

House Hunting Checklist

By Nicole Nichols-West

- Before you start house-hunting
 - Establish your property budget.
 - Get pre-approved for a mortgage
 - Decide on the type of area you want to live in.
 - Decide the type of property that best suit your needs.
 - Check if the area is convenient to work, essential shops, schools and other services that you need.
 - Check for public transportation.
 - Decide if having family and friends nearby is a priority.
 - Decide what lifestyle amenities are important (beach, pools, parks, views, general shopping).
 - Determine any apparent concern or risk factors.
 - Check the development history and development forecast of the area.
 - Check the crime rate for the area.
 - Find a local real estate agent.
- While you're house-hunting
 - See a variety of properties in order to get a feel for the market.
 - Talk to real estate agents to get a better idea of properties available and prices in the area.
 - Devote at least one day a week to serious house hunting.
 - Keep a property checklist.
 - Take snaps of various properties, inside and out, to act as reminders.
- Pre-Purchase Inspection (by a specialist)
 - Check under-floor areas for ventilation.
 - Check if the walls are straight and free from major bulges.
 - Check if the windows have double-pane insulating glass.
 - Check if floors are free from squeaking.
 - Check weatherboards for sagging or rot.
 - Check roof condition, guttering, flues, chimneys and flashings.
 - Check eaves for water staining that may reveal roof or gutter problems.
 - Check rooms for evidence of water entry or mildew.

- Check garages and sheds for water penetration.
- Check timber floors for rot, mould, borer and termites.
- Check concrete floors for exposed perimeters, cracks and water penetration.
- Check wet or damp areas like bathrooms, showers and laundries for cracks, leaks and mildew.
- Check for evidence of existing or past pest activity.
- Check any trees nearby for possible structural damage caused by roots.