

CHOOSING THE RIGHT HOME INSPECTOR

To be able to choose the correct home inspector you must be familiar with what a home inspection is and what it entails. Please read the C.R.E.I.A. Standards of Practice.

A real estate Inspection is a survey and basic operation of the systems and components of a building, which can be reached, entered, or viewed without difficulty, moving obstructions, or requiring any action, which may result in damage to the property or personal injury to the inspector.

Some areas of a home, such as the crawlspace and attic, can be very difficult to gain access to or to maneuver through once you are in.

The crawlspace and attic can be very important to the inspection. A lot of the systems (plumbing, electrical, framing, foundation) will be visually accessible in these areas and if the inspector is unable to access this area, a significant amount of information can be overlooked.

Sometimes the access hatches to these areas are not the correct size or the clearance dimensions are not adequate for the inspector to fit. What this means is ideally you want an inspector that is agile enough to fit and maneuver in small spaces.

You also want an inspector that is willing to go into areas that are not the correct size or do not have adequate clearance.

Crawlspace access hatch minimum dimension requirements:

- Through floor openings minimum 18 in. X 24in.
- Perimeter wall openings minimum 16 in. high X 24 in. wide

Crawlspace minimum clearance requirements:

- Joists and subflooring minimum 18 in. clearance above earth
- Girders minimum 12 in. clearance above earth

Attic access hatch minimum dimension requirements:

- Attic access is required if the attic is greater than 30 sq. ft. and greater than 30 in. high measured from top of ceiling framing to underside of roof framing.
- Attic access opening (rough-framed) minimum 22 in. X 30 in. readily accessible.

Attic minimum clearance requirements:

- Attic opening in ceiling minimum 30 in. headroom at some point above opening measured from bottom of ceiling framing.

If your structures' access hatch dimensions are less than what is noted it is more likely the inspector will not be able to, or will be more difficult to access the area.

The purpose of the inspection is to provide the client with information regarding the general condition of the building(s). Cosmetic and aesthetic conditions shall not be considered.

A real estate inspection report provides written documentation of material defects discovered in the inspected building's systems and components which, in the opinion of the inspector, are safety hazards, are not functioning properly, or appear to be at the ends of their service lives. The report may include the inspector's recommendations for correction and further evaluation.

Inspections performed in accordance with these standards of practice are **not technically exhaustive** and shall apply to the primary building and its associated primary parking structure.

Home inspections are non-invasive and are not technically exhaustive.

The construction industry is divided up by trade; plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and so forth. So ideally you want an inspector that is versatile in all the trades, meaning he/ she is educated and/ or experienced in each one or several of them.

If a particular inspector has a lot of experience in a certain trade, say 20 years' experience in plumbing that may not necessarily be a good thing. While he/she is very educated in plumbing they may not be educated in the other trades, versatility is very important.

Also building codes are constantly evolving, so you want to make sure that your inspector is up-to-date on the new building codes and existing building codes that have been reevaluated and adjusted.

The first question you want to ask your home inspector is what association does he/she belong to?

Home inspectors are not required to be licensed in the state of California and there is no governing agency. So home inspectors belong to home inspection associations, such as; C.R.E.I.A. (California Real Estate Inspection Association), A.S.H.I. (American

Society of Home Inspectors), and N.A.C.H.I. (National Association of Certified Home Inspectors).

You want to confirm that your home inspector is an active member in good standing, meaning up-to-date on his educational requirements and membership dues. Each home inspection association has their own standards of practice and code of ethics; it is in your best interest to review these documents.

You want to confirm that your home inspector follows these rules and regulations set forth by the home inspection association. You also want to confirm that the home inspector in question is the one that will be performing the inspection on your home. Some home inspection companies have multiple inspectors with a range of education and experience.

Last but not least, you want to confirm that your home inspector holds the appropriate E&O insurance (errors and omissions) this will cover you if the home inspector makes a mistake that is detrimental to the value of the home. He/ she should also have General Liability insurance in case an accident should happen during the inspection.

Provided by:

Inspect A Home - Los Angeles County Home Inspection Services

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