



InterNACHI® Home Inspection Standards of Practice

Table of Contents

- 1. Definitions and Scope**
- 2. Limitations, Exceptions & Exclusions**
 - a. 2.1 Limitations
 - b. 2.2 Exclusions
- 3. Standards of Practice**
 - a. 3.1 Roof
 - b. 3.2 Exterior
 - c. 3.3 Basement, Foundation, Crawlspace & Structure
 - d. 3.4 Heating
 - e. 3.5 Cooling
 - f. 3.6 Plumbing
 - g. 3.7 Electrical
 - h. 3.8 Fireplace
 - i. 3.9 Attic, Insulation & Ventilation
 - j. 3.10 Doors, Windows & Interior
- 4. Glossary of Terms**

1. Definitions and Scope

A home inspection is a non-invasive, visual examination of the accessible areas of a residential property, performed for a fee, designed to identify defects within specific systems and components defined by these Standards that are both observed and deemed material by the inspector. The scope of work may be modified by the Client and Inspector prior to the inspection.

- **Based on observations made on the date of inspection.** It is not a prediction of future conditions.
- **Not exhaustive.** The inspection reveals only material defects observed at the time of inspection.

Material defect: A specific issue with a system or component of a residential property that may have a significant, adverse impact on the value of the property or that poses an unreasonable risk to people. The fact that a system or component is near or beyond its normal, useful life is not, in itself, a material defect.

Report: A home inspection report shall identify in written format the defects within specific systems and components defined by these Standards that are both observed and deemed material by the inspector. Reports may include additional comments and recommendations.

2. Limitations, Exceptions & Exclusions

2.1 Limitations

- Not technically exhaustive.
- Will not identify concealed or latent defects.
- Will not address aesthetic concerns or matters of taste.
- Will not determine property suitability, market value, marketability, or insurability.
- Will not determine life expectancy of property or components.
- Does not include items not permanently installed.
- Applies to properties with four or fewer residential units and their attached garages and carports.

2.2 Exclusions

The inspector is not required to:

- Determine property boundaries, encroachments, service life, BTU, performance, efficiency, causes of conditions, future conditions, compliance with codes, presence of pests, mold, mildew, fungus, radon, air quality, environmental hazards, recalls, acoustical properties, or cost estimates.
- Operate systems that are shut down or not functioning properly.
- Evaluate low-voltage systems, shut-off valves, disconnects, alarm systems, moisture meters, gas detectors, or similar equipment.
- Move personal items or obstructions.
- Dismantle or uncover systems.
- Enter unsafe areas or crawlspaces.
- Inspect underground items, decorative items, common elements in multi-unit housing, intercoms, speaker systems, security systems, or offer guarantees/warranties.

- Perform engineering services, trade services, research property history, determine construction ages, insurability, or perform Phase 1 environmental audits.

3. Standards of Practice

Each section below outlines what the inspector **shall inspect, shall describe, shall report as in need of correction**, and is **not required to** do.

3.1 Roof

- Inspect roof-covering materials, gutters, downspouts, vents, flashing, skylights, chimneys, other penetrations, and roof structure from accessible areas.
- Describe type of roof-covering materials.
- Report observed indications of active roof leaks.
- Not required to walk on roof surfaces, predict life expectancy, inspect underground drainage pipes, remove snow/debris, or warrant the roof.

3.2 Exterior

- Inspect exterior wall coverings, eaves/soffits/fascia, representative windows, exterior doors, flashing/trim, adjacent walkways, driveways, stairs, porches, decks, railings, vegetation and grading where it may affect the structure.
- Describe type of exterior wall-covering materials.
- Report improper spacing between balusters/spindles/rails.
- Not required to inspect screens, shutters, fences, outbuildings, non-visible flashing, soil conditions, recreational facilities, seawalls, erosion control, safety glass, underground utilities, wells, solar/wind systems, swimming pools/spas, septic systems, irrigation systems, or thermal seals.

3.3 Basement, Foundation, Crawlspce & Structure

- Inspect foundation, basement, crawlspace, and structural components.
- Describe type of foundation and access location to under-floor space.
- Report wood in contact with soil, active water penetration, possible foundation movement, and unsafe framing modifications.

