

# Communication and Professional Practice

Dearborn™  
Home Inspection

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional service. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought.

**President:** Roy Lipner

**Publisher and Director of Distance Learning:** Evan M. Butterfield

**Senior Development Editor:** Laurie McGuire

**Content Consultant:** Alan Carson

**Acting Editorial Production Manager:** Daniel Frey

**Creative Director:** Lucy Jenkins

**Graphic Design:** Neglia Design Inc.

© 2003

Carson Dunlop & Associates Limited. All rights reserved.

Published by Dearborn™ Real Estate Education  
a Division of Dearborn Financial Publishing, Inc.®  
a Kaplan Professional Company®  
30 South Wacker Drive  
Chicago, IL 60606-7481  
www.dearbornRE.com

All rights reserved. The text of this publication, or any part thereof, may not be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission in writing from the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America.

03 04 05 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

---

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome! This home inspection training program has two primary goals:

- To provide you with a sound introduction to the components, materials and mechanics of house systems that you will encounter and evaluate as a home inspector;
- To provide you with a solid understanding of inspection processes, strategies and standards of practice that will help define the scope of your inspections.

We hope you enjoy this training program and develop a good understanding of the various house systems as you proceed. Good luck!

## FEATURES OF THIS PROGRAM

This program is structured to help you learn and retain the key concepts of home inspection. It also will help you form a set of best practices for conducting inspections. A number of features are included to help you master the information and put your knowledge into practice:

- Topics are organized into evenly paced Study Sessions. Each Session begins with learning objectives and key words to set up the important concepts you should master by the end of the Session. Each Session concludes with Quick Quizzes to help you test your understanding. Answers to Quick Quizzes are provided so you can check your results.
- Scope and Introduction sections present the ASHI® (American Society of Home Inspectors) Standards of Practice for each major topic. Standards help you define a professional, consistent depth and breadth for your inspections.
- An Inspection Checklist at the end of each section summarizes the important components you will be inspecting and their typical problems. You can use this as a set of field notes during your own inspections.
- The Inspection Tools list will help you build your toolkit of “must have” and optional tools for the job.
- An Inspection Procedures section provides some general guidelines to conducting your inspection of each major house system. This feature will help you develop a methodology to complement your technical knowledge.
- Field Exercises give you an opportunity to turn your knowledge into real world experience.

---

## **SUMMARY**

The road we have paved for you is designed to be easy and enjoyable to follow. We trust it will lead you quickly to your destination of success in the home inspection profession.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Thanks to Kevin O'Malley for his inspiration, advice and guidance. Thanks also to James Dobney for his invaluable input and encouragement. Special thanks are extended to Dan Friedman for his numerous and significant contributions.

We are grateful for the contributions of: Duncan Hannay, Richard Weldon, Peter Yeates, Tony Wong, Graham Clarke, Ian Cunliffe, Joe Seymour, Charles Gravely, Graham Lobban, Dave Frost, Gerard Gransaul, Jim Stroud, Diana DeSantis, David Ballantyne, Shawn Carr and Steve Liew.

Special thanks are also extended to Susan Bonham, Dearbhla Lynch, Lucia Cardoso-Tavares, Jill Brownlee, Ida Cristello and Rita Minicucci-Colavecchia who have brought everything together. Thanks also to Jim Lingerfelt for his invaluable editing assistance.

## ► PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

	<b>1.0</b>	<b>OBJECTIVES .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>STUDY SESSION 1</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>SCOPE AND INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
	2.1	Scope.....	5
	2.2	Introduction.....	25
<b>STUDY SESSION 2</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>INSPECTIONS AND INSPECTORS .....</b>	<b>31</b>
	3.1	A brief history .....	31
	3.2	Home inspection – a look from the outside .....	34
	3.3	The characteristics of a good home inspector.....	40
	3.4	Vehicles, clothes and tools .....	42
	3.4.1	Vehicles .....	42
	3.4.2	Clothes .....	43
	3.4.3	Tools.....	44
	<b>4.0</b>	<b>TYPICAL CLIENTS.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>STUDY SESSION 3</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>THE INSPECTION PROCESS.....</b>	<b>59</b>
	5.1	Pre-inspection routine .....	59
	5.2	Introductory discussion.....	64
	5.3	The inspection.....	73
<b>STUDY SESSION 4</b>	5.4	The closing discussion .....	89
	5.5	Strategies for awkward situations .....	93
	5.6	Common mistakes made by new inspectors .....	98
	<b>6.0</b>	<b>THE REAL ESTATE TRANSACTION .....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>FIELD EXERCISE</b>			
		<b>ANSWERS TO QUICK QUIZZES.....</b>	<b>119</b>

## ► COMMUNICATION AND REPORT WRITING

	<b>1.0</b>	<b>OBJECTIVES .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>STUDY SESSION 1</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>VERBAL COMMUNICATION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
	2.1	Introduction – communication defined .....	5
	2.2	Elements of the communication process .....	9
	2.3	Nonverbal messages in communication .....	17
	2.4	Obstacles to effective communication .....	20
	2.5	Techniques for improving communication .....	23
<b>STUDY SESSION 2</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>REPORT WRITING .....</b>	<b>34</b>
	3.1	Why reports are written .....	34
	3.2	Who writes the report?.....	35
	3.3	How is the report created? .....	36
	3.4	When are reports delivered? .....	36
	3.5	Report style or format .....	37
	3.6	What should the report contain? .....	38
<b>STUDY SESSION 3</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>LIABILITY .....</b>	<b>57</b>
	<b>5.0</b>	<b>THE STEP-BY-STEP HOME INSPECTION .....</b>	<b>64</b>
	5.1	Pre-inspection routine .....	64
	5.2	The introductory discussion .....	67
	5.3	The inspection itself.....	69
	5.4	Report preparation .....	70
	5.5	Closing discussion .....	70
	<b>6.0</b>	<b>INSPECTION CHECKLISTS.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>FIELD EXERCISE 1</b>			
	<b>7.0</b>	<b>INSPECTION TOOLS.....</b>	<b>194</b>
		<b>ANSWERS TO QUICK QUIZZES.....</b>	<b>198</b>