New build snagging checklist

56 checks, room by room, with NHBC pass marks. From snagai.uk

Address: Date: Plot:

What to bring

- **Tape measure:** For gaps and heights.
- **Spirit level:** The longer the better. A 2m straight edge is ideal for walls and floors.
- **Your phone:** Torch for under sinks, camera to see the tops of doors and the underside of sills, zoom for the roof.
- **A £1 coin:** It is 2.8mm thick, so it works as a gap gauge.
- **Socket tester:** About £10 online. Plugs in and shows if a socket is wired correctly.
- **Tissue:** To check extractor fans and feel for slow leaks.
- **A 10cm ball or card circle:** To check gaps in stair and landing guarding.

When to report

- **Before you complete:** You, or a snagger you hire, can usually inspect the home before legal completion. It is part of the New Homes Quality Code and the Consumer Code for Home Builders. Ask the developer for the inspection date in writing.
- **Within 7 days of moving in:** Report cosmetic damage such as scratches, chips and marks. NHBC says it must be reported to the builder within seven days of completion.
- **Years 1 and 2:** The builder is responsible for putting right defects you report. Report in writing, with dated photos, and keep copies.
- **If it is not fixed:** Make a formal complaint to the developer in writing. If the developer is registered with the New Homes Quality Board and it is not resolved within 56 days, or you are unhappy with their final response, you can take it to the New Homes Ombudsman Service. It is free for buyers, and time limits apply, so do not leave it too long.
- **Years 3 to 10:** Your warranty (for example NHBC Buildmark) covers damage caused by defects in certain parts of the home, mainly the structure.

Outside

Do this in daylight, and ideally once after rain.

- [ ] **Brickwork from a distance** Stand at least 10m back and look at each wall as a whole. Mortar should be one even colour, with no smears or splashes on the bricks.
  Pass mark: Chips or marks over 15mm across should be fixed. A 5p coin is 18mm.
- [ ] **Pointing and weep vents** Walk along the bottom of each wall. Mortar joints should be full, with no holes, and the small vents near the base should not be blocked.
- [ ] **Roof** Zoom in with your phone from the ground. Look for cracked, slipped or missing tiles, a straight ridge, and lead flashing tight to the walls.
- [ ] **Gutters and downpipes** Check they are fixed firmly. In rain, or with a hose, look for drips at the joints. Staining on the brickwork below is a sign of a leak.
- [ ] **Drains and manhole covers** Covers should sit level and not rock when you stand on them. Run water into a gully and check it drains away.
- [ ] **Drive, paths and patio** An hour after rain, look for puddles. Ground should fall away from the house.
  Pass mark: No puddles deeper than 5mm or bigger than 1m², and none at all by a door. (NHBC)
- [ ] **Fences and gates** Push each post: it should not move. Gates should close and latch on their own weight.

- [ ] **Garden** Push a spade in at a few spots. Builders often bury rubble just under the turf.
- [ ] **Garage** SAFETY The door opens, closes and locks. If a door leads from the garage into the house, it should close by itself.
- [ ] **Paint, sills and render** Look for missed patches and runs. Use your phone camera to see the underside of window sills.

Doors and windows

- [ ] **Internal doors** Open and close every door. It should latch without a push and stay where you leave it.
  Pass mark: Gap at the top and sides of 4mm or less. If two £1 coins stacked fit in the gap, it is too big. (NHBC)
- [ ] **Door edges and frames** Use your phone camera to check the top and bottom edges are painted. Look for dents and open joints in the frame trims.
- [ ] **Front and back doors** Lock and unlock from both sides with every key. With the door shut, you should see no daylight and feel no draught.
- [ ] **Every window** Open, close and lock each one. Handles should feel firm, and you should have keys for any locking handles.
- [ ] **Glass** Stand 2m away in daylight and look for scratches. Misting between the two panes means a failed seal.
  Pass mark: Judge from 2m, or 3m for toughened or laminated glass. (NHBC)
- [ ] **Trickle vents** The slots at the top of the frame should slide open and shut.
- [ ] **Upstairs windows** SAFETY If restrictors are fitted, they should catch and release. Bedrooms upstairs usually need a window that opens wide enough to escape through in a fire, so check it opens fully.

Walls, ceilings, floors and stairs

Judge finishes in daylight from 2m away with the lights off. A torch held flat to the wall shows up every tiny bump, which is not how NHBC judges it.

