

SELLER TOOL

Inspection negotiation cheat sheet

The buyer receives a very long report, most of which is standard. A good buyer's agent helps them separate what matters from what does not. Your job is to respond to the parts that matter and not to everything.

CATEGORY	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	TYPICAL APPROACH
Routine maintenance	Filters, servicing, minor wear	Usually handle it. Cheap and it builds goodwill.
Cosmetic	Scuffs, dated finishes, small cracks	Generally disclose and decline. Priced in already.
Minor mechanical	A part, a valve, a thermostat	Often worth fixing to keep the deal moving.
Major mechanical	Boiler, roof, snowmelt at end of life	Investigate first. Get a real bid before you negotiate.
Moisture	Any evidence of water where it should not be	Investigate. Do not guess and do not minimize it.
Health and safety	Gas, electrical, egress, rails, detectors	Fix it. This is not the place to hold the line.
Structural	Movement, settlement, framing	Bring in the right professional before you respond.
HOA or document issues	Assessments, litigation, restrictions	Not repairable. Disclose early and clearly.

General guidance only. The right response depends on your property, your contract and where you are in the deal.

TUCKER'S TIP

Never negotiate a big-ticket item off the inspector's guess. Get a real bid first. Half the time the scary line in the report prices out at a fraction of what everyone assumed, and the other half you are glad you found out before agreeing to a number.