

The 60-Point Home Check

The same list we walk when we visit a parent's home. Sixty things that quietly go wrong in Lower Mainland houses — and for each one, whether it's a Saturday job or a phone call to someone licensed.

- Print it and walk the house with a pen.
- Start with sections 3 and 4 — electrical, fire and carbon monoxide.
- Anything marked **Call a pro**, please don't do yourself.

Or have us do it.

We walk all 60 points, fix the small things on the spot, and send the family a photo report after every visit.

First check \$49. Now booking for September 15.

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1 Heating & cooling

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| ☐ 1. Furnace age
Check the manufacture date on the label.
<i>Furnaces over ~18–20 years lose efficiency and risk cracked heat exchangers (a CO source).</i> | Call a pro |
| ☐ 2. Furnace filter
Check if it's grey and clogged.
<i>A blocked filter overworks the furnace and worsens air quality.</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 3. Thermostat function
Confirm the set temp actually triggers heat.
<i>An unreliable thermostat leaves a senior cold without them realizing why.</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 4. Supply & return vents
Check none are blocked by furniture or rugs.
<i>Blocked airflow creates cold rooms and strains the system.</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 5. Gas smell near furnace or water heater
Note any rotten-egg odour.
<i>Possible gas leak.</i> | Call a pro |
| ☐ 6. Heat pump / AC unit (if present)
Check the outdoor unit is clear of debris and level.
<i>Blocked units fail in summer heat — a real risk since the 2021 BC heat dome.</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 7. Baseboard heaters (if present)
Check nothing flammable sits within 30 cm.
<i>Curtains and furniture against baseboards are a fire cause.</i> | Do it yourself |

2 Water & plumbing

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| ☐ 8. Water heater age
Check the date label.
<i>Tanks over 12 years are on borrowed time; failure means a flood, often while no one's home.</i> | Call a pro |
| ☐ 9. Water heater temperature
Should be ~49°C / 120°F.
<i>Higher scalds; seniors' skin burns faster. (BC seniors'-safety guidance uses this threshold.)</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 10. Main water shutoff location
Confirm the parent knows where it is and it turns.
<i>In a burst-pipe emergency, minutes of water = thousands in damage.</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 11. Under-sink leaks
Check cabinets under every sink for damp or staining.
<i>Slow leaks rot cabinets and grow mould unseen.</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 12. Slow drains
Run each sink and tub.
<i>A slow drain is an early warning of a bigger blockage.</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 13. Running / phantom-filling toilet
Listen for a toilet that refills on its own.
<i>Wastes water and signals a worn flapper.</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 14. Poly-B plumbing
Look for grey plastic supply piping (common in Lower Mainland homes built ~1978–1998).
<i>Poly-B is prone to failure and can affect insurance.</i> | Call a pro |

☐	15. Outdoor taps / hose bibs Check for drips and that they were drained before winter. <i>Freeze damage bursts pipes inside the wall.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	16. Water pressure Note any sudden change. <i>A drop can signal a hidden leak or supply issue.</i>	Call a pro

3 Electrical

☐	17. Panel brand & age Identify the brand. Federal Pioneer/Federal Pacific (Stab-Lok) and Zinsco panels have known failure/fire histories. <i>These may not trip under fault.</i>	Call a pro
☐	18. Knob-and-tube or aluminum wiring Common in pre-1950 heritage and older East Van homes. <i>Fire risk and often an insurance problem.</i>	Call a pro
☐	19. GFCI protection Test outlets near water in bathrooms and kitchen. <i>GFCIs prevent electrocution; older homes often lack them.</i>	Call a pro
☐	20. Breaker labeling Check the panel is labeled. <i>In an emergency you need to kill the right circuit fast.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	21. Extension-cord reliance Note any cord used as permanent wiring. <i>Overloaded cords overheat and start fires.</i>	Call a pro
☐	22. Outlet & switch condition Look for scorching, warmth, or loose fit. <i>Signs of a failing connection behind the wall.</i>	Call a pro
☐	23. Exterior outlets Confirm weather covers are intact. <i>Water in an outdoor outlet is a shock hazard.</i>	Do it yourself

4 Fire & carbon monoxide

☐	24. Smoke detector AGE Check the manufacture date, not just the battery. Replace at 10 years (NFPA guidance). <i>Sensors degrade; an old detector may not sound.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	25. CO detector One near sleeping areas and near any gas appliance. <i>CO is odourless and deadly; gas heat makes this essential.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	26. Dryer vent lint Check the exterior vent and the duct behind the dryer. <i>Lint buildup is a leading house-fire cause.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	27. Fire extinguisher One in the kitchen, charged, in date. <i>First 60 seconds of a stovetop fire matter most.</i>	Do it yourself