- [ ] **Walls and paint** From 2m in daylight, look for bumps, visible board joints, patchy paint and marks around sockets and switches.
- [ ] **Wall flatness** Hold a long level against the wall and look for gaps behind it.
  Pass mark: Up to 3mm out over 2m is within NHBC tolerance. A £1 coin is 2.8mm.
- [ ] **Cracks** Fine cracks where walls meet ceilings are usually the house drying out.
  Pass mark: Up to 2mm is normal. Report cracks over 5mm, any diagonal or stepped crack, or one that keeps growing. (NHBC)
- [ ] **Ceilings** Look along the ceiling for sagging or dips, and for cracks along board joints.
  Pass mark: Flat within 5mm over 2m. (NHBC)
- [ ] **Skirting boards** Check the joints at corners are closed and there are no dents.
  Pass mark: Gap to the floor of 5mm or less. (NHBC)
- [ ] **Floors** Walk every room, including the edges. Listen for squeaks and feel for bounce or high spots.
  Pass mark: Flat within 5mm over 2m. (NHBC)
- [ ] **Stairs and handrails** SAFETY Push the handrail and balusters hard: nothing should move. Walk up and down listening for creaks.
  Pass mark: Guarding at least 900mm high on stairs and landings, 1100mm on balconies. A 10cm ball should not fit through any gap. (Building Regulations, Part K)

Kitchen

- [ ] **Cupboards and drawers** Doors should hang level with even gaps. Open every drawer fully: it should run smoothly and close properly.
- [ ] **Worktops** Look for chips and scratches, and check joints are flush. The sealant line along the wall should be unbroken.
- [ ] **Sink** Run the taps for a minute, then shine your torch under the sink and feel the pipes with a dry tissue.
- [ ] **Appliances** Switch on the hob, oven, fridge and freezer. Run the dishwasher and washing machine on a short cycle if fitted.
- [ ] **Extractor hood** Check every speed and the light.
- [ ] **Splashback and tiles** Tiles should be straight with full grout lines and no cracked tiles.

Bathrooms

- [ ] **Bath, basin, toilet and tray** Look for chips and scratches from about half a metre away, the distance NHBC uses.
- [ ] **Sealant** The silicone around the bath, shower tray and basin should be continuous, with no gaps or holes.
- [ ] **Taps and shower** SAFETY Run every hot and cold tap. Check the pressure, and that hot water arrives in a reasonable time.
  Pass mark: The bath hot tap must not be scalding: new homes must limit it to 48°C. (Building Regulations, Part G)
- [ ] **Toilet** Flush it. It should refill and then stop running. The seat should be firm.
- [ ] **Leaks** After running everything, feel under the basin, around the toilet and behind the bath panel with a dry tissue.
- [ ] **Wall and floor tiles** Tap tiles with a knuckle. A hollow sound means poor fixing. Run your hand across joints for raised edges.
  Pass mark: Raised edges of 1mm or less between tiles, or 2mm where the grout joint is wider than 6mm. (NHBC)
- [ ] **Extractor fan** Switch it on and hold a sheet of tissue to it. The tissue should be pulled flat.
- [ ] **Bath panel and shower screen** Both should be firmly fixed, with no flex or rattle.

Electrics and alarms

- [ ] **Lights and switches** Try every one, including outside lights and the doorbell.
- [ ] **Sockets** Plug a socket tester or a phone charger into every socket, including those behind appliances you can reach.
- [ ] **Fuse box** Find the consumer unit and check every circuit is labelled.
- [ ] **Smoke and heat alarms** SAFETY Press the test button on each. In new homes they should be linked, so they should all sound together. Expect one in the hallway and on each landing, and a heat alarm in the kitchen if it opens onto the stairs.
- [ ] **Carbon monoxide alarm** SAFETY If a boiler, fire or stove that burns gas, oil or solid fuel is fitted, there should be a carbon monoxide alarm in the same room. Press its test button.

Heating and hot water

- [ ] **Radiators** Turn the heating up and check every radiator gets hot all over. Look for drips at the valves.
- [ ] **Thermostat and timer** The heating should come on and go off when you change the setting.
- [ ] **Boiler or heat pump** Ask for the manual and the commissioning paperwork, and check nothing is leaking below it.
- [ ] **Hot water cylinder** If you have one, check for drips at the pipes and valves.

Loft

- [ ] **Loft hatch** It should open and close easily, sit tight, and have insulation on top.
- [ ] **Insulation** It should be laid evenly with no gaps, and pipes and tanks in the loft should be insulated too.
- [ ] **Damp** Light condensation on the roof membrane in cold weather is normal. Drips, wet insulation or stains are not.

Documents and keys

Most of these come from the developer or your conveyancer. Chase anything missing in writing.

- [ ] **Warranty documents** Your warranty policy and certificate (for example NHBC Buildmark). NHBC says to ask your conveyancer if they have not arrived within four weeks of moving in.
- [ ] **Energy Performance Certificate** Every new home needs an EPC.
- [ ] **Building control certificate** A completion certificate from the council, or a final certificate if a private building control approver was used. It confirms the home was signed off under the Building Regulations.
- [ ] **Gas and electrical certificates** A compliance certificate for the boiler installation, and a certificate for the electrical installation.
- [ ] **Manuals and guarantees** For the boiler or heat pump, every appliance, and the alarms.
- [ ] **Keys and meter readings** Keys for every door, window lock and the garage. Photograph each meter on the day you move in.

Do this checklist in the Snag AI app.

The same 56 checks on your phone: tick them off, photograph snags against each check, and send your developer a PDF report with every photo. Free on the App Store: scan the code or search "Snag AI", then choose "Checking my own new build" when you sign up.

Updated October 2026. Pass marks are from NHBC Standards (Chapter 9); other warranty providers may differ slightly. General guidance only, not a professional survey. Sources and the interactive version: https://snagai.uk/new-build-snagging-checklist/