

# How to Save Thousands of Dollars When Buying Your Next Property



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## Introduction

Would you buy a \$20,000 second hand car without a pre-purchase inspection report from a mechanic or an accredited RACV mechanic?

While most people wouldn't hesitate spending a few hundred dollars to protect their \$20,000 investment we estimate that close to 70 percent of people shy at spending a few hundred dollars to get a pre-purchase inspection report when buying a house, unit or flat worth several hundred thousand of dollars.



Of course, the downside of buying a car that is a 'lemon' is probably two or three thousand dollars but the cost of repairs to a home riddled with termites and structural damage can amount to tens of thousands of dollars. In some instances we have actually seen the cost of repairs blow out to more than six figures. The good news is this type of shock is avoidable with one of our affordable property inspection reports that are designed to detect the faults so you make an informed buying decision. Having completed several thousand pre-purchase inspection reports throughout Melbourne in the last 20 years we aim to provide you with peace of mind when buying a property.

So, why do so many home buyers bypass this form of 'insurance' that could protect them from buying a 'lemon'?

There seems to be several factors but most people buy on face value and get caught up in the appearance and features. Because the property looks good and is only 15 years old they assume it must be sound but the danger lies beneath the cosmetic surface. The analogy with a second hand car rings true because until the vehicle is put under the microscope of a trained mechanic you really don't know the true condition of the car. With property, the television networks are full of shows that show home owners how to window dress a property to disguise the weaknesses and faults. The do-it-yourself or DIY owner/builder is taught to mask the problems and patch them up on a budget to maximize the sale price! Make no mistake, the risk of buying a property in metropolitan Melbourne with serious faults is real. Over the past 20 years, Paul O'Toole and his the team of inspectors at Home Buyers Protection Service have prepared several thousand building inspection reports and suggests that close to a third of established properties in Melbourne have a major fault. He says, "Melbourne's extreme weather conditions over the past decade with drought and temperatures ranging from freezing to the forties has taken its toll. We have also had some seismic activity with earthquakes and tremors in the last few years and when you combine that with poor workmanship from some DIY owner builders and tradespeople you have a ticking time bomb in many suburban properties."

We understand your property purchase could be the largest financial commitment you make in your lifetime and serious defects in a property can turn your dream home or investment property into a financial disaster. Our pre-purchase inspection reports are designed to give you peace of mind and our inspection uses a 228 point checklist. Our thorough approach is designed to identify any serious defects and give you an estimate of the costs to rectify the problems. In many cases our reports have helped clients negotiate a reduced purchase price and in some cases, the evidence has persuaded clients not to buy the property. Essentially, we give you the key information to make an informed buying decision. We might laugh about properties that are listed as a 'renovator's delight' but every week in Melbourne we inspect properties that fit this category but are actually marketed with the tagline, 'The Work is all Done - Just Move in'.



We have inspected houses with serious termite infestations that have eaten away at the structural foundations, the trusses and eaves but clients still buy the property. Our role is to assess the condition of the property and provide an independent report so you can make an informed buying decision. In this e-booklet we give you an insight into the top 10 most costly repair items we encounter and some handy hints to help you identify the symptoms when inspecting houses, flats and units in Melbourne. We hope you find it useful and prevents you buying a costly 'lemon'.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul O'Toole".

**Home Buyers Protection Service P/L**

**ABN: 50 060 367 222**  
**Grad Dip of Building Surveying**  
**Award Number 26286 / 2001**



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the best in the business 

# The Top 10 Most Expensive Property Repairs



We have compiled a list of the big ticket items that we regularly see at suburban Melbourne properties and they are:

## 1. Re-Stumping:

Most dwellings constructed prior to the 1960s were more than likely built on timber stumps. The tell-tale signs that you can look for as a buyer without even getting underneath a dwelling, would be to check the door and window openings, assessing their alignment and also signs of any cracking around these openings. If you simply open and close the door to a room and check to see whether it is binding or not whether the margin around the door is even will generally give you a fair idea of what sort condition the stumps are in. In solid brick homes, were all of the internal walls run right through the ground, it is more difficult to get an idea on the condition of the timber stumps. However, if you notice any movement or bounce in the middle of the rooms, it is more than likely that the timber stumps beneath the dwelling have gradually deteriorated over time. In most cases, it is the perimeter stumps around the outside of the dwelling that are first to deteriorate being exposed to moisture from garden beds, pathways etc. Once the perimeter stumps begin to give way and deteriorate, it puts greater loads on the stumps close by which in turn causes the movement to occur throughout the dwelling. Depending on access space beneath the dwelling, an experienced reblocker would be able to completely re-stump a dwelling with new concrete stumps without having to remove any floorboards inside the dwelling. Dwellings constructed in the early 1900s were mostly built very low to the ground and are very difficult to re-stump without gaining access through the top of the floor.

