

# PROPERTY RED FLAGS CHECKLIST:



## Buyer's Guide

### Structural & Safety Checks

Essential checks before buying a home:

- Cracks in walls, ceilings, or brickwork.
- Uneven floors or sloping surfaces.
- Doors/windows sticking or misaligned.
- Signs of subsidence (especially in clay soil areas).
- Roof sagging, missing tiles, or visible damage.
- Loft insulation even and dry (no damp timbers).

### Damp & Moisture Risks

- Damp patches or water stains on walls/ceilings.
- Peeling wallpaper or crumbling plaster.
- Mould around windows or in corners.
- Musty smell in rooms or cupboards.
- Signs of poor ventilation (condensation build-up).

### Electrics & Plumbing

Essential checks before buying a home:

- Old fuse box or outdated wiring.
- Flickering lights or limited sockets.
- Low water pressure.
- Visible leaks or corrosion on pipes.
- Presence of old materials (e.g. lead pipes).

### Hidden Risks

- Property built before 2000 (possible asbestos risk).
- Signs of asbestos (ceilings, pipe lagging, insulation).
- Evidence of pests (woodworm, rodents, insects).
- Japanese knotweed or invasive plants nearby.

### Legal & Boundary Red Flags

- Boundaries match what's physically on site.
- Fences, garages, extensions align with title plan.
- No visible disputes or shared access confusion.
- Extensions appear properly built and approved.
- No obvious encroachment onto neighbouring land.

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### Neighbourhood & Surroundings

Essential checks before buying a home:

- Visited at different times (day, evening, weekend).
- Noise levels acceptable (roads, businesses, neighbours).
- Area feels safe and well-maintained.
- No signs of ongoing disputes or antisocial behaviour.
- Checked flood risk or environmental concerns.

### Bigger Picture Considerations

- Property located in conservation or protected area.
- Any restrictions on changes or renovations.
- Rights of way affecting the property.
- Long-term resale potential considered.

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### Smart Buyer Actions

Essential checks before buying a home:

- Booked a professional survey.
- Asked direct questions about known issues.
- Compared property against budget for potential repairs.
- Reviewed title plan carefully.
- Spoke to neighbours where possible.

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### HOW THIS CHECKLIST HELPS

This checklist is designed to help you spot potential issues early - before they turn into costly surprises later. From visible concerns like damp and structural movement to less obvious risks such as legal boundaries or neighbourhood factors, it gives you a clear framework to assess a property with more confidence.

While it won't replace a professional survey or legal advice, it helps you ask the right questions, identify warning signs, and approach the buying process more prepared. When combined with guidance from experienced conveyancing solicitors, it can make your journey smoother, more informed, and far less stressful.

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