

Pre-Drywall Inspection Checklist

A Contractor-Proven Walkthrough Before Insulation & Drywall

When to Use This:

After framing, electrical, plumbing, and HVAC rough-ins are complete — before insulation or drywall.

Why This Matters:

Once drywall is installed, mistakes become hidden and significantly more expensive to correct. Some issues can never be fully fixed without demolition.

This walkthrough protects:

- Structural integrity
- Safety and code compliance
- Future flexibility and resale value

Framing & Structural

- Walls framed according to approved plans
- Stud spacing consistent (typically 16" or 24" on center)
- No split, cracked, bowed, or twisted studs
- Headers installed over all doors and windows
- Window and door openings square and properly sized
- Load-bearing walls properly supported
- Fire blocking installed where required
- Stair framing secure and code-compliant
- No unauthorized cuts to joists, beams, or trusses

Electrical (Rough-In)

- Outlet, switch, and light locations match plans
- Outlet heights consistent throughout the home
- GFCI locations installed correctly (kitchen, baths, garage, exterior)
- Dedicated circuits installed where required (HVAC, appliances)
- Ceiling fan boxes rated for fan support
- Recessed lights rated for insulation contact (if required)
- Low-voltage wiring installed (internet, TV, security, doorbell)
- Extra outlets installed where needed (garage, closets, pantry)
- No exposed or damaged wiring
- Electrical rough inspection passed or scheduled

Plumbing (Rough-In)

- Water lines secured and protected
- Drain and vent lines sloped correctly
- Shut-off valves installed and accessible
- Tub and shower valves set to correct depth
- Hose bibs installed in correct locations
- No visible leaks or loose fittings
- Bathtubs and shower pans properly supported
- Plumbing pressure test completed
- Plumbing rough inspection passed or scheduled

HVAC & Ventilation

- Supply and return ducts installed per plan
- Ductwork sealed and supported (no crushed flex duct)
- Return air locations correct
- Bathroom exhaust fans vented outside
- Kitchen hood vented outside (if applicable)
- Thermostat locations confirmed
- HVAC rough inspection passed or scheduled

Safety & Code Items

- Smoke detector wiring installed in required locations
- Carbon monoxide detector wiring installed where required
- Fire-rated assemblies completed (garage walls and ceilings)
- Draft stopping and fire blocking installed
- All penetrations sealed or ready for sealing

Blocking & Future-Proofing

- Blocking installed for TV mounts
- Blocking installed for towel bars and accessories
- Blocking installed for future grab bars
- Cabinet and shelving backing installed
- Extra conduit installed for future wiring
- Photos taken of all walls and ceilings before insulation

Final Pre-Drywall Approval

- All corrections completed
- Changes documented and approved in writing
- Insulation inspection requirements confirmed
- Approved to proceed with insulation and drywall

Contractor-Proven Tip

If something looks questionable at this stage, stop the job and fix it now.

Once drywall is installed, corrections cost significantly more—and some mistakes can't be undone.

Toolkit 2

Prepunch Inspection Checklist

Contractor-Proven Review Before the Final Punch List

When to Use This:

The prepunch inspection is completed after most finishes are installed but before final inspections and the official punch list.

Purpose:

Catch major issues early—before the final walkthrough, when leverage is already beginning to shift.

This inspection helps you:



Identify workmanship issues while crews are still on-site

- Reduce last-minute surprises
- Shorten the final punch list

Walls, Ceilings & Trim

- Drywall smooth with no cracks, nail pops, or waves
- Corners straight, clean, and uniform
- Trim installed securely and properly aligned
- Caulk applied neatly at joints and seams
- No visible gaps at baseboards or casing
- Closet shelving installed securely
- Attic access panel installed, aligned, and sealed

Doors & Windows

- Interior doors open and close smoothly
- Doors aligned, plumb, and properly latched
- Door hardware installed and functioning

- Windows open, close, and lock properly
- Window glass free of cracks or chips
- Screens installed where required
- Window trim complete and securely installed

Flooring

- Flooring installed per specifications
- No gaps, squeaks, or loose sections
- Transitions installed and secure
- Tile floors level with no cracked tiles
- Grout joints consistent and clean
- Carpet seams tight and clean
- Stairs finished neatly and securely

