Home Inspection Glossary

1. A solid brick partition in the flue. Wythe
2. The horizontal surface of the stair. Tread
3. Generally furnished to the seller by a real estate agent, the form asks the seller to disclose detailed information regarding the property. Property condition disclosure form
4. A drainage pipe that connects to the house drain where waste leaves the system. Main soil stack
5. The removal of soil material by flowing water. Water erosion
6. An air conditioner component that liquefies the refrigerant gas by cooling it. Condenser
7. Small perforations in retaining wall material that allows water drainage. Weepholes
8. Connected to branch circuit wires that supply the current to equipment. Receptacle
9. The top of the main soil stack that connects to all of the home's toilets. Main vent stack
10. The metal door located in the inner hearth of some fireplaces that leads to an ash pit. Ash dump door
11. Covers individuals and business organizations for claims made by third parties. Professional Liability Insurance
12. The slope of the roof. Pitch
13. The electrical pressure that pushes through wires. Voltage
14. Caused by a type of fungus that destroys wood; it is as damaging as termites or other insect infestation. Wood rot
15. The long wooden framing members that are fastened to the ends of the ceiling joists and form the gables of the roof. Rafters
16. A large metal conduit box in the form of a duct located inside the heating system where hot air builds up pressure and is then forced out to room heating elements. plenum
17. Used to change alternating current from one voltage to another. Transformer
18. Framing members are much larger than ordinary studs and may be four or six inches square; the larger posts are placed several feet apart instead of 16 or 24 inches on center. post-and-beam framing
19. Uses a single system of wall studs that run from the foundation through to the first and second floors to the ceiling support. Balloon framing
20. Contain wiring and are used to provide the necessary space for making electrical connections. Junction boxes
21. Conductors on the main panel board that provide electrical connections for fuses or circuit breakers. Bus bars
22. A type of valve that contains a hydraulic piston that absorbs the shock waves produced by sudden changes in water flow; it reduces the commonly hear banging in pipes. Water hammer arrestor
23. A hidden or concealed defect that cannot be discovered by ordinary observation or inspection. Latent defect

24. Is appended to the home inspection report and documents the scope of the inspection and specifically indicates which items are omitted from the report, including opinion about the structure and design, building code compliance, and environmental problems. Disclaimer
25. A curved section of drainpipe that fills with water and provides a seal that prevents sewer gasses from entering a structure. Trap
26. A contract that protects both the home inspector and the client. It explains, in general terms, the scope of the inspection (what is included and what is not), the cost, and the procedures to address any dispute that may arise. Pre-inspection agreement
27. A cavity underneath the firebox that is used as a receptacle for ashes and is accessible through a cleanout door. Ash pit
28. Made of either metal or wood and used to finish windows, doorways, cabinetry, shelving, and the area where the floor meets the wall and the wall meets the ceiling. Trim
29. Affixed to a garage overhead door (or a pull rope attached to the bottom bracket in the lower corner of the door) and used with a door that is opened and closed manually. Lift handle
30. Top and bottom pieces of the window sash. Rails
31. Composed of metal flashing, it prevents snow and ice from building up against the chimney. Cricket
32. A metal door located at the base of the chimney that leads to the ash pit. Ash pit cleanout door
33. The lowest part of the roof that projects beyond the walls of the structure. Eave
34. White stains often observed on the foundation wall or floor slab that are caused by masonry mineral salts combining with water as it penetrates through the floor or wall. Efflorescence
35. The structure's framing rests on a sub-floor platform; the most common type of framing used in residential construction. platform framing
36. A form of professional liability insurance that covers claims of negligence that occur while rendering a professional service. Errors and Omissions Insurance
37. Sheets of moisture-resistant material, such as polyethylene film, kraft paper, or aluminum foil, bonded to insulation that prevents warm interior air from mixing with cold exterior air and forming condensation within the wall. Vapor barrier
38. Steel reinforcement embedded in the concrete foundation. Rebars
39. A conductor on the main panel board that is the connection for the neutral and ground wires. Neutral bus bar
40. A document issued by a local government agency, after a satisfactory inspection of a structure that authorizes an owner or tenant to occupy the structure. Certificate of Occupancy
41. Trip and switch off the electrical power for a given circuit if the current increases beyond the capacity of the system. Circuit breakers
42. A qualified professional who performs a home inspection. Home Inspector
43. Also called a pressure-reducing valve; a type of valve that limits the water pressure, it reduces and automatically maintains the pressure of water within predetermined parameters. Pressure regulator valve (PRV)

