

Understanding the Scope of Inspections

You've found a home and scheduled the inspection. But are you really clear about what the home inspector will be inspecting? More importantly, do you have an idea of what *won't* be inspected?

A professional home inspector should be able to tell you which National Association's Standards of Practice they follow. Standards of Practice from the American Society of Home Inspectors, (ASHI), and the National Association of Home Inspectors, (NAHI), are the most recognized and respected. Other associations generally emulate one of these. Inspectors who do not follow any standards of practice tend to focus on what they think is important or what they have the most experience with, often overlooking truly important conditions or making big issues out of minor findings.

Preparation and understanding are key to a positive inspection experience: Before the inspection, ask your inspector what Standards of Practice they follow and look them up through the internet. ASHI can be reached at www.ASHI.org and NAHI at www.NAHI.org. If the inspector belongs to another association, they should be able to provide you with a web address. Either way, take time and familiarize yourself with the standards.

Next, jot down any concerns or questions you have about the home and remember to bring that list to the inspection. A notepad, clipboard and pen will be handy too. Make sure the inspector takes the time to talk to you about the scope of the inspection, including what items are inspected and what items are not. Pull out the list you made earlier and review it with the inspector so that you are clear about which concerns should be addressed during the inspection and which might require follow up by another professional or tradesperson. Remember, being clear about expectations now is paramount to avoiding disappointment later.

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