BUYER GUIDE

# HOME INSPECTIONS: 10 COMMON ISSUES

What inspectors find most often in GTA homes

*A home inspection looks well beyond what you'll notice during a showing. These are ten of the most common issues inspectors flag in Toronto and GTA homes. Most are manageable when you know about them in advance, and some can be costly if you don't.*

## 01 GRADING AND DRAINAGE

Soil sloping toward the house, short downspouts and blocked eavestroughs send water to the foundation. It's one of the most common findings and a leading cause of wet basements. Fixes range from simple downspout extensions to regrading.

## 02 BASEMENT MOISTURE

Musty smells, white mineral deposits on walls, staining and fresh paint in only one area are clues. Inspectors may use moisture meters to check. Ask what waterproofing has been done and whether there's a sump pump and backwater valve.

## 03 ROOF WEAR

Asphalt shingles typically last around 15 to 25 years. Curling, missing granules and soft spots signal replacement may be coming. Ask for the roof's age and any receipts.

## 04 AGING FURNACE OR AIR CONDITIONER

Furnaces commonly last about 15 to 20 years. Older units may still run, but plan for replacement. Check whether equipment such as the furnace or water heater is **rented**, since rental contracts often transfer to the buyer.

## 05 OLDER ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

Older GTA homes may have knob and tube or aluminum wiring, undersized service or DIY additions. Some insurers restrict coverage for certain wiring, so check with your insurance provider before you firm up.

## 06 PLUMBING MATERIALS

Watch for galvanized steel pipes, Kitec plumbing and, in some older Toronto homes, a lead water service pipe. Low water pressure, rusty water or visible leaks are also worth a closer look.

## 07 ATTIC INSULATION AND VENTILATION

Too little insulation raises heating costs, and poor ventilation can lead to condensation, mould and ice damming in winter.

## 08 WINDOWS, DOORS AND DRAFTS

Failed window seals, worn weatherstripping and old caulking cause drafts and higher energy bills. Most fixes are simple, although full window replacement adds up.

## 09 MINOR STRUCTURAL MOVEMENT

Hairline cracks in foundations or plaster are common as homes settle. Wider, stair step or growing cracks deserve a structural engineer's opinion.

## 10 SAFETY ITEMS

Missing or expired smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, loose railings and missing GFCI outlets near water are frequent, inexpensive fixes. Older homes may also have materials such as vermiculite insulation that warrant testing.

> **TYLER'S TIP**
>
> Attend the inspection in person and ask questions as you go. For condos, the inspection matters less than the status certificate, so make sure your lawyer reviews it carefully.




## TYLER KOELLER

Realtor® · Re/Max Premier Inc. Brokerage International

Questions about buying in Toronto or the GTA? Let's talk. I reply within 24 hours.

Cell 416-705-1734 · Office 416-987-8000

tyler@tylerkoeller.com · tylerkoeller.com


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