Once the dwelling has been completely re-stumped and given time to settle back into its correct position, cracking to the internal wall lining will generally occur as well as cracking to wall and floor tiles in certain areas. Generally speaking, the more re-levelling that a dwelling requires will also mean more cracking and repairs to the internal wall lining. An average sized three-bedroom home generally takes between four and seven days to complete the re-levelling process.



## 2. The Roof:

The roof receives scant attention from most homebuyers despite roof faults costing tens of thousands of dollars to repair. The most common cover-up is a quick paint fix for a rusty roof, often with the rust re-appearing soon after settlement. A leaking roof can cause a significant amount of damage to the roof framework, the electrical wiring inside a roof, the insulation inside a roof and finally the plaster ceiling. In most cases it's only when there is a massive bulging the ceiling or of the ceiling itself collapses into a room when you realize you have a problem. The roof surface is exposed to all the elements from driving rain to countless summers with the sun beating down on the roof. Even if you think that your roof is in good condition, it is worth having an independent assessment made on it every five years to monitor its condition. A careless handyman doing work on the roof may break a tile or two and not tell anyone as in his mind, nobody is going to know about this for a while. Hopefully this situation doesn't happen to you. Dwellings constructed in the early 1900s were clad with either slate shingles or corrugated iron roofing or both. If purchasing a property of this age, you would definitely need to factor in the cost of a brand-new roof as the slate shingles would have deftly deteriorated over that time along with the corrugated iron roofing especially where the sheets overlap each other causing a chemical reaction. In dwellings constructed in the 30s and 40s, terracotta tiles were a popular choice along with concrete or cement tiles. When inspecting a property, you can generally get a good idea of the condition of the roof cladding from inside the roof. Ageing terracotta tiles will begin to erode from the underside of the tile causing several of the tiles to slip down out of position exposing an entrance point for water. Ageing concrete or cement tiles become porous with noticeable staining on the underside of the tile. When an old concrete or cement tile begins to deteriorate, it gradually erodes where the tiles overlap each other causing the gap between the tiles to open up and allow water penetration depending on wind and rain directions.

Externally, apart from having to replace the odd cracked or broken tile here and there over time, the mortar bedding that holds the Ridge capping, Valley and gable end tiles in position on top of the roof also deteriorates over time. Often the roof cladding itself remains in fairly good condition but it's the mortar bedding that deteriorates first. A new product used these days rather than using sand and cement, is flexipoint bedding that expands and contracts with change weather conditions. Reputable roof restoration companies commonly use product in conjunction with pressure cleaning the roof tiles and resealing them with a waterproof paint all clear barrier for terracotta tiled rooves. Completing this type of repair is a cheaper alternative to having your roof replaced, but it only provides a short-term solution to making the eventual decision to replace the roof cladding altogether.