- Not required to enter unsafe crawlspaces, move debris, operate inaccessible sump pumps, determine adequacy of structural systems, or provide engineering services.

3.4 Heating

- Inspect heating system using normal controls.
- Describe thermostat location, energy source, and heating method.
- Report heating systems that did not operate or were inaccessible.
- Not required to inspect flues/chimneys interiors, fuel tanks, measure capacity/BTU, light pilot flames, override thermostats, or evaluate fuel quality.

3.5 Cooling

- Inspect cooling system using normal controls.
- Describe thermostat location and cooling method.
- Report cooling systems that did not operate or were inaccessible.
- Not required to determine capacity/BTU, inspect portable units, operate when temperature <65°F, or examine coolant fluids/leaks.

3.6 Plumbing

- Inspect main water/fuel shut-off valves, water heating equipment, interior water supply, toilets, sinks/tubs/showers, drain/waste/vent systems, and accessible sump pumps.
- Describe water supply source (public/private), shut-off valve locations, observed fuel-storage, and water heater capacity (if labeled).
- Report deficiencies in water supply flow, faucet installations, active leaks, or damaged/loose/leaking toilets.
- Not required to light pilot flames, measure capacity/age/adequacy, inspect interior flues, water softeners, sprinkler systems, water quality, sealed panels, washing machines, valves, shower pan leakage, conservation compliance, backflow devices, cleanouts, fuel storage tanks, or test for gas leaks.

3.7 Electrical

- Inspect service drop, conductors, service head, mast, meter, disconnect, panelboards, grounding/bonding, switches, lighting fixtures, receptacles (AFCI/GFCI), and presence of smoke/CO detectors.

- Describe main service disconnect amperage (if labeled) and wiring type.
- Report deficiencies in service conductor insulation, unused breaker openings, aluminum branch wiring, receptacle power/polarity/heat/arcing/grounding, and absence of detectors.
- Not required to insert tools into panels, operate shut-down systems, remove covers, reset devices, operate/test detectors, inspect security/fire/alarm systems, measure amperage/voltage, inspect ancillary wiring, activate de-energized circuits, inspect low-voltage or exterior lighting.

3.8 Fireplace

- Inspect visible fireplaces/chimneys, lintels, damper doors, and cleanout doors/frames.
- Describe fireplace type.
- Report joint separation/damage/deterioration, dampers that don't operate, lack of smoke/CO detectors, and improper cleanouts.
- Not required to inspect flues, interiors, gas inserts, pilot flames, draft adequacy, move inserts, perform smoke tests, or NFPA-style inspections.

3.9 Attic, Insulation & Ventilation

- Inspect insulation and ventilation in unfinished spaces and mechanical exhaust systems in kitchens, bathrooms, and laundry areas.
- Describe type and approximate depth of insulation observed.
- Report absence of insulation or ventilation in unfinished spaces.
- Not required to enter unsafe areas, move/touch insulation or vapor retarders, damage access panels, identify R-value, activate fans, or determine ventilation adequacy.

3.10 Doors, Windows & Interior

- Inspect representative doors/windows, floors/walls/ceilings, stairs/landings/railings, and garage vehicle doors/openers.
- Describe garage vehicle door as manual or with opener.
- Report improper baluster spacing, non-operating photo-electric safety sensors, and fogged/broken-seal windows.
- Not required to inspect paint, wallpaper, treatments, floor coverings, central vacuums, safety glazing, security systems, fastening of cabinets, move furniture,

inspect appliances, certify auto-reverse safety features, evaluate security bars, operate special-key systems, test small appliances, inspect elevators, pools/spas/fountains, or determine whirlpool jets' adequacy.

4. Glossary of Terms

Clear definitions of key terms used throughout the Standards, such as **accessible**, **activate**, **adversely affect**, **appliance**, **component**, **foundation**, **material defect**, **operate**, **readily accessible**, **structural component**, **system**, **technically exhaustive**, **unsafe**, and many others. (Full glossary: nachi.org/glossary.htm)