

Home Inspection Business — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into the actual steps, numbers, and systems you need to launch and run a profitable home inspection business. Work through each section as you progress: confirm your licensing and certification path, build your fee schedule and per-inspection economics, design your agent-referral and review engine, and standardize your inspection and report process. The templates are built to be filled in with your own market's figures and reused on every inspection.

Getting Licensed, Certified, and Insured

Pin down exactly what your state requires, choose your certification path, and put insurance and the pre-inspection agreement in place before your first paid job.

Worksheet: Your State Licensing and Certification Map

Research your specific state and fill in the exact requirements so you spend money only on what you actually need and never inspect out of compliance.

My state

Does my state license home inspectors? (yes / no)

Required education hours (if any)

Required exam (NHIE / state-specific / InterNACHI Online Inspector Exam)

Required supervised or parallel inspections (number)

Background check / fingerprint required? (yes / no)

Certification I will pursue (InterNACHI CPI / ASHI / both)

Annual continuing-education hours required to stay active

Estimated total cost to get credentialed (course + exam + license fees)

Exercise: Internalize Your Standards of Practice Scope

Read the InterNACHI or ASHI Standards of Practice in full, then answer these in your own words so you know exactly where your responsibility starts and stops.

- List the major systems and components the Standards of Practice require you to inspect.

-
- List at least five things the Standards explicitly exclude or do not require you to do.
-
- When a finding is ambiguous or beyond a general inspection, what is the exact phrase you will use to recommend further evaluation?
-
- How will you document an area you could not access (locked room, snow-covered roof, blocked crawlspace)?
-

Checklist: Inspection-Ready Foundation Checklist

- I have confirmed whether my state requires a license and listed every requirement
- I have a plan and timeline to complete the required course, exam, and supervised inspections
- I have arranged at least a few paid ride-alongs with an experienced local inspector
- I have an E&O insurance quote from an agent who writes inspector policies specifically
- I have a general liability policy or a bundled E&O and GL policy
- I have a pre-inspection agreement with a limitation-of-liability clause and e-signature
- I have chosen a business structure (e.g. LLC) and confirmed it with an accountant
- I have a calendar reminder for my annual continuing-education hours

Pricing and the Economics of an Inspection

Build a defensible fee schedule, model your real per-inspection income, and know your break-even count before you spend on marketing.

Worksheet: Build Your Fee Schedule

Research what experienced, well-reviewed inspectors in your market charge, then set your own base, increments, age surcharge, and add-on menu within that band, never below it.
Local market price range for a standard single-family inspection (low to high)

My base fee and the square-footage it covers (e.g. up to 2,000 sq ft)

Incremental charge per additional block of square footage

Age surcharge and the cutoff year (e.g. +\$50 for pre-1975)

Radon test add-on price

Termite / wood-destroying-organism add-on price

Sewer-scope add-on price

Thermal-imaging add-on price

Water-quality / mold add-on price

Target average ticket including typical add-ons

Exercise: Model Your Inspector Economics

Work out your real income picture using honest numbers for your market and drive times, not best-case assumptions.

- What is your realistic average inspections per day given on-site time and drive time in your service area?

- At your target average ticket times that many inspections across 20 working days, what is your monthly gross?

- Add up your fixed monthly costs (insurance, software, vehicle, marketing, CE, dues). What is the total?

- What is your variable cost per inspection (fuel, report fee, ancillary supplies and lab fees)?

- Divide your fixed costs by your average net per inspection: how many inspections is your monthly break-even?

Worksheet: Startup Budget and Equipment ROI

List your all-in startup costs and decide which add-on equipment to buy now versus after you have the volume to pay it back.

Credentialing cost (course + exam + license)

Core toolkit cost (flashlight, moisture meter, voltage tester, CO detector, ladder, crawlspace gear)

Report software (monthly cost x first months)

E&O and general liability (annual)

Website, logo, business phone

Radon monitor cost and price per test (tests to break even)

Sewer-scope camera cost and add-on price

Thermal-imaging camera cost and add-on price

Total all-in startup figure

Checklist: Pricing Discipline Check

- My fee schedule is set by square footage and age, written down, and published
- I price within the band of experienced local inspectors, not below it
- I offer at least two or three add-on services to lift my average ticket
- I know my realistic inspections per day and my average net per inspection
- I know my monthly break-even inspection count
- I only buy add-on equipment when the volume justifies the payback

Getting the Phone to Ring: Agents, Referrals, and Marketing

Build the agent relationships that drive most volume, the review engine that wins trust, and the repeat-client system that makes each inspection feed the next.

Worksheet: Target Agent and Brokerage List

Identify the active buyer's agents and brokerages in your service area and plan a specific way to earn each relationship; these referrals are your real growth engine.

Brokerage name and location

Active buyer's agents to target there

How I will get in front of them (office meeting / lunch-and-learn / CE class I host)

My responsiveness offer (same-day report? next-day scheduling? online booking?)

Current inspector they use (the incumbent I must beat on service)

First-contact date and follow-up plan

Status (cold / introduced / first referral / repeat)

Exercise: Become the Agent's Low-Risk Choice

Agents fear both an incompetent inspector and an alarmist deal-killer. Plan exactly how you will be thorough but calm so agents trust you with their client relationship.