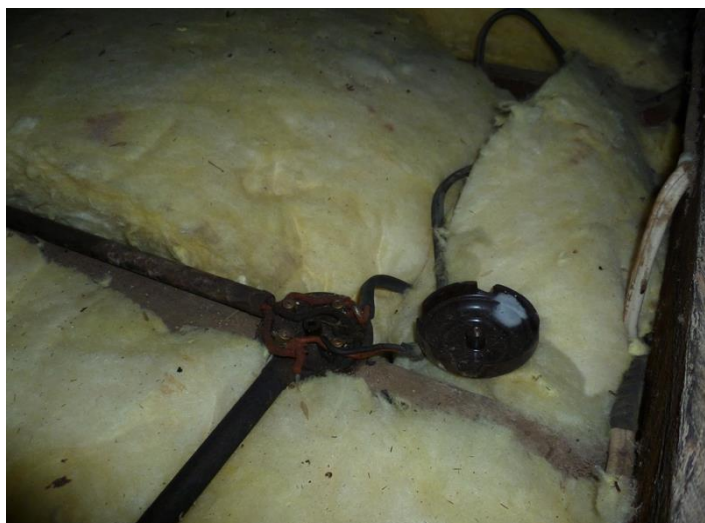


### 3. Electrical Wiring:

People looking at buying their dream the home notice a new electrical switch board inside the dwelling as well as new powerpoints and light switches when they attend an open for inspection viewing not realizing that the original electrical wiring is still present throughout the dwelling. In the modern era that we now live in, computers, large plasma or LCD televisions and other modern household appliances demand greater energy and the last thing you want is to have any faulty wiring cause a major problem to any of these household goods. There are also situations where do-it-yourself handymen think that they are saving money by completing their own electrical repairs putting that not only themselves at risk, but family members as well. Any property constructed prior to the 1980s should always have an electrical safety test completed by a qualified and experienced electrician to determine whether or not any immediate repairs are required. Properties most at risk are dwellings that still contain old cotton wiring inside either a timber or metal casing, dwellings where original black rubber wiring is still present, or dwellings built in and around the early 70s where the original wiring has gradually deteriorated over time.

Rewiring a solid brick home is far more labour-intensive than having to rewire a standard brick veneer or timber weatherboard home. Also having to rewire a dwelling built low to the ground or with a flat roof can often be time-consuming and the cost associated with the inconvenience of completing this work can increase the cost of rewiring your home. When a dwelling is rewired, it is also a building requirement that new wired in smoke alarms be installed throughout the dwelling to comply with current fire safety standards.

Another fire safety hazard that is also a common occurrence in most dwellings is the venting of the kitchen rangehood. It seems strange but it isn't the building requirement to have the rangehood venting up through the roof and outside the property. In most cases the rangehood either recirculates back into the room or vents up into the roof space area. I would always recommend having any rangehood inside a dwelling correctly venting either up through the roof space area and out onto the roof or through an external wall to help increase fire safety inside the dwelling and reduce the possibility of any accidents occurring in the future.



## 4. Pest Management:

Termite eradication and damage costs are expensive, and some people decide instead to sell their homes and in some cases take steps such as nailing shut access points in the ceiling and floor to conceal the problem. Termites thrive on moist conditions, sandy soil and poor ventilation to cause significant structural damage to a property. There is a misconception that termites, once they are in your home stay there until have eaten every stick of timber. Termites generally nest in a tree either on your property or close to it and will travel to from their intended area each and every day. The termite colony's nest can be located as far as a few hundred metres away from a dwelling but that won't stop them from choosing your home. Termites will eat everything from your subfloor framework through to the smallest section of timber beading inside a cupboard. Termites can be very hard to detect as they never expose themselves to the light and create mud packs or tunnels to get to their intended area. If termites decide to eat the wall framework inside the dwelling, you will have no way of knowing this unless engaging an experienced and qualified pest controller who uses moisture and movement detection equipment and can also pick up sound inside a wall. As you can imagine, this type of damage virtually weakens the whole structure of the dwelling and in most cases there is no other option but to demolish the dwelling.

In nearly all older dwellings built in the early 1900s, Baltic pine flooring was a popular choice of material used. The different type of insect to the termite is commonly known as wood borer and they take a significant amount of time to cause damage inside the dwelling. Most people would have seen when inspecting an older home, very fine squiggly lines and very fine holes in the flooring material. As with termites, wood borer also thrive on moist conditions where there is a lack of ventilation. Creating greater airflow around the perimeter of the dwelling can definitely help the situation but if these tell-tale signs are present within a dwelling that you are looking to purchase, it is recommended that it be thoroughly inspected by an experienced and qualified pest controller.

More and more these days we have seen a huge increase in the possum population throughout the Melbourne metropolitan area and it is getting to a stage where they are becoming a nuisance. Not only do they damage and destroy plants and vegetation on a property but also they leave a terrible smell inside a roof space area where they decide to call home. Trees, creeper vines and vegetation that overhang the roofline of the dwelling should be pruned well back away from a roof and any small access points completely blocked up to reduce the possibility of a possum or other vermin entering the roof space area.



