

Ask the Experts: What Should Home Sellers Do to Prepare for a Home Inspection?

April 16, 2013 @ 4:25 PM In [Consumer News and Advice, Home Buying 101, Home Owner News](#)

We see it every day. Sellers who don't take the time to ensure a smooth home inspection and who pay for it in the long run. The spring market is upon us. A little preparation can ensure sellers have great home inspections.

Home inspectors typically arrive 30-45 minutes early to the home inspection appointment so that they are professionally set up and ready to go when you arrive. I can't tell you how many times I've been greeted at the door a half hour before everyone is set to arrive by a person who looks as if they're freshly out of bed.

If a seller does this, he's about two hours late for his presentation. On inspection day, the house should be empty of the owners and their presence. In fact, everything should be just like it was on the initial viewing day. Be ready for inspection day by getting up and out of the house an hour before the appointment. The home should also be clean and pets should be removed or crated.

If something isn't working properly, don't try to hide it. We will find it. Buyers get very suspicious when sellers deliberately try to conceal defects. They immediately see you as dishonest and wonder what else you're hiding. It's not worth losing their confidence over a trivial defect. Just leave a note: "We know about it and we're getting it fixed."

In addition, make sure the location of attic and crawlspace hatches are identified and are easily accessible, as home inspectors hate moving your stuff.

If the hatch is in a closet, remove any clothing that is hanging directly under the hatch as well as anything on the floor. Your home inspector doesn't want to move your smelly sneakers.

It's also important to check every area of the house for blown light bulbs. This includes the crawlspace, attic, garage and furnace room. We don't want to waste time determining if a fixture is inoperable or simply has a blown bulb.

Do you have a septic system or a well buried in your yard? If so, make sure you leave a sketch of the locations. There's nothing worse than a group of contractors, home inspector, buyers and their REALTOR® wandering around a yard needlessly, searching for something you know the exact location of.

Lastly, please don't leave your dirty laundry in the washing machine or dryer. We have to test these appliances and we don't want to pull your dirty underwear out of the washer in front of everybody. Also, make sure your oven and stovetop are clear and clean so that we can easily test them without setting off the smoke alarm.

Some of these items may seem like REALTOR® 101, but I've noticed over thousands and thousands of home inspections that only the most successful REALTORS® pay attention to these details. Help your seller help themselves—and you—get ready for inspection day.

By David R. Leopold is the owner of Pillar To Post Home Inspection located in Fairfield County, Conn.

For more information, visit www.pillartopost.com