

Attend your Home Inspection

It's inspection day! You do not have to be there- BUT YOU SHOULD, even if its only for an hour at the end of the inspection. Even though you'll receive a report summarizing the findings later on, being there gives you a chance to ask questions, and to learn the inner workings of the home.

Ask the inspector how long you should plan on being there in advance. The inspector will survey the property from top to bottom. This includes checking water pressure, leaks in the attic, plumbing, if door and window frames are straight (if not, it could be a sign of a structural issue), if electrical wiring is up to code, if smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working, and appliances work properly. Outside, he or she will look at things like siding, fencing, and drainage.

You may be able to negotiate repairs with the seller.

Once you receive the inspector's report, review it with your agent. Most sales contracts (ask your agent)

require the seller to fix:

- Structural defects
- Building code violations
- Safety issues

Most home repairs, however, are negotiable. But choose your battles wisely. Minor issues, like a cracked switch plate or loose kitchen faucet, are easy and cheap to fix on your own. If there are major issues with the house, your agent can submit a formal request for repairs that includes a copy of the inspection report. Trust your inspector, trust your gut, and lean on your agent — they likely have a lot of experience to support your decision-making.

If the seller agrees to make repairs they must provide you with invoices from a licensed contractor stating that the repairs were made. Then it's full steam ahead toward the sale.

If the seller responds to your repair requests with a counteroffer they will state which repairs (or credits at closing) he or she is willing to make. The ball is in your court to either agree, counter the seller's counteroffer, or void the transaction.

You need to be realistic about how much repair work you'd be taking on. At this point in the sale, there's a lot of pressure from all parties to move into the close. But if you don't feel comfortable, speak up.

