



# Ten Important Questions to Ask Your Home Inspector

From US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

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## 1. What does your inspection cover?

The inspector should ensure that their inspection and inspection report will meet all applicable requirements in your state if applicable and will comply with a well-recognized standard of practice and code of ethics. You should be able to request and see a copy of these items ahead of time and ask any questions you may have. If there are any areas you want to make sure are inspected, be sure to identify them upfront.

*At a minimum ENVIRON inspections cover the following systems:*

*Exterior:*

*Foundation, Landscape, Roof, Chimneys, Windows, Doors, Siding, Gutters & Downspouts, Driveways, Patios, Decks and Porches*

*Interior:*

*Structural, Air Conditioning (HVAC), Plumbing and Electrical Systems Appliances, Walls, Floors, Ceilings, Attic, Basement, and Crawl Spaces.*

*Out-buildings, pools, septic systems, large trees, irrigation systems, landscape structures, low voltage systems, and other additional features of a property can be provided.*

## 2. How long have you been practicing in the home inspection profession and how many inspections have you completed?

The inspector should be able to provide his or her history in the profession and perhaps even a few names as referrals. Newer inspectors can be very qualified, and many work with a partner or have access to more experienced inspectors to assist them in the inspection.

*Over twenty five years of building design, surveys and inspections. Hundreds. Inspections have been of small dwellings to campuses.*

## 3. Are you specifically experienced in residential inspection?

Related experience in construction or engineering is helpful, but is no substitute for training and experience in the unique discipline of home inspection. If the inspection is for a commercial property, then this should be asked about as well.

*Yes. ENVIRON Design Consulting has designed dozens of residences across the country. All home inspection industry training has been taken, plus advanced courses. For years Tom Fisher has also worked closely with electrical and mechanical engineers, contractors, and other building industry consultants.*

## 4. Do you offer to do repairs or improvements based on the inspection?

Some inspector associations and state regulations allow the inspector to perform repair work on problems uncovered in the inspection. Other associations and regulations strictly forbid this as a conflict of interest.

*No. This is improper and is not allowed by InterNACHI's code of ethics (for at least one year after the inspection).*

**5. How long will the inspection take?**

The average on-site inspection time for a single inspector is two to three hours for a typical single-family house; anything significantly less may not be enough time to perform a thorough inspection. Additional inspectors may be brought in for very large properties and buildings.

*Depending on size and complexity, our inspections generally take 3 to 4 hours for a single family home. In addition to HomeGauge® Software, we use our own additional checklists to ensure that no systems or important deficiencies are missed. Often Owners will be present and we can also take the time to explain findings, answer questions or discuss possible additions or improvements to a property.*

**6. How much will it cost?**

Costs vary dramatically, depending on the region, size and age of the house, scope of services and other factors. A typical range might be \$300-\$500, but consider the value of the home inspection in terms of the investment being made. Cost does not necessarily reflect quality. HUD Does not regulate home inspection fees.

*Our clients understand that a tough inspection takes time and that this is a good investment. We are interested in building our reputation for quality, and quality simply takes more effort and attention. If our proposal is more than you feel you can afford, please feel welcome to inquire about a discount.*

**7. What type of inspection report do you provide and how long will it take to receive the report?**

Ask to see samples and determine whether or not you can understand the inspector's reporting style and if the time parameters fulfill your needs. Most inspectors provide their full report within 24 hours of the inspection.

*We use the comprehensive HomeGauge® system and generally do our reports based on building systems, and not room by room. This is generally more useful to Buyers. We try to finish reports by the evening of the day of the inspection. We can accommodate rush cases and have them online within an hour or two of the inspection.*

**8. Will I be able to attend the inspection?**

This is a valuable educational opportunity, and an inspector's refusal to allow this should raise a red flag. Never pass up this opportunity to see your prospective home through the eyes of an expert.

*Absolutely. Providing insights into such a large investment is part of what we do. The house and site may also have potential for improvements. Ask an architect!*

**9. Do you maintain membership in a professional home inspector association?**

There are many state and national associations for home inspectors. Request to see their membership ID, and perform whatever due diligence you deem appropriate.

*Yes. ENVIRON inspectors are members of InterNACHI. Owner Tom Fisher is also a member of the American Institute of Architects and a LEED accredited professional (LEED AP).*

**10. Do you participate in continuing education programs to keep your expertise up to date?**

One can never know it all, and the inspector's commitment to continuing education is a good measure of his or her professionalism and service to the consumer. This is especially important in cases where the home is much older or includes unique elements requiring additional or updated training.

*Yes. We are professionally interested in our work, how to improve at it, and in increasing our knowledge base. ENVIRON inspectors have rigorous continuing education requirements.*

**Other questions you may want to ask:**

**Do you do Radon, Septic, Energy, asbestos, thermal scanning, mold, IAQ, or other testing?**

Having these tests done in your home can uncover unseen problems or deficiencies. Radon, especially is prevalent in this region, and tests are often recommended.

*ENVIRON can arrange for specialists who can provide these services in conjunction with an inspection. These tests are provided by professionals who are expert in testing and inspecting these important concerns.*

**What about large estates, mansions or commercial properties?** Building complexes, challenging sites, extensive landscaping, older and historic structures, remote locations, and the privacy concerns of wealthy clients require an added level of skill, knowledge and understanding. Can your home inspector meet this level of investigation?

*Because of ENVIRON's background in both design and large scale inspections, we are an ideal choice for large luxury homes with complex systems, historical concerns, and a need the for consultant discretion.*

**This purchase is an investment property, can you provide more than just a standard home inspection?** Investors, tough negotiators, out of town buyers, and other buyers needing a very high level of investigation may need more than a good industry standard property inspection. What options are available for this?

*ENVIRON can provide enhanced and comprehensive levels of inspection far exceeding the InterNACHI Standards of Practice. Please call to discuss your requirements and to request a proposal.*

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**Home and Estate Inspections**

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