Cabinets & Countertops

- Cabinets securely mounted and properly aligned
- Cabinet doors and drawers open and close smoothly
- Hardware installed evenly and securely
- Countertops properly supported
- Seams clean, tight, and consistent
- No chips, cracks, or stains
- Backsplash installed neatly and completely

Plumbing Fixtures

- Toilets installed, secured, and flushing properly
- Sinks and faucets installed and operational
- No leaks at fixtures or connections
- Showers and tubs sealed properly
- Shower doors installed and aligned
- Water pressure consistent throughout the home

Electrical & Lighting

- All outlets and switches installed
- Cover plates installed and secured
- Light fixtures installed and operational
- Ceiling fans installed and balanced

- GFCI and AFCI outlets tested
- Exterior lighting installed and functioning

HVAC & Ventilation

- HVAC system operational
- Thermostat functioning properly
- Supply and return registers installed
- Bathroom exhaust fans operational
- No excessive airflow noise
- Airflow balanced between rooms

Paint & Finishes

- Paint coverage complete and even
- No drips, runs, or missed areas
- Touch-ups completed
- Stain and clear finishes consistent
- No overspray on trim or fixtures

Exterior (Visible at Prepunch Stage)

- Siding installed properly
- Trim painted or sealed
- Exterior doors aligned and sealed
- Exterior lights operational
- Hose bibs operational and leak-free
- Walkways and steps complete and safe

Prepunch Summary

- Major defects identified
- Corrections documented in writing
- Contractor notified of issues
- Ready to proceed to final punch list

Contractor-Proven Tip The prepunch inspection is where good projects become great ones. Fixing issues now saves time, money, and frustration at closing.

Toolkit 3

Exterior Punch List

Contractor-Proven Exterior Review Before Final Walkthrough

When to Use This:

The exterior punch list is completed after all exterior finishes are installed and before final inspection or closing.

Why This Matters:

Exterior defects are often the most expensive problems to correct later. Water intrusion, drainage issues, and flashing mistakes may not show up immediately—but they cause long-term damage.

Use this checklist before warranties begin and before access becomes limited.

Roofing

- Roofing installed per manufacturer specifications
- Shingles or roofing panels aligned and secure
- No missing, damaged, or lifted shingles
- Ridge caps installed properly
- Flashing installed correctly at valleys, chimneys, and penetrations
- Vent boots sealed and intact
- No exposed fasteners
- Gutters and downspouts securely attached

Siding & Exterior Walls

- Siding installed straight and secure
- No cracks, gaps, or loose panels
- Proper clearance from grade maintained
- Siding joints aligned and finished properly
- Trim boards installed securely
- No visible damage, warping, or buckling
- All seams caulked where required

Windows & Exterior Doors

- Windows installed plumb and square
- Flashing installed correctly around windows and doors
- Caulking complete and continuous
- Windows open, close, and lock properly
- Exterior doors aligned and weather-tight
- Door thresholds sealed
- No visible gaps or air leaks

Foundation & Grading

- Soil graded to slope away from the foundation
- No low spots where water can collect
- Foundation free of visible cracks or damage
- All visible penetrations sealed
- Expansion joints installed where required

Gutters & Drainage

- Gutters installed securely and pitched correctly
- Downspouts connected and directed away from the foundation
- Extensions installed where required
- No leaks at gutter joints
- Drainage functioning properly during rainfall

Exterior Trim & Paint

- Paint coverage complete and consistent
- No peeling, blistering, or missed areas
- Caulk applied neatly at trim joints
- Stain or clear finishes even and sealed
- No overspray on windows, doors, or fixtures

Decks, Porches & Railings

- Decks and porches structurally secure
- Railings properly anchored and code-compliant
- Steps even and properly supported
- Handrails installed where required
- Fasteners installed correctly and concealed where appropriate

Driveways, Walkways & Hardscape

- Concrete or pavement installed per plan
- No major cracks or surface defects
- Proper slope away from the foundation

- Control joints installed correctly
- Walkways even and free of trip hazard

Exterior Electrical & Fixtures

- Exterior lights installed and operational
- GFCI outlets installed and functioning
- Covers installed and sealed
- Doorbell and security devices operational
- Exterior outlets properly weather-protected

Final Exterior Review

- All exterior deficiencies documented
- Contractor notified of required corrections
- Repairs completed or scheduled
- Exterior approved to proceed to final walkthrough

Contractor-Proven Tip

Most exterior problems are water problems in disguise.

If something looks questionable now, address it before closing—not after damage appears.