

UNDERSTANDING FOUNDATION FINDINGS

IN A HOME INSPECTION REPORT

Home inspection reports often include comments about the foundation. Here's what those comments typically mean and what you should know as a North Texas homebuyer.



1 WHAT COMMON INSPECTION COMMENTS MEAN

COMMON INSPECTION COMMENTS	WHAT IT TYPICALLY MEANS
"Minor cracking noted in interior walls."	Small, hairline cracks are common in North Texas due to normal soil movement and are usually cosmetic.
"Stair-step cracking in brick veneer."	Often caused by foundation movement. The width and pattern of the crack help determine severity.
"Doors or windows sticking."	Can indicate movement or settlement of the foundation.
"Floors appear sloped or uneven."	May indicate foundation movement or subsidence. A professional evaluation is recommended.
"Separation at wall or ceiling."	Can be a sign of foundation movement or framing stress.
"Moisture present in crawl space."	Moisture issues can contribute to soil movement and should be addressed.

2 COSMETIC VS. STRUCTURAL CONCERNS

COSMETIC CONCERNS

Typically do not affect the home's structural integrity.

- Hairline (1/16" or less) drywall cracks
- Small vertical cracks in drywall or brick
- Minor settling cracks in concrete that are not expanding
- Cosmetic cracks in non-load-bearing areas

These are common in North Texas homes due to normal expansion and contraction of clay soils.

STRUCTURAL CONCERNS

May indicate movement or a structural issue.

- Wide (1/4" or more) or growing cracks
- Stair-step cracks in brick wider than 1/4"
- Sloping or uneven floors
- Doors/windows that won't close properly
- Gaps between walls, ceilings, or floors

Further evaluation by a foundation specialist is recommended.

3 WHEN A STRUCTURAL ENGINEER OR FOUNDATION SPECIALIST MAY BE APPROPRIATE



- When structural concerns are noted in the report
- When cracks are wide, growing, or in multiple areas
- When floors are uneven or sloping
- When previous foundation repairs are present and details are unclear
- When you want additional peace of mind before completing the purchase



A foundation specialist can perform a more thorough evaluation and determine if further investigation by a structural engineer is needed.

4 TYPICAL NEXT STEPS AFTER AN INSPECTION



Review the Report Carefully

Read all comments and notes related to the foundation, structure, and drainage.



Ask Questions

Ask your inspector for clarification on any items you don't understand.



Consider a Specialist Evaluation

If there are concerns, schedule a foundation evaluation for a more detailed assessment.



Use the Information Wisely

The findings can help you make informed decisions, negotiate, or plan for future maintenance.



Address Drainage and Moisture Issues

Poor drainage can contribute to foundation movement. Correcting these issues is an important first step.

5 QUESTIONS HOMEOWNERS SHOULD ASK BEFORE PURCHASING A HOME



Are there any known foundation issues with the home?

Ask the seller for any history of movement, repairs, or monitoring.



Has the foundation been inspected or evaluated before?

Request copies of reports or evaluations if available.



Have any foundation repairs been made?

If yes, what was done, when, by whom, and is there documentation?



Is there a warranty for prior repairs?

Verify if the warranty is transferable to you as the buyer.



How is drainage managed around the home?

Proper drainage helps protect your investment.



Are there large trees near the foundation?

Roots can contribute to soil movement.



KNOWLEDGE TODAY
PROTECTS YOUR INVESTMENT
TOMORROW.



ADDITIONAL HOMEOWNER RESOURCES

Visit our Homeowner Foundation Resource Center for guides on maintenance, drainage, warning signs, repair costs, and more.



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