

House viewing checklist (UK)

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Every room

- ☐ Damp: sniff for mustiness, look for tide marks, peeling paper, black mould around windows
- ☐ Cracks in walls and ceilings (hairline is common; wide, stepped or growing cracks need a surveyor)
- ☐ Windows: double glazed? Do they open? Condensation between panes? Frame condition?
- ☐ Enough sockets, and where they are
- ☐ Radiators in every room, cold spots, signs of leaks underneath
- ☐ Storage space (or where your own storage would go)
- ☐ Floors: level, squeaks, condition under rugs if you can
- ☐ Phone signal in the room (check your own phone)
- ☐ Ceiling stains (old or active leaks from above)

Kitchen and bathrooms

- ☐ Run the taps: water pressure and how fast hot water arrives
- ☐ Under-sink cupboards: leaks, staining, fresh sealant hiding something?
- ☐ Extractor fans work (mould risk if not)
- ☐ Boiler: age, service history, where it is, does it fire up
- ☐ Toilet flushes properly; drains away fast
- ☐ Sealant and grout condition (cheap fix, but shows upkeep)
- ☐ Which appliances are staying?

The building

- ☐ Fuse box: modern consumer unit or old fuse board?
- ☐ Loft: insulation depth, daylight through the roof, damp timbers (ask to look)
- ☐ Roof from outside: missing or slipped tiles, sagging ridge

- ☐ Gutters and downpipes: cracks, plants growing, staining on walls below
- ☐ External walls: cracks, bulging, repointing needed
- ☐ Drains and manhole covers: smell, standing water
- ☐ Extension or loft conversion? Ask about building regs and planning paperwork

Outside

- ☐ Garden orientation (which way does it face; where is the sun in the evening?)
- ☐ Boundaries: fences and walls, who owns which side
- ☐ Parking: allocated, permit, or a nightly hunt?
- ☐ Trees near the house (roots, leaves in gutters, maintenance)
- ☐ Flat roofs on extensions or garages (age and condition)
- ☐ Security: door and window locks, side gate, lighting

The area (do this without the agent)

- ☐ Walk the street at a different time of day, and after dark
- ☐ Noise: road, flight path, trains, pubs, neighbours
- ☐ Check broadband speeds available at the address (Ofcom's checker: checker.ofcom.org.uk)
- ☐ Check flood risk for the address on GOV.UK (www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk)
- ☐ Time your actual commute
- ☐ Schools, shops, GP within reach

Questions to ask the agent or seller

- ☐ Why is the owner selling?
- ☐ How long has it been on the market? Any price reductions?
- ☐ Is there a chain? How long is it?
- ☐ How long have the owners lived there?
- ☐ What is included: fixtures, fittings, appliances, curtains, sheds?
- ☐ What council tax band is it? Who supplies energy, and is there a smart meter?
- ☐ Any offers so far? What happened to them?

- ☐ Any work done? Is the paperwork available?
- ☐ Leasehold or freehold? If leasehold: years left, ground rent, service charge
- ☐ Any disputes with neighbours or the freeholder?

After the viewing

- ☐ Book a second viewing at a different time of day before offering
- ☐ Note your three biggest doubts and put them to the agent in writing
- ☐ If you offer, plan a proper survey: the viewing is not one

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