- How will you deliver reports fast enough to make the agent look good (target turnaround time)?
 - Write how you would explain a 30-year-old but functioning furnace to a nervous buyer without scaring them off the deal.
 - What value can you offer agents beyond inspections (CE classes, market info, reliability) that is legal and not a kickback?
 - How will you stay top of mind with your best agents over time without being pushy?
-

Worksheet: Online Reputation and Review Engine

Set up the systems that build the Google reviews and online presence that win both agents and direct-search buyers.

Google Business Profile claimed and complete? (yes / no)

Current Google review count and star rating

When and how I ask for reviews (e.g. automated message with one-tap link after report delivery)

Website live with services, pricing/quote, sample report, certifications? (yes / no)

Online scheduling enabled? (yes / no)

Online payment enabled? (yes / no)

Listed on InterNACHI / ASHI find-an-inspector directories? (yes / no)

Monthly review-count goal

Checklist: Referral and Recurring-Revenue Check

- I keep a client database (name, address, date, referring agent) for follow-up
- I have a system to ask every satisfied client for a Google review with a one-tap link
- I stay in light contact with past clients (maintenance tips, prompt answers)
- I offer recurring services: annual maintenance, new-construction phase, and 11-month warranty inspections
- I offer market-resilient services (e.g. four-point, wind-mitigation, new construction) to smooth resale cycles
- I thank every client and agent who refers me and never pay an illegal referral kickback

Doing the Work: Software, the Inspection, and the Report

Configure your report software, standardize a defensible Standards-of-Practice inspection route, and deliver a calm, same-day report that earns the next referral.

Worksheet: Report Software Setup

Choose your platform and configure it once so every report is fast, consistent, professional, and same-day.
Platform chosen (Spectora / HomeGauge / Horizon / HIP / other)

Monthly cost

Mobile / tablet on-site capture workflow learned? (yes / no)

Custom defect library and report template built? (yes / no)

Pre-inspection agreement with e-signature configured? (yes / no)

Online scheduling and online payment configured? (yes / no)

Automated emails set up (confirmation, agreement, report + review request)? (yes / no)

My report-delivery time commitment (target: same day)

Exercise: Standardize Your Inspection Route

Define the exact, repeatable sequence you will follow on every house so nothing is missed under time pressure, and list the high-consequence defects you are hunting in each system.

- Write your fixed inspection sequence from arrival to finish (e.g. exterior, roof, then interior systems).

- For electrical, list the specific defects you always check for (double-tapped breakers, reversed polarity, missing GFCI, hazardous wiring).

- For plumbing and HVAC, list what you always verify (leaks, water-heater TPR valve, supply material, age and operation).

- What is your rule for photographing systems and defects, and how will you document anything you could not access?

Worksheet: Report Delivery and Client Communication Standard

Define how you will communicate findings calmly and deliver fast, so you build referrals instead of a deal-killer reputation.

Do I give a calm on-site verbal summary if the buyer attends? (yes / no)

How I group findings by severity in the summary (e.g. safety / major / minor-maintenance)

My same-day written report delivery time commitment

How I make myself available for buyer and agent questions afterward

When the automated review request fires

How I describe a normal end-of-life item without alarming the buyer

Checklist: Inspection, Report, and Back-Office Standards

- I follow the same Standards-of-Practice inspection route on every house
- I photograph every system inspected and every defect, with video where it helps
- I clearly document and disclose any area I could not access or fully evaluate
- I recommend evaluation by a qualified licensed specialist when a finding exceeds my scope
- I deliver a clear, severity-grouped, photo-rich report the same day
- I present serious findings calmly and separate them from routine maintenance items
- I track bookkeeping (revenue, mileage, equipment, software, insurance, CE) for true net and clean taxes
- I track my numbers (inspections, average ticket, lead source) and never inspect without a signed agreement

Your Action Plan

1. Look up your state's exact licensing requirement and map the education, exam, supervised inspections, and continuing-education hours you must complete.
2. Earn your InterNACHI CPI or ASHI certification, internalize the Standards of Practice, and complete paid ride-alongs with an experienced local inspector.
3. Put E&O and general liability insurance in place and adopt a pre-inspection agreement with a limitation-of-liability clause that you sign before every job.
4. Build a written fee schedule by square footage and age, add a menu of two or three add-on

services, and price within the band of experienced local inspectors.

5. Model your per-inspection economics and your fixed and variable costs to find your monthly break-even inspection count before spending on marketing.
6. Build a target list of buyer's agents and brokerages and earn the first relationships by out-responding the incumbent: same-day reports and easy scheduling.
7. Claim and optimize your Google Business Profile and set up an automated review request with a one-tap link sent right after every report delivery.
8. Choose and fully configure your report software (defect library, agreement e-signature, online scheduling and payment, automated emails) for same-day delivery.
9. Standardize a fixed Standards-of-Practice inspection route, photograph every system and defect, and refer out anything beyond a general inspection.
10. Add recurring and market-resilient service lines (annual maintenance, new-construction phase, 11-month warranty, four-point and wind-mitigation where relevant) so each inspection feeds the next.