44. Usually mounted above the closed garage door, parallel and horizontal to the top section of the door, they provide lifting power by winding and unwinding while the door is opened or closed. Torsion springs
45. Used to tie the walls together and provide additional support for the ceiling and roof system. Double top plate
46. Structures made from a variety of materials, such as brick, stone, slate, poured concrete, concrete block, and pressure treated wood, that are used to hold back areas of earth. Retaining walls
47. Pole or post that runs from the stair handrail vertically to the tread. Baluster
48. An air conditioner component that crates a flow of refrigerant from one part of the system to the other. compressor
49. Supports the ceiling or the roof and includes the outside wall frame. Bearing wall
50. Wiring that goes from the main panel board through the walls of the building to the switches and outlets. Branch circuit wiring
51. A system of pipes that provides a flow of air to and from a drainage system; it permits gases and odors to circulate up through the system and escape into the air. Vent system
52. An appliance requiring a water supply and drainage system. Plumbing fixture
53. Responds quickly to ground faults; includes the main disconnect, circuit breakers, and fuses. Overcurrent Protection Device
54. A black tar-like substance that builds up inside the chimney through normal use. creosote
55. Keeps water from backing up in a water supply or drainage system. Backflow preventer
56. A second layer of flashing. Counter flashing
57. A device used to regulate the flow of a liquid or gas; it may force the flow in a certain direction. valve
58. A plate or valve that closes the fireplace flue when the fireplace is not in use, preventing heat loss. Damper
59. A pipe fitted with a removable plug to assist in dislodging a pipe obstruction. cleanout
60. A type of foundation slab where the footing and slab are poured at the same time. Monolithic slab
61. Permission from the appropriate local government authority to construct or renovate any type of property. Building Permit
62. Trim piece of the eave. Cornice
63. Wooden framing members used to construct floors and ceilings. joists
64. The land's ability to draw off surface water. Drainage
65. A point on a wiring system where current is taken to supply equipment. outlet
66. The wearing away of land by water, wind, or other process of nature. Erosion
67. Sensor mounted five to six inches off the floor on both sides of a garage door. photoelectric eye
68. The degree of resistance to heat transfer through the walls (heat is kept in or out); the larger the R-value, the greater the degree of insulation. R-value
69. Also known as the carriage, it supports the stairway. Stringer
70. Used to control water levels in tank. float valve
71. A type of heating system that contains a fan or blower, a heat source such as gas or oil, a heat exchanger, and filters; works by extracting cool air from indoors and outdoors and passing this cool air through the heat sources. Forced warm air system

