

Home Observation Checklist

A calm walk-through for noticing what your home is already telling you.

Print this page to add a Home Observation Checklist to your Tracking Symptom Binder — re-walk every season; the differences between visits are where the story lives.

01

Bathroom

Where small leaks tend to start the longest stories.

VISUAL SIGNS

- Water stains around the tub, shower, or toilet base
Small ring around base of toilet — never noticed before.
- Caulking or grout discolored, cracked, or pulling away
- A soft or spongy spot in the floor near the tub or toilet

AIR & MOISTURE

- Humidity that lingers long after the fan runs (or no fan)
- A musty smell when the room hasn't been used recently

BEYOND THE ROOM

- Water staining on the ceiling of the room directly below

NOTES

02

Kitchen

Quiet plumbing under the things that run every day.

UNDER SINKS & APPLIANCES

- Discolored wood or warping inside the cabinet under the sink
- Stains or damp spots around the dishwasher base
- Pooling water or a damp drip pan behind the refrigerator

AIR & SMELL

- A persistent smell coming from a drain
- Window sills with peeling paint or condensation rings

BEYOND THE ROOM

- Water staining on the ceiling above appliances (if a room sits above)

NOTES

03

Bedrooms

Where you spend the longest stretches — patterns settle here.

WALLS & WINDOWS

- Window sills with condensation or peeling paint
- Furniture against an exterior wall with discoloration behind it

CLOSETS & SOFT SURFACES

- Closet walls that feel cool, damp, or smell stale
- Carpet that smells different in some rooms than others

AIR & FIRST IMPRESSIONS

- Vents with heavy dust patterns or visible buildup
- A different smell when you first open the door in the morning

NOTES

04

Basement & Crawlspace

The quietest room often holds the loudest signals.

WALLS & FLOOR

- White, chalky residue (efflorescence) on concrete
- Cracks in foundation walls, especially near the floor line
- Standing water near a floor drain, sump pit, or water heater

MATERIALS & SYSTEMS

- Insulation darkened, sagging, or pulled away from joists
- Visible rust on the water heater base, HVAC unit, or pipes

AIR

- A persistent earthy or damp smell

NOTES

05

HVAC

What lives in the system ends up everywhere.

MAINTENANCE

- Filter has not been changed in more than three months
- Visible dust or discoloration around supply or return registers

INSIDE THE SYSTEM

- Standing water in the condensate pan beneath the indoor coil
- Ductwork with visible tears, gaps, or sagging sections

OPERATION

- A musty or burning smell when the system first turns on
- Outdoor unit blocked by debris, vegetation, or restricted airflow

NOTES

06

Exterior

Most indoor moisture starts outside.

DRAINAGE

- Soil grading slopes toward the house instead of away from it
- Gutters that overflow, sag, or lack downspout extensions

SEALING

- Cracked or missing caulk around windows and exterior doors
- Vegetation growing into siding, brick, or the foundation

FOUNDATION & UTILITIES

- AC condensate line draining directly against the foundation
- Visible foundation cracks or staining at the splash line

NOTES

DATE WALKED _____ OUTDOOR CONDITIONS _____

01

Highest concern areas

What stood out — even if you're not yet sure why.

02

Repeating patterns noticed

Anything that showed up in more than one room is worth noting twice.

03

Revisit after...

Different weather often shows different stories.

Rain Humidity Cold front Heat

04

Questions for an inspector or contractor

Specific things you want a trained eye to confirm.

05

Notes for your next walkthrough

What to look for next season — small things you almost forgot.

One walk is a starting point. The next walk — same rooms, different season — is where the patterns begin to show themselves.