

DIY PRE-PURCHASE CHECKLIST



A home is likely to be the biggest investment you ever make, so it is crucial that you take the time to thoroughly inspect potential properties. This DIY list will keep you focused and rule out properties early on, before investing too much time or money. You may find it helpful to have someone else with you, particularly if they have an objective perspective.

If you notice any of the below issues, call Kadok House Inspections on 0479 185 341. Kadok will take your inspection one step further by going through the property with a fine-toothed comb, letting you know the extent of the problem, and identifying areas that may become problematic in the future.

You may find some (or a lot!) of the issues detailed in this checklist, particularly in older homes. You might be able to negotiate a better price if you know there are areas that need work. At the very least, you can make a decision based on what needs to be done and your capacity to either do it yourself or bring in tradespeople.

If you are looking at a new home (or one that is a few years old) located in a housing estate, it is imperative to have the property checked. It is particularly important to look for evidence of sub-standard work and defects that may not have been rectified when the construction was completed.

A note on renovations & extensions:

If there has been an extension or internal structural work, consider the quality of the work and request to see council approvals. If you are planning to extend, check council requirements and possible restrictions. Call in professionals to conduct a thorough check. This is particularly important when it comes to the structural integrity of the home, including the presence of termites or borers, as well as safety issues in relation to asbestos and electrical work.

What to Look for Outside:

- Large trees:** Especially if they are close to the house. Check the age and condition, not just of those on the property you are interested in, but also neighbouring trees that are large, old or overhang into the yard or over the house. It can be expensive to have trees removed and you may need a permit from your local council to do so.
- Poisonous plants:** eg. Belladonna Lily, Arum Lily, Oleander, English Ivy – these can be dangerous to children and pets.
- Garden beds:** Are they against the house? Do they appear damp? Dampness against the house can attract termites.
- Yard:** Is it the right size for you? Too big? Too small? Too much work?
- Drainage:** Are there wet or muddy patches in the yard? If the block is sloping, where will rain flow?
- Garden taps:** Where are they located?
- Access:** What is the condition of the driveway? Is it paved, gravel or raw earth? Think about what it will be like in different seasons – a mud bath or dust bowl?
- Pathways:** Are they uneven or slippery?
- Privacy:** Can neighbours or people passing by see into the yard and house?
- Fencing and gates:** Are they sound? Will they need repairing in the near future?
- Yard:** Is it secure? This is important if you have children or pets.
- Pools and spas:** Look for evidence of leaks or bulges, as well as the condition of the surrounding paving or deck areas. Ask for maintenance reports and seek expert advice if you feel it is necessary.
- External structures:** Examine sheds, carport, garage and pergolas for stability and their general condition, particularly if they will be used for storage. Don't forget to look at the electrical work too.
- Outside walls:** Are they straight? Are weatherboards sagging or rotted? If they are brick, is the sub-floor well ventilated?
- Eaves:** Are they well fitted or buckled and water-stained?
- Guttering:** Look for rust and holes and the build-up of garden debris. Check the downpipes and drainage to make sure the water runs off to the stormwater drain.

- Plumbing:** Look for leaks and rust in external plumbing and dampness where downpipes meet the ground.
- Under timber floors:** You are looking for stumps or brick piers, not props, blocks or off-cut timbers which are temporary fixtures. Check for damp ground that is attractive to termites.
- Termites:** Check under the house for the presence of termite 'tubes'. Check for termite damage wherever wood touches the ground. Don't forget to look at pergolas and decking as well as the main house.
- Asbestos:** Ask if there is asbestos in walls, roof or fencing. Asbestos was used in residential construction until the late 1980s. If it is present, it is best to have it professionally assessed and removed as inhalation of asbestos dust can cause serious health issues. This is particularly important if you are considering renovating.
- Fuse box:** Is it modern? Does it meet safety requirements? Have the box and wiring checked if you are unsure.
- Orientation:** Which way does the house face? Do the living spaces get enough natural light? Will they be too hot in summer and cold in winter? Are the neighbours too close? Will there be excessive traffic noise? Try to go to the house several times at different times of the day/week as you might get a different impression of the location.

What to Look for Inside:

(Look for these issues in each room as applicable)

- Ceilings:** Do they appear straight? Are there cracks or signs of movement, particularly near the cornices? Are there water stains or mould?
- Walls:** Are they straight? Look for cracks, particularly near chimneys and doors. Look carefully at walls that are freshly painted or have new wallpaper. Run your hand over the walls and look at them from different angles. Dampness may be covered up by fresh paint. Are the brick walls damp? Tap them to check for a hollow sound or change in tone. Check with your nose as well as your eyes. Ask if the walls are insulated.
- Doors:** Open and close them. Do they move smoothly, or do they stick?
- Windows:** Check condition of timber and metal frames. Open and close windows. Do they jam? Check for broken panes and rot. Look for condensation and evidence of mould. Be wary if they are freshly painted.
- Fly screens:** Are these fitted and if so, are they in good condition?

- Concrete floors:** Look for signs of dampness. Pay attention to lifting floor tiles or rotten carpet.
- Timber floors:** Check for rotten floorboards, structural issues or borer infestation by jumping lightly in different areas. Check whether floors are level or if there are gaps between the skirting boards and floorboards.
- Floor coverings:** Consider the age and condition of carpets and if they might need replacing. Lift rugs to make sure they are not covering damage.
- Benchtops and cupboards:** Are they in good condition? Is there enough cupboard space?
- Plumbing:** Check water pressure by turning on taps. Open cupboards and check drainage. Check fittings for cracks or leaks. Check for damaged enamel and broken surfaces. Check for loose grout and cracked tiles that can be signs of water damage.
- Hot water service:** Consider the age, condition and type of hot water service and whether it will meet your needs.
- Electrical:** Check light switches and power points. Are they in the right places? Are there enough power points? If they appear old there may also be old wiring that needs replacing.
- Heating and cooling:** Consider their age and the type of system and whether they will meet your needs. Ask about their service history and if they are running well.
- Room configuration:** Are there enough rooms in the right places? Enough storage space?
- Décor:** The aesthetics of a house can be changed but it can be expensive to do so. Be realistic about what you need to do compared to what you would like to do or what you can afford to do.
- Furnishings:** Will the furniture you already own fit into the house? Will you need more or less?

Once you have found the home you wish to purchase and completed the checklist, get in touch to book a pre-purchase inspection:



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 www.kadokhouseinspections.com.au/book-an-inspection/