## 5. Plumbing:

During an inspection, you can get an idea of the water pressure by turning on a couple of taps at once to see what water pressure is available and whether the water is discoloured. Most dwellings constructed prior to the 1980s would mostly contain a combination of galvanized iron pipe as well as copper pipe. As the galvanized iron pipe deteriorates from the inside, the pressure that comes out of the pipe also decreases. In most cases when replacing the original galvanized iron pipes to a dwelling, a plumber will generally cut off the ageing pipe and run either new PVC poly pipe or copper pipe to the intended area.

Hot water services are also very hard to gauge when they decide to give up the ghost and pack it in. Most older dwellings would have been built using a gravity fed electric hot water service located in the roof space area. A sure indication of an ageing hot water service can easily be determined by simply turning on the hot water tap and assessing the pressure. If you have purchased the property you're intending to purchase a property and you cannot locate a hot water service anywhere around the outside of the dwelling or inside the laundry, it is most likely going to be located inside the roof space area. Checking the electrical switchboard for the hot water element will also help you determine its location. These days, there is a choice of either purchasing a mains pressure hot water service or an instantaneous hot water service. One is a storage tank that heats up the water on a regular basis and the other being the instantaneous unit only heats up the water as you need it. As far as preference goes, it really comes down to personal choice.

Another common repair in most dwellings is the replacement of ageing metal guttering and down pipes as well as chimney flashings, Valley irons and other metal cappings and flashings on a roof which are very hard to see from the ground and are often overlooked when budgeting on repairs needed on a dwelling. The very popular material used on nearly every dwelling built these days is colourbond. It comes in nearly every colour imaginable and is very durable in all weather conditions including properties located close to the ocean.

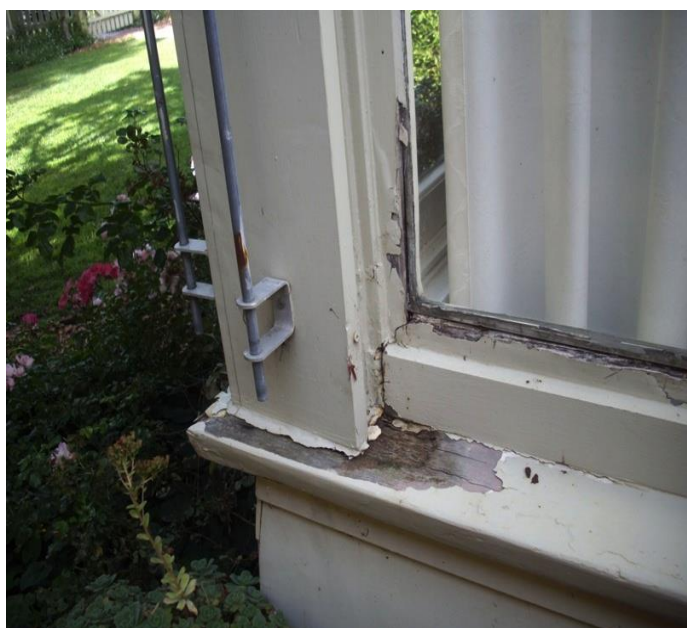
Dampness and drainage problems often occur due to the damaged or blocked stormwater pipes beneath the ground. Again in older homes built prior to the 1970s, terracotta stormwater pipes or commonly known as urban ware, were used to collect and redirect rainwater away from the dwelling and out to the street wall into the stormwater barrel drain located at the rear of a property. The roots of established trees on a property searching for water especially during the warmer months the year, are the main cause of damage and blockages to the ageing stormwater pipes as unlike the new PVC stormwater pipes that run continuously and are properly sealed, these pipes when installed were roughly a little over a metre long and butted together. When renewing the stormwater drainage to a property, a plumber would simply bypass the original pipes and install new 100mm PVC pipe connecting up to the external drainage system.



