

The Indiana Homeowner's Foundation & Crawl Space Checklist

Walk your home twice a year — once in spring, once in fall. Check off what you find, note the date, and photograph anything questionable. A single crack tells you little; the same crack six months later tells you whether your house is moving.

Date of inspection:

Previous inspection:

Property:

1. FOUNDATION WARNING SIGNS

Inside the house

- ☐ Diagonal drywall cracks from door or window corners
- ☐ Doors or windows sticking that used to close cleanly
- ☐ Floors that slope, bounce, or feel uneven
- ☐ Gaps between baseboards and floor

- ☐ Cracks in ceiling corners
- ☐ Nail pops or drywall seams showing
- ☐ Cabinets or counters pulling from the wall
- ☐ Straight-line cracks in tile or grout

Basement and foundation walls

- ☐ **Horizontal cracks** in a foundation wall
- ☐ **Stair-step cracks** along mortar joints
- ☐ Walls that bow, lean, or bulge inward

- ☐ Vertical cracks that have widened over time
- ☐ Cracks that leak during rain
- ☐ White powdery mineral deposits (efflorescence)

Outside the house

- ☐ Stair-step cracks in exterior brick or masonry
- ☐ Gap between the chimney and the house
- ☐ Separation where an addition or porch meets the house

- ☐ Soil pulling away from the foundation wall
- ☐ Sunken or tilted steps, patio, or driveway slabs
- ☐ Gaps around exterior door and window frames

Vertical hairline cracks in poured concrete are common and often just shrinkage. Horizontal cracks, stair-step patterns, and anything actively widening are the ones that matter.

2. CRAWL SPACE MOISTURE WARNING SIGNS

Noticeable from inside the house

- ☐ Musty or earthy smell, strongest near floor vents
- ☐ Floors that feel cold, soft, or springy
- ☐ Higher-than-usual humidity on the main floor

- ☐ Allergy symptoms that improve away from home
- ☐ Heating and cooling bills climbing without a usage change
- ☐ Pest activity on the main floor

Visible in the crawl space (bring a flashlight)

- ☐ Standing water or damp soil
- ☐ Condensation on ducts, pipes, or the subfloor
- ☐ Vapor barrier torn, shifted, or missing
- ☐ Wet, compressed, or fallen insulation

- ☐ Visible mold on joists, subfloor, or walls
- ☐ Wood that is dark, soft, or crumbles when pressed
- ☐ Sagging joists or joists pulled from supports
- ☐ Rust on fasteners, ducts, or metal supports

3. BASEMENT & WATER INTRUSION WARNING SIGNS

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| ☐ Water on the floor after heavy rain | ☐ Rust at the base of appliances or support posts |
| ☐ Damp spots or staining at the wall-floor joint | ☐ Sump pump running constantly — or never running |
| ☐ Brown or yellow water stains on walls | ☐ Musty odors that return after cleaning |
| ☐ Chalky white residue on block or concrete | ☐ Warped or cupped flooring in finished space |
| ☐ Peeling or bubbling paint on basement walls | ☐ Visible mold in corners or behind stored items |

Check the exterior too — many basement leaks start above ground

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| ☐ Soil slopes toward the house rather than away | ☐ Water pooling against the house after a storm |
| ☐ Gutters overflow during rain | ☐ Window wells holding water or full of debris |
| ☐ Downspouts discharging close to the foundation | ☐ Landscaping beds trapping water at the wall |

4. SEASONAL INDIANA CHECKLIST

Spring (March–May) — saturated clay, rising groundwater, peak stress season

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| ☐ Watch where water goes during a heavy rain | ☐ Clear gutters of winter debris |
| ☐ Check basement and crawl space for new water | ☐ Look for cracks that appeared over winter |
| ☐ Test the sump pump with a bucket of water | ☐ Check for soil that settled or washed out |

Summer (June–August) — dry spells shrink clay and pull support away

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| ☐ Look for soil separating from the foundation wall | ☐ Check crawl space humidity (peak season) |
| ☐ Watch for doors and windows that suddenly stick | ☐ Confirm any dehumidifier is draining properly |

Fall (September–November)

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| ☐ Clear gutters after leaf drop, then again in late fall | ☐ Do your second full crawl space inspection |
| ☐ Extend downspouts 4–6 feet from the foundation | ☐ Compare photos against your spring visit |
| ☐ Regrade low spots against the house | ☐ Service the sump pump before winter |

Winter (December–February) — freeze-thaw widens existing cracks

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| ☐ Watch for ice buildup at the foundation | ☐ Note any new cracks — winter is when they grow |
| ☐ Check downspout extensions are still attached | ☐ Watch for doors sticking as the ground freezes |
| ☐ Keep snow piled away from the foundation | |

5. WHEN TO CALL A PROFESSIONAL

Schedule an inspection soon

- A horizontal crack in a foundation wall
- A wall that is bowing, leaning, or bulging
- A crack that widened between checks
- Standing water that doesn't drain
- Floors actively sagging or soft
- Visible mold across a large area
- Doors sticking in multiple rooms
- Any crack wide enough to fit a coin

Monitor, don't panic

- A single hairline vertical crack in poured concrete
- One door that sticks seasonally, then releases
- Minor efflorescence with no active water
- Slight dampness during an unusually wet stretch

The distinction is movement. Static conditions can be watched. Conditions that change between checks should be looked at.

A good inspection identifies the cause, not just the symptom. Healthy Home Foundation Repair offers free inspections across Central Indiana — and if what you are seeing doesn't need repair, we will tell you that. Call (317) 975-0440.