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| ☐ 28. Stove auto-shutoff
Note whether the range shuts off if left on.
<i>Left-on burners are a top senior fire risk.</i> | Call a pro |
| ☐ 29. Space-heater clearance
Check any portable heater sits ≥ 1 m from anything flammable.
<i>Space heaters cause winter fires.</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 30. Two ways out
Confirm bedrooms have a clear exit path.
<i>Mobility + clutter can trap someone.</i> | Do it yourself |

5 Structure & exterior

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| ☐ 31. Roof age & condition
Note curling, missing, or mossy shingles.
<i>A failing roof leaks into the structure long before it's obvious inside.</i> | Call a pro |
| ☐ 32. Moss on roof
Common in our climate.
<i>Moss holds moisture and shortens roof life.</i> | Call a pro |
| ☐ 33. Gutters
Check for debris, sagging, and overflow in rain.
<i>Overflowing gutters dump water at the foundation.</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 34. Downspout drainage
Confirm water is carried away from the house, not pooling at the base.
<i>Foundation moisture is the #1 basement/crawlspace problem here.</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 35. Grading / slope
Check the ground slopes away from the foundation.
<i>Ground sloping toward the house drives water in.</i> | Call a pro |
| ☐ 36. Walkway & step heave
Look for lifted or uneven sections.
<i>This is a literal trip-and-fall.</i> | Call a pro |
| ☐ 37. Deck & railings
Push on railings; check for rot and wobble.
<i>A railing that gives way is a serious fall.</i> | Call a pro |
| ☐ 38. Foundation cracks
Note any new or widening cracks.
<i>Some are cosmetic, some structural.</i> | Call a pro |

6 Doors, locks & entry

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| ☐ 39. Deadbolts
Confirm each exterior door has a working one.
<i>Basic security.</i> | Do it yourself |
| ☐ 40. Sticking or swollen doors
Note doors that jam.
<i>A jammed door is an obstacle in an emergency and a daily frustration.</i> | Do it yourself |

☐	41. Weatherstripping Check for drafts around doors and windows. <i>Drafts mean cold rooms and higher bills.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	42. Exterior lighting Confirm entries and paths are lit. <i>Poor lighting causes after-dark falls.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	43. House number visibility Confirm it's readable from the street. <i>Paramedics need to find the house fast.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	44. Entry-step handrails Confirm at least one sturdy rail at every set of steps. <i>The entry is a top fall location.</i>	Call a pro

7 Moisture & air

☐	45. Crawlspace / basement damp Check for standing water, musty smell, or efflorescence. <i>Chronic damp means rot and mould.</i>	Call a pro
☐	46. Sump pump (if present) Test it works. <i>A dead sump pump means a flooded basement in our rainy season.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	47. Bathroom fan venting Confirm fans vent *outside*, not into the attic. <i>Venting into the attic rots the roof structure.</i>	Call a pro
☐	48. Kitchen exhaust Confirm it moves air. <i>Grease and moisture buildup otherwise.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	49. Window condensation Note persistent interior fogging. <i>Signals humidity/ventilation problems or failed seals.</i>	Call a pro
☐	50. Visible mould Check bathrooms, window frames, closets. <i>Health risk, especially for older lungs.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	51. Attic ventilation Confirm vents aren't blocked. <i>Poor attic airflow drives moisture and ice damming.</i>	Call a pro

8 Long-term wear — fine now, not in 18 months

☐	52. Water heater approaching 12 years Plan the replacement before it fails, not after. <i>Call.</i>	Depends
☐	53. Roof approaching end of life Budget ahead of the leak. <i>Call for a lifespan estimate.</i>	Depends

☐	54. Failing exterior caulking Check windows and trim. <i>Gaps let water into the wall.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	55. Buried oil tank Common in pre-1970s homes; may be abandoned underground. <i>A leaking tank is a major environmental liability.</i>	Call a pro
☐	56. Sewer line / tree roots Older clay laterals in mature Lower Mainland neighbourhoods invite root intrusion. <i>Backups are expensive and messy.</i>	Call a pro
☐	57. Aging major appliances Note fridge, washer, dishwasher ages. <i>Old appliances leak and fail; washer hoses burst.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	58. Fading exterior paint / exposed wood Check south and west faces. <i>Exposed wood rots in our rain.</i>	Call a pro
☐	59. Driveway & path cracks Watch for widening. <i>Freeze-thaw turns small cracks into trip hazards.</i>	Do it yourself
☐	60. Overgrown vegetation on the house Check for ivy, branches on the roof, shrubs against siding. <i>Vegetation traps moisture and damages surfaces.</i>	Do it yourself