## 6. Painting:

If you buy a home where painting has been a quick cover up exercise and there has been a lack of preparation or skimping on the quality of paint, you can face a hefty bill to have the affected areas professionally repainted. You can generally tell if a dwelling has been well maintained over time. You only have to look at the door and window frames, the timber fascia boards around the perimeter of the roof and the external timber cladding. A property that hasn't been well maintained will show signs of fatigue and deterioration in these areas and more often than not, woodrot and other problems will arise as a result of the neglect. On average, paintable services around the outside of the dwelling really need to be repainted every 7 to 10 years. Preparation is a very big part of making sure that the surface to be painted has been sanded back, filled where required and cleaned of any dust to allow the paint to properly adhere to the painted surface. Lead paints were commonly used on older homes along with Calcimine paint which becomes quite chalky and difficult to paint over. In this situation, it is recommended that as much of the old paint be stripped back using a sharp scraper and heat gun and making sure that you use a proper breathing apparatus so as to avoid any exposure to the hazardous material. This same process should apply when also removing wallpaper.

Another common problem when purchasing an un-renovated property is the presence of smoke stains and mould inside a dwelling. To correctly prepare the surface, you really need to clean the walls and ceilings and woodwork down with sugar soap to remove as much of the staining and mould as possible. From there the first coat of paint applied to the walls and ceilings would need to be an all based paint to help seal the stains and prevent them from bleeding through the paint as would occur using a water-based paint. Once the first coat has been applied using all based paint, the second and third coats of paint applied to the walls and ceilings can be done so using a water-based or acrylic paint. In bathrooms and wet areas, it is recommended that a mould resistant paint be used for best results in these areas.





## 7. Plastering:

Plastering repairs can vary from the filling of minor cracking to major patch-ups where re-stumping is concerned, or where a home has been inundated with water. If purchasing an older property where the internal walls are lined with lathe and plaster, it can be a very costly repair trying to make good a wall that has significant cracking in it. In most cases, it is far more practical to remove the lathe and plaster and completely re-plaster the walls using new plasterboard sheeting. Often when there is significant cracking throughout a dwelling, an owner will install wallpaper over the cracking to try and bond things together and hold the plaster in place. It is only when the wallpaper is removed whilst renovating that you uncover the true extent of the repair work required. This unforeseen problem can often blow out a budget when renovating. Water damage to ceilings and cornices can also be quite an expensive repair especially in a period home where there are large ornate cornices, ceiling roses and other mouldings on the ceiling. It is also quite difficult to match period style mouldings, cornices and ceiling roses. When renovating a home, if a ceiling is damaged but not significantly, it is sometimes more practical and far more cleaner to leave the existing plaster on the ceiling and install new plasterboard sheeting directly beneath the original ceiling. Repairing a ceiling in this manner not only saves the lungs from the exposure of accumulative dust inside the roof space area built up over many years, but it also provides additional insulation and soundproofing to the room replastered.

As mentioned previously within this booklet, whenever re-stumping a house, it is always recommended to allow the house to settle for roughly 4 to 6 weeks before completing any repair work to the internal walls that will be affected by the re-levelling process. This way, you won't have to repair the same wall twice.



## 8. Rising Damp:

Rising damp is caused by a breakdown in the damp course and most often occurs in solid brick or double brick dwellings. Older period homes are most susceptible to rising damp issues mainly due to their age, but also as a result of poor ventilation around the perimeter of the dwelling and a lack of height between the ground and the subfloor framework. With solid brick homes, all of the internal walls run right through the ground with small crawlspace access points between each room. Not only does this make it difficult for air to circulate throughout the subfloor area, but more and more these days, people are installing gas heating ducts beneath the dwelling which pretty much blocks out any remaining airflow between the rooms which causes the air to become still on moist. Not only do the walls become damp, but the lack of air ventilation also causes woodrot and deterioration in the subfloor framework which can also cost thousands of dollars to repair. Externally, it is important to make sure that the external wall vents around the perimeter of the dwelling are clear of any soil, plants or shrubs or other impediments that will prevent or reduce air circulation beneath the dwelling. Metal wall vents are far more effective and allowing adequate airflow than the old terracotta subfloor wall vents are present in most older dwellings.

