

Home Inspection Guide: What Every Redding Buyer Should Know

What to expect during a home inspection, how to prepare, and what to do with the results.

You've found a home you love, your offer was accepted, and now you're under contract. The next critical step? The home inspection. This is your opportunity to learn exactly what you're buying—the good, the bad, and everything in between.

I'm Nathan Cross, a Realtor serving Redding and Shasta County. I've been through hundreds of home inspections with my buyer clients, and I can tell you: a thorough inspection by a qualified professional is one of the best

investments you'll make in the home buying process. Here's everything you need to know.

What Is a Home Inspection?

A home inspection is a visual examination of a property's major systems and components. A licensed home inspector evaluates the condition of the home and documents their findings in a detailed report—typically 30–50 pages with photos.

The inspection is for your benefit as the buyer. It's not an appraisal (which determines value) or a code compliance check (which ensures building standards). It's an educational opportunity to understand what you're purchasing. If you're still early in the process, start with our [complete guide to buying a home in Redding](#) and make sure you're [pre-approved for a mortgage](#) before making offers.

What Inspectors Examine

A standard home inspection covers:

- **Roof:** Shingles, flashing, gutters, chimneys, overall condition and estimated remaining life
- **Exterior:** Siding, trim, windows, doors, decks, driveways, grading and drainage
- **Foundation:** Cracks, settling, moisture intrusion, crawl space condition
- **Plumbing:** Pipes, water heater, fixtures, water pressure, drainage

- **Electrical:** Panel, wiring, outlets, GFCI protection, smoke detectors
 - **HVAC:** Heating and cooling systems, ductwork, filters, thermostats
 - **Interior:** Walls, ceilings, floors, doors, windows, stairs, railings
 - **Attic:** Insulation, ventilation, structure, signs of leaks or pests
 - **Garage:** Door operation, fire separation, electrical
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What Inspections Don't Cover

Standard home inspections have limitations. Inspectors examine visible, accessible areas but don't:

- Move furniture or stored items
- Open walls or excavate foundations
- Inspect inside sewer lines or septic systems
- Test for environmental hazards (mold, radon, asbestos)
- Evaluate well water quality
- Provide pest/termite inspections (separate service)
- Inspect pools, spas, or outbuildings (often additional cost)

For properties in Shasta County, I often recommend additional inspections depending on the home:

Specialty Inspections to Consider

- **Pest/Termite Inspection:** Essential in California. Looks for wood-destroying organisms and damage.
 - **Septic Inspection:** Required for homes on septic systems. Includes pumping and evaluation.
 - **Well Inspection:** Tests water quality and flow rate for homes on private wells.
 - **Roof Certification:** Detailed roof evaluation, sometimes required by insurance.
 - **Pool/Spa Inspection:** Evaluates equipment, structure, and safety features.
 - **Chimney Inspection:** Important for homes with wood-burning fireplaces.
 - **Sewer Scope:** Camera inspection of sewer line—especially valuable for older homes.
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Shasta County–Specific Considerations

Our region has some unique factors that make certain inspections particularly important:

Fire Risk and Insurance

Many Shasta County properties are in high fire risk zones — particularly in communities like [Shingletown](#), [Round Mountain](#), and [Bella Vista](#). Inspectors will note defensible space issues, and your insurance company may require

specific roof types or clearances. Properties near recent fire areas may need additional scrutiny for smoke damage or compromised systems.

Well and Septic Systems

Many homes outside Redding city limits use private wells and septic systems, especially in [Palo Cedro](#), [Cottonwood](#), and the rural communities. These require specialized inspections beyond the standard home inspection. Don't skip these — replacing a failed septic system can cost \$15,000-30,000.

Older Homes

Redding has many homes built in the 1950s-1970s, particularly in neighborhoods like [Lake Redding](#) and [West Redding](#). These may have outdated electrical panels (Federal Pacific, Zinsco), galvanized plumbing, or original HVAC systems. A good inspector will identify these and explain the implications.

Foundation Issues

Our clay soils expand and contract with moisture, which can cause foundation movement. This is common across the [Shasta County area](#). Look for inspectors experienced with local soil conditions who can distinguish between normal settling and concerning structural issues.

The Inspection Process: Step by Step

1

Schedule the Inspection

Your agent (or you) will schedule the inspection within the contingency period—typically 7-17 days after contract acceptance. I recommend scheduling as early as possible to leave time for follow-up inspections if needed.

2

Attend the Inspection

Plan to spend 2-4 hours at the property. Bring a notepad, wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty (you may enter crawl spaces or attics), and prepare questions. The inspector will walk you through their findings at the end.

3

Review the Report

You'll receive a detailed written report within 24-48 hours. Read it carefully—all of it. The inspector will categorize findings by severity: safety issues, major defects, maintenance items, and general observations.

4

Discuss With Your Agent

We'll review the report together and discuss which items are significant, which are normal wear, and what approach makes sense for negotiations. Not everything in an inspection report needs to be addressed.

5

Request Repairs or Credits

Based on the findings, you may ask the seller to make repairs, provide a credit toward closing costs, or reduce the purchase price. We'll craft a strategic request that focuses on significant items.

