

IN SEARCH



of the Perfect House

Our Inspectors are chosen for their communication skills as well as their technical expertise.

Our office staff are friendly, helpful and available by phone 8 am to 7 pm, seven days a week.

Our website lists many more benefits for home buyers, sellers and agents alike. Visit us at:

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Home Check America has inspected thousands of homes and we haven't found a perfect house yet.

This doesn't mean we don't like the homes we inspect; in fact we usually love them. It just means that we haven't found a "perfect" house, one without any flaws. Humans build homes, and all homes have components that wear out. Fortunately, they don't all wear out at the same time. Different components (or systems) have different life cycles. As a house ages, they establish a regular maintenance pattern.

THE 1% RULE

When you consider the life cycle of every component in a house, a reasonable annual estimate of the normal expense of maintaining a home is about 1% of the value of the house. One year you may replace the dishwasher, or the central air conditioner; several years down the road you may need to re-surface the driveway or re-shingle the roof. Throw in the unexpected expenses, as when John Boy knocked out the center support between the garage doors while learning to drive, and you average about 1% of the homes value per year in home maintenance repair expense. This rule is pretty accurate for both the very expensive home, and the not so expensive. Exceptions may be the newly constructed home. However, here the new homeowner will need to purchase such things as garage door openers, furniture and draperies.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

A homebuyer should arrive at the home inspection with realistic expectations about what is likely needed to maintain a home. The third law of thermodynamics states that "matter continually breaks down". In other words, 'Stuff happens'. If you are buying a 12-15 year old house, expect you may need to replace the hot water heater or the dishwasher. And, in a few years, the roof will probably need replacing. If you are buying a 60 year old home, you may have to update some plumbing. Don't let this scare you away from buying a good older home. Even new homes can become a 'money pit' just as easily as an older home.

HOW LONG DOES IT LAST?

With every home inspection we perform, we provide our clients with the typical life span of most common household components. Please keep in mind that there will be exceptions in every category. Much of the time line estimates depends on the quality of the component when it was installed, and how it was maintained along the way. Here is a list we provide.

HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?



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Reasonable Life Expectancy of Materials in the Home

Item _____ Life in years _____

Plumbing

Waste & Supply Pipe

§ Concrete & tile drain	50-100
§ Cast iron drain	75-100
§ Copper supply & drain	100-200+
§ Galvanized or lead supply and drain	45-55

Sinks

§ Enamel steel sink	5-10
§ Enamel cast iron sink	25-30
§ Porcelain sink or toilet	25-30+

Faucets (Depends on finish, chrome lasts longer than brass or enamel)

§ low quality	10-15	high quality	15-20
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Pumps

§ Sump or ejector pump	2-7
§ Well pump	10-15

Whirlpool bath

15-20

Source: American Concrete Pipe Association, Cast Iron Soil and Pipe Institute, Neil Kelly Designers, Thompson House of Kitchens and Baths.

Roofing

Asphalt and wood shingles and shakes (Depends on grade) 12-30

Low slope shingle 10-15

Tile (Depends on quality of tile, thoroughness of design and climate) 50

Slate (Depends on grade) 50-150

Metal (Depends on gauge, quality of coating, design & application) 20-50+

Built-up Roofing (Depends on materials, drainage & coatings)

§ Asphalt	15-20
§ Coat and Tar	12-30

Asphalt roll roofing 5-10

Asphalt Overlay (roof over) (Warrantee's invalidated) 15-20

Source: National Roofing Contractors Association

Exterior

Gutters & Downspouts

§ Wood (10 years if constantly moistened, to 80 years if properly maintained)	10-80
§ Metal (Steel or copper)	50-100+
§ Aluminum	20-40
§ Vinyl (if not damaged, and well supported)	40

Siding

§ Vinyl (if not damaged- and well supported)	40
§ Metal	50+
§ Stucco or wood	depends on maintenance

Source: Alcoa Building Products; Alside, Inc.; Vinyl Siding Institute

Item _____ Life in years _____

Windows

Window Glazing	20
Wood Casement	20-50
Aluminum Casement	10-20
Screen	15-20

Source: Best Build Products; Optimum Window Manufacturing, Safety Glazing Certification Council, Screen Manufacturers Association

Appliances

Compactor, Dishwasher, Disposer	10
Clothes Washer or Dryer	13-14
Freezer (Compact 12 yrs)	16
Microwave Oven	9
Range (Electric 17 Gas 19 High oven, gas 14)	
Refrigerator (Compact 14)	17
Exhaust Fan	20
Furnace	20-25
Humidifier	5-10
Electronic air filter	10-20
Boilers (Copper tube 10-20 Steel 20-30) Cast iron	35-45
Air conditioning condenser	12-17
Water Heater	8-12
Water softener	5-15
Garage door opener	8-12

Source: Appliance Statistical Review, April 1990.

Countertops

Laminate	10-15
Ceramic Tile (High Grade Installation)	Lifetime
Wood/Butcher Block	20+
Granite	20+

Source: AFP Associates of Western Plastics, Ceramic Tile Institute of American

Footings & Foundations & Driveways

Poured footing & Foundation	200
Concrete Block	100
Cement (mortar)	50
Driveway (sealer 2-3 yrs, asphalt 10-20 yrs, concrete 30-40 yrs)	

Walls & Treatments

Drywall and Plaster	30-70
Paint (exterior 4-6 years)	Interior 5-10
Ceramic Tile (High Grade Installation)	Lifetime

Source: Assn of Wall & Ceiling Industries International; Ceramic Tile Institute of America.