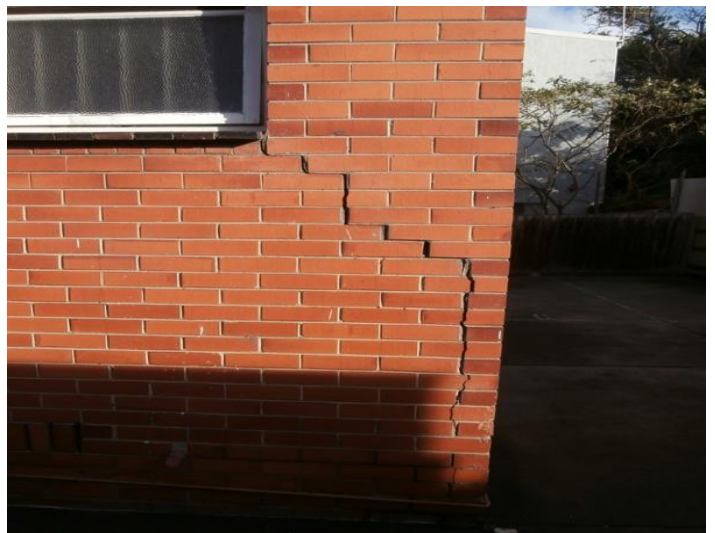
As far as having to rectify or repair a dwelling with rising damp, an experienced damp proof specialist will need to be consulted to assess the affected walls and determine the best form of treatment required to help rectify the problem. The standard method of preparing rising damp within solid brick home is to; a) remove the timber skirting boards, b) break away the cement render on an internal wall up to a point where there no longer is a positive reading for moisture or dampness, c) drill a series of holes into the brickwork roughly 50 mm apart along the length of the wall and then apply a new damp proofing solution within these holes to create a new damp course. Once this process has been completed, an experienced solid plaster or renderer will need to be consulted to reinstate the cement render to the wall followed by the skirting boards being properly refitted and the wall professionally repainted. As you can see, it is a fairly drawn out process and can cost anywhere between \$300-\$500 per lineal metre to damp proof a wall. Damp walls encourage the growth of mould which with high humidity can lead to health problems.



## 9. Foundations / Structural Movement & Cracking:

Depending on the soil conditions in which the property you're looking to purchase is situated on, will have a great bearing on the likelihood of any structural movement and cracking occurring to your property in the future. Clay based soils expand and contract quite considerably depending on the weather conditions at that time. It is not uncommon in a property situated on clay for cracks to open and close in the external brickwork over the course of the year. Movement and cracking in properties mostly occurs as a result of changing soil conditions either beneath or around the outside of a dwelling. The following causes are the most common foundation structural movement and cracking to occur. Be it a burst water pipe, a leaking stormwater pipe or sewer pipe, a large tree close to the property with interfering roots, concreting up to the external walls of the dwelling were a garden bed used to exist, poor drainage around the outside of the dwelling or run-off from an adjoining property. In most cases, the property owner only find out about these problems once damage has occurred.

If timber stumps beneath a dwelling deteriorate and rot out, you can easily replace them with new concrete stumps which will bring the dwelling back into correct alignment. However, if you have to stabilize or strengthen an external brick wall, then this is a totally different matter and a far more expensive one. When inspecting a property, it is necessary and very important to look at the gaps where the door and window frames butt up against the external brickwork. If there is any more than a 3 mm - 5 mm gap alongside the door or window opening, it means that there has been more than just initial settlement in the foundation after construction of the dwelling is complete. Another tell-tale sign of movement in the external brickwork of the dwelling is to inspect the timber beading and fascia boards on the external corners of the dwelling to determine whether they have opened up and separated. Any lay person or inexperienced house hunter can easily follow these methods to hopefully save themselves the headache of spending several thousand dollars in underpinning a dwelling. The terminology underpinning, is the method where soil is removed beneath the existing concrete footing and replaced with additional concrete along with pins or wedges driven into the gap between both sections of concrete and filled with caulking to help stabilize an affected of external brickwork. Underpinning an external brick wall will strengthen the foundation but apart from in some circumstances, it won't close up any large cracks or gaps alongside door and window openings.



## 10. Heating & Cooling Systems:

When looking to purchase property, it is very important to choose the correct type of heating and cooling system. If a dwelling is situated close to the ground with minimal airflow, you would be mad wanting to install a gas ducted heating system beneath the dwelling. Not only will this block the limited amount of ventilation that you have beneath the dwelling, but it will create not only moisture and dampness problems but also potentially health elements whether heating ducts are resting on damp soil because of the lack of room beneath the dwelling. In this situation, the best type of heating system would be to install a hydronic heating system where rather than having large ducts positioned beneath the dwelling, there are only small diameter gas and water pipes installed. Alternatively, if wanting to install a gas ducted heating system to the dwelling and if the property doesn't have a flat roof on the top of the ceilings inside the rooms are no greater than 2.7 m, then this type system could quite easily be installed inside the roof space area. A popular choice of heating and cooling in single-storey dwellings with a pitched roof is the installation of a combined gas ducted heating and reverse cycle cooling system located in the roof space area rather than having both a gas ducted heating system and a separate evaporative cooling system located on top of the roof. Another popular choice of heating and cooling these days is installation of a reverse cycle split system or multiple splits position throughout a dwelling. This type of system is perfect for dwellings built on this concrete slab and which have a flat roof as well.

