in? Is it big enough and modern enough to suit your needs? Is there sufficient cabinetry and storage?

Poor

Average

Good

.....



Are the bathrooms adequate and appropriate for your family size and typical usage patterns?

Poor

Average

Good

.....



What is the condition of the basement? Does it suit your needs (ie. finished vs unfinished) or will it need additional work?

Poor

Average

Good

.....



Is there enough space for activities that matter to you (ie. adequate family room, a private home office area, etc)?

Poor

Average

Good

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Which appliances come with the home and what is their condition?

Poor

Average

Good

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Is there anything that will clearly need renovation or repair?

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Were any recent improvements done professionally?

Poor

Average

Good

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Notes about Home Interior:

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