6

Negotiate and Proceed

The seller will respond to your request. This may involve back-and-forth negotiation. Once you reach agreement (or decide to accept the property as-is), you'll remove your inspection contingency and proceed toward closing.

What to Do With Inspection Results

After receiving the inspection report, you have several options:

Option 1: Request Repairs

Ask the seller to fix specific items before closing. This works best for clear-cut repairs (fix the leaky faucet, replace the broken window). Be aware that seller repairs are often done as cheaply as possible—you may prefer a credit so you can hire your own contractor.

Option 2: Request a Credit

Ask for money toward closing costs or a price reduction instead of repairs. This gives you control over the work and lets you choose your own contractors. Credits are often easier for sellers to agree to than coordinating repairs.

Option 3: Accept As-Is

Proceed with the purchase without requesting anything. This makes sense when issues are minor, when you're in a competitive situation, or when the home was priced to reflect its condition.

Option 4: Walk Away

If the inspection reveals serious issues you didn't anticipate, you can typically cancel the contract during the contingency period and receive your earnest

money back. This is the whole point of the inspection contingency—protecting you from buying a money pit.

Red Flags vs. Normal Wear

Every inspection report will have findings. Here's how to think about them:

Serious Concerns (Address These)

- Foundation cracks wider than 1/4 inch or showing movement
- Active water intrusion or significant moisture damage
- Roof at end of life or with active leaks
- Electrical panels with known safety issues (Federal Pacific, Zinsco)
- HVAC systems that don't function or are unsafe
- Evidence of structural modification without permits
- Active pest infestation or significant wood damage
- Sewage or septic problems
- Safety hazards (missing railings, improper stairs, no smoke detectors)

Normal Wear (Usually Not Worth Negotiating)

- Minor cosmetic issues (scuffs, paint touch-ups needed)
- Older but functional systems
- Small cracks in concrete or drywall

- Worn caulking around tubs and windows
 - Weatherstripping that needs replacement
 - Minor grading issues
 - Appliances approaching end of typical lifespan
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Tips for Getting the Most From Your Inspection

Before the Inspection

- Ask your agent for inspector recommendations—experience matters
- Review the property disclosure and note anything you want the inspector to examine closely
- Prepare questions about the home's systems and maintenance needs

During the Inspection

- Follow the inspector (at a respectful distance) and ask questions
- Take your own photos and notes
- Ask the inspector to show you where shutoffs are located
- Learn about routine maintenance the home will need
- Pay attention to the inspector's tone—their verbal comments often add context beyond the written report

After the Inspection

- Read the entire report, including the summary and photos
 - Research any unfamiliar terms or systems
 - Get estimates for significant repairs before negotiating
 - Focus negotiations on major issues, not cosmetic items
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Choosing a Home Inspector

Not all inspectors are created equal. Look for:

- **Licensing:** California requires home inspectors to be licensed (as of 2024)
- **Experience:** At least 200-300 inspections, ideally with experience in Shasta County
- **Sample report:** Ask to see a sample report—it should be detailed with photos
- **References:** Other agents can recommend inspectors they've worked with
- **Availability:** Can they accommodate your timeline?
- **Communication:** Are they willing to answer questions and explain findings?

Price shouldn't be your primary consideration. The difference between a \$350 inspection and a \$500 inspection is trivial compared to catching a \$15,000 problem. Choose quality over cost. Understanding the [current Shasta County](#)

[market conditions](#) will also help you gauge how aggressively to negotiate after inspection findings.

Frequently Asked Questions

How much does a home inspection cost in Redding?

Home inspections in Shasta County typically cost \$350-550 depending on the home's size and age. Larger homes, older properties, or those with additional structures like guest houses may cost more. Specialty inspections (pest, septic, well) are additional.

How long does a home inspection take?

A typical home inspection takes 2-4 hours depending on the property's size and condition. Plan to attend for at least 1-2 hours, especially the walkthrough at the end when the inspector reviews findings with you.

Should I attend the home inspection?

Absolutely. While not required, attending your inspection is one of the best learning opportunities you'll have. You'll see the home's systems firsthand, learn maintenance tips, and can ask questions in real-time. At minimum, attend the final walkthrough.

Can a house fail a home inspection?

Technically, no. Inspections are informational—they don't pass or fail homes. The inspector documents the property's condition so you can make informed decisions. Even significant issues don't mean you can't buy the home; they mean you have negotiating leverage or decisions to make.

What happens if the inspection finds problems?

You have options: request the seller make repairs, ask for a credit toward closing costs, renegotiate the purchase price, accept the property as-is, or walk away if issues are too significant. Your agent will help you navigate the best approach based on your situation.

What My Buyers Say

"I am very satisfied with working with Nathan. I am thankful for meeting you as our agent. I don't think we would be as happy if we went with someone else. Thank you for everything you have done."

— Ellie H., Redding

"This was our family's first home buying experience and we were beyond fortunate to have Nate guiding us through every step of the process. He was always there to answer the phone with all our young first time buyer questions."

– Zillow Review