In older dwellings where the presence of a slimline wall heater or a living room gas space heater, it is very important to have these ageing appliances properly serviced upon occupation of the dwelling to avoid the potential dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning which has occurred on several occasions in recent time with fatal consequences. It is also important to have an experienced and licensed plumber to assess the venting system on any old gas heating systems as they would more than likely be fitted with an asbestos flue. If budget constraints prevents you from replacing the ageing gas heating system altogether, it is definitely well worthwhile having a plumber or experienced asbestos removalist, remove and dispose of the asbestos flue correctly and replace it with a new metal flue. The condition of the heating ducts throughout a dwelling is also very important to monitor and if required, replace with new ductwork.

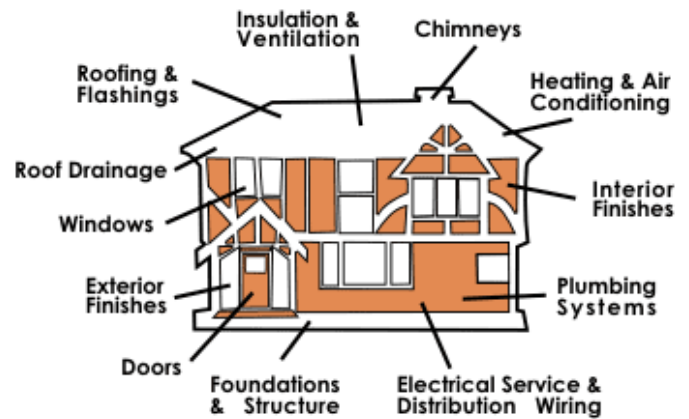


# Types Of Pre-Purchase Inspection Reports

You have a choice of the following report formats:

1. Verbal building inspection report.
2. Written building inspection report.
3. Combined building and pest inspection report.
4. Video building inspection report.

Every inspection includes a review of all buildings including structural issues, fixtures and fittings, appliances as well as the roof, plumbing and electrical work. The reports are detailed but delivered in layman's terms so you have a clear understanding of the findings including the major faults, minor defects and any maintenance concerns.



We can also identify the cause of the problem and as Registered Building Practitioners and members of the Housing Industry Association (HIA) we can provide approximate costings and how to remedy the faults. After more than 20 years working in and around the building industry in Victoria we can also refer you to our list of preferred trades people and experienced technicians who can assist you with any of the repair works required.

Our property inspection services include:

- Fixed price reports with no hidden or additional costs ( starting from just \$240 )
- Verbal, written or video inspection reports
- Inspection reports prepared using our comprehensive 228 point checklist
- Personal service with fast turnaround and where possible, same day inspection service
- Verbal summary on the day of inspection
- Schedule of repairs together with cost estimates
- Identification of Safety and Environmental Issues
- Internal and external review including roof cavity and sub-floor
- Where required, referral to a list of accredited trade specialists to complete repairs and renovations
- Independent advice regarding emerging issues and projected costs
- Pest Inspection Reports

Your inspection is performed by highly experienced, independent building professionals who are all accredited members of the HIA. They carry both professional indemnity and public liability insurance and the inspection reports conform with current Australian Standards **AS 4349-1-2007**.



# Before You Buy A Home – 10 Item Checklist:

We've learned the hard way that there are some very important things that should be checked before signing contracts to purchase a new home. Sure you can have someone do an inspection and look over the place to make sure you're termite and flood damage free, but these things fall into a different category — the immediate honey-do list! Even though there will always be cosmetic changes to make on a new home, trying to avoid costly repairs upon first moving in is always a bonus. Being able to save that money for the dining table of your dreams, or even just for gas and groceries can be extra beneficial. Here's a few things we suggest checking before you sign your life away and inherit all of the previous owners past problems.