72. A device that shuts off a circuit immediately if it senses a short circuit. GFCI Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter
73. Land surface that is graded on an angle. slope
74. Generally mounted just above the horizontal track of the garage door, they provide lifting power by stretching (extending). Extension springs
75. The crumbling of brick. spalling
76. A support member constructed in a factory by nailing a number of smaller members (2x4s or 2x6s) together in a number of triangular patterns to provide a maximum strength. Floor truss
77. The highest part of the framing, it forms the apex, or top line, of the roof. Ridge beam
78. The area of material facing the outer edge of the soffit. Fascia
79. Used in hot water and steam systems, it allows hot water and steam to escape if the water temperature and pressure buildup are too high for the equipment. Temperature pressure relief valve
80. The foundation is a concrete slab instead of a foundation wall; the concrete slab is poured directly on the ground, eliminating the crawl space or basement. Slab-on-grade construction
81. The area between garage door sections. Section joint
82. The enclosed passageway in a chimney through which smoke and other gases move upward. Flue
83. The main carrying beam, either steel or several wooden members fastened together (usually 2x10s, 2x12s, or larger), that spans the distance from one side of the foundation to the other. Girder
84. Plywood covering placed over exterior framing members. sheathing
85. The space between the stair and the overhang (or the ceiling inside the structure). Headroom
86. Vertical pipes into which waste flows from waste pipes connected to each plumbing fixture. Soil stacks
87. The opening on the top, rear, or side of a wood burning stove to which the stovepipe is connected. Flue collar
88. A device that automatically closes the gas valve that controls the flow of gas and stops its flow if the pilot light goes out. Thermocouple
89. An examination of the exterior and interior of residential property including the grounds, the structure, and the mechanical systems to determine structural defects; broken or obsolete components; and damage due to water, wear and tear, and other conditions. Home Inspection
90. Generally composed of poured concrete, masonry (concrete) block, or brick; the height of the foundation wall, determines whether the structure has a full basement or a crawl space. Foundation wall
91. The frame that surrounds and secures the glass. Sash
92. A metallic material that is used in certain areas of the roof and walls to prevent water from seeping into the structure. Flashing
93. The vertical area of a step that supports the tread. riser
94. The concrete base below the frost line that supports the foundation of the structure. Footing
95. The area on the ground in front of the door that keeps rain and snow from entering the structure. Threshold
96. The material inside the windowpane. Glazing

97. Varies from state to state and by the type of claim asserted. It sets the time frame for commencing a lawsuit and begins to run on the date the claim arose or the date on which the client knew or reasonably should have known of the claim. Statute of limitations
98. The first wooden member of the house and is used as the nailing surface for the floor system. Sill plate
99. An air conditioner component that takes heat from the air surrounding it and brings it to the refrigerant. Evaporator
100. A single conductor or several conductors, with or without covering, used for aboveground service entrance. Service entrance Cable (SE Cable)
101. Do not open or close (e.g., picture window or variations of the bay window). Fixed-pane windows
102. A device with an internal metal link that melts and opens the circuit, causing electrical power to stop when overheating occurs. fuse
103. A plywood surface nailed to the floor joists that serves as the surface for the floor finish. Subfloor
104. A damper located in the throat of the fireplace, just above the firebox. Throat damper
105. A type of valve generally used as the main valve shutoff valve to the property. Gate valve
106. The perforated area under the roof extension that allows air to flow through the ridge vents to ventilate the attic. Soffit
107. Exterior insulation material that is nailed over the sheathing. Felt Paper
108. A roof frame made up of a number of smaller framing members; it carries the load-bearing function to the outer walls. Roof truss system
109. A type of foundation slab constructed by pouring the footing first, then pouring the slab. Floating Slab
110. A horizontal base plate that serves as the foundation for the wall system. Sole plate
111. The most commonly used refrigerant in air conditioners. freon
112. A control device that automatically responds to temperature changes by opening and closing an electric circuit. Thermostat
113. The arrangement and preparation of the soil for construction. Grading
114. A mixture of Portland cement, lime, and sand that is mixed with water to fill and seal the spaces between tiles. Grout
115. Aboveground cables that come from the nearest pole connecting to the service entrance conductors of the house or building. Service Drop
116. Side framing member of the window sash. Stile
117. Beams that support the ceiling and the roof over the door and window openings. Headers
118. Used to open and close electrical circuits and allow current to flow to appliances. Switch
119. Prevents wind and moisture from penetrating the junction of the soffit and sheathing. Frieze board
120. Framing members, commonly 2x4s, 2x8s, 2x10s, or 2x12s, used vertically for wall construction. Studs
121. The area where combustion or the burning of fuel for heat takes place in a furnace or hot water heater. Heat exchanger
122. Framing members that span the distance between the foundation walls and the girder and provide support for the sub floor. Floor joists