## 1. Check The Drains:

This might sound silly, but we've had two homes with the same issues in the last several years. Somewhere between the house and the sewer line, there's a backup. Usually tree branches or a collapsed pipe, but either way, it's hard to spot unless you run a load of washing through the laundry, fill up the bath and sinks and let them all attempt to drain at the same time.

## 2. Assess The Condition Of All The Windows:

Replacing windows isn't fun and it isn't cheap either. Look for any sign of woodrot and open them all to find out if they are painted shut, sticking, or just plain old won't open.

## 3. Turn On All The Taps:

Although changing of taps isn't exactly rocket science it's always a pain to lay under a cabinet and having to replace a faulty tap. Just check to make sure they all work before buying to eliminate the back ache. Also check the pressure and the colour of the water that comes out of the tap as this may highlight rusting or deteriorating water pipes.

## 4. Check All The Door & Window Frames:

Especially with older dwellings, it is important to check the alignment of the door and window openings looking for any signs of jamming doors or cracking above or around the door window openings. This will most likely indicate a gradual deterioration in the stumps beneath the dwelling, or in the case of a solid brick home, a more serious foundation problem.

## 5. Inspect The Walls Adjoining A Shower Recess:

A leaking shower can cost thousands to repair or replace. Inspecting the walls adjoining a bathroom or ensuite shower recess looking for any sign of any moisture or damage to the walls or skirting boards will help determine if there is a problem. It's also worthwhile checking out the floor directly in front of the shower recess and any woodwork close by to check off on this area is well.

## 6. Flush The Toilets:

A common fault with older toilets or toilets that haven't been used for a while is leaking of the black rubber seal behind the toilet. When inspecting a property, make sure that you flush the toilet and look for any signs of any water leaks coming from beneath the cistern or the connection point where it joins into the pan. Also check to see if there is a slow trickle of water into the toilet pan which would indicate a leaking seal from the cistern.

## 7. Open The Electrical Meter Box Or Switchboard:

An old or original switchboard more than likely means older original wiring throughout the dwelling. Old timber meter boxes exposed to the weather can allow water to penetrate into meter box and to the switchboard wiring causing the potential for a power surge to occur.

## 8. Turn On The Heat / Air Con:

Knowing that both of these appliances work prior to actually needing them to, can be a serious bonus. Check to make sure they blow their respective temperatures in addition to just turning on.

## 9. Pull The Carpet Back:

Before you move in, you'll want to find out if there are hardwood floors and also any mould or mildew under the carpets. Look for the lowest side of the room and if possible pull a corner back. Many homeowners will have a section of carpet removed in a cupboard or robe to allow you to see the condition of the floors below.

## 10. Basement Or Subfloor Moisture:

Although most home inspectors will sniff this one out for you, look for signs of dampness. Even if the walls aren't apparently wet, look beneath the dwelling for any signs of mould or fungus as well as moisture. Also check out the drainage around the outside of the dwelling and that all downpipes are connected. The



## Inspection Reports Pricing (Inclusive of GST)

<p><b>Pre Purchase Inspection Reports</b></p> <p>Verbal or oral building inspection on apartments and units            Verbal or oral building inspection on homes up to 30 Squares            Detailed Pest &amp; Vermin inspection report on all types of property up to 30 Squares</p>	<p><b>Price</b></p> <p>\$ 240            \$ 270            \$ 330</p>
<p><b>Written Building Inspection Reports</b></p> <p>On Apartments or Units up to Two Bedrooms            On Apartments, Units or Houses up to 30 squares            On Larger Houses greater than 30 squares            On Commercial Premises</p>	<p><b>Price</b></p> <p>\$ 375            \$ 420            \$ POA            \$ POA</p>
<p><b>New Home Inspections</b></p> <p>Verbal or oral final hand over inspection on apartments and units            Verbal or oral final hand over inspection on homes up to 30 Squares            Written building inspection report on Apartments and Units up to Two Bedrooms            Written building inspection report on Houses up to 30 Squares            Written building inspection report on Larger Houses greater than 30 Squares</p>	<p><b>Price</b></p> <p>\$ 240            \$ 270            \$ 375            \$ 420            \$ POA</p>