

A home observation and follow-up sheet

A paper log for writing down what you can see around your home, what you cannot tell from looking, and which instruction or local source to ask. It does not score or rate a home.

Write down visible concerns and unknowns, then route each question to the right instruction, local source or qualified person, with a follow-up date of your own choosing.

How to use this sheet

1. Print the sheet or copy its headings onto paper. It is for your own notes; nothing is sent anywhere.
2. Take one area at a time and look only. Record what you can see or read without touching, moving, opening, testing or taking apart anything.
3. In the unknowns column, write what you cannot tell from looking. A blank or the word 'unknown' is a complete answer.
4. In the source column, name the document or person who could answer: the maker's instructions, building management, your landlord, your local fire department, your local authority or a qualified professional. Write where you will find them, not what you assume they would say.
5. Name who will follow up and choose your own review date. There is no recommended interval.
6. Mark each row with one of three statuses: Observed, Question open or Follow-up recorded. None of them means 'fine' or 'not fine'.

Use only the fields relevant to your notes. All fields are optional. Keep the sheet with your own records; no information is submitted.

Not for emergencies

If there is an active emergency, do not use this sheet. Contact your local emergency services immediately, using the number you already know for your country or region.

What this sheet is and is not

It records what you notice and where to take each question. It does not rate a home, find faults, certify anything or replace advice from a product maker, building management, a local authority or an inspector.

Rules differ by country, state or province, and building. Check yours separately. Health Canada's fire-safety guidance, for example, is Canadian guidance and should not be read as the law where you live.

Cleaning a surface does not repair a leak or deal with the cause of dampness, so moisture questions go in their own section and to the person responsible for investigating the source. For label-reading on cleaning products, see [cleaning versus disinfecting](#).

Sheet details

Keep this general. Do not write an address, medical details or account numbers on a sheet you may share.

Date I started this sheet

Write today's date.

Part of the home covered

For example 'upstairs rooms' or 'kitchen and hallway'. No street address.

Country or region whose rules I need to check

Write the country or region, so you look up local sources rather than guidance from elsewhere.

Who is filling this in

A first name or a role such as 'tenant' or 'owner'.

My overall review date

A date you choose for looking at the whole sheet again.

Status key

Use these three statuses only.

Status	What it means
Observed	I wrote down what I can see or read. I am not claiming anything beyond that.
Question open	There is something I cannot tell, and I have not yet asked the person or source who could.
Follow-up recorded	I have named the source and who is responsible. This does not mean the question is answered or resolved.

A. Labels and written instructions

Product labels, care labels, rating plates and manuals. Choose products suited to the actual surface and follow that product's label. One product's directions do not authorise another use, and products should never be mixed. For washable soft items, follow the maker's instructions and dry completely.

Area	What I can see (no touching or dismantling)	Unknowns	Instruction or local source to consult	Responsible follow-up	Review date I choose	Status
(room or area)	Which labels are readable, and which are missing or worn	What the product is for; whether its label covers the use I have in mind	The product label or maker's instructions; the supplier if there is no label	(who)	(date)	☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded
						☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded
						☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded

B. Storage

What is kept where, as far as you can see. If a label gives storage directions, those are the directions to follow.

Area	What I can see (no touching or dismantling)	Unknowns	Instruction or local source to consult	Responsible follow-up	Review date I choose	Status
(cupboard, shelf, shed, garage)	What is stored there; whether containers still carry their original labels	Whether the storage matches what the label describes; what any unlabelled container holds	The label's storage directions; whoever filled an unlabelled container	(who)	(date)	☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded
						☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded
						☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded

C. Access and routes

Doors, halls, stairs and the ways people move through the home. Note anyone in the household who finds a route difficult, without giving medical details. Questions about fire safety can go to your local fire department.

Area	What I can see (no touching or dismantling)	Unknowns	Instruction or local source to consult	Responsible follow-up	Review date I choose	Status
(route, door or stairs)	What stands on or beside it; how it is used day to day	Whether anything about the route needs advice from someone who knows local rules	Local fire department; building management or landlord, if the route is shared	(who)	(date)	☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded
						☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded
						☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded

D. Moisture

Describe what you see, not what you think caused it. Do not try to work out the cause by taking anything apart. Cleaning or an air cleaner does not deal with the source of a moisture problem, so record who is responsible for finding the source (you, a landlord, a building owner or management) and whether they have been told.

Area	What I can see (no touching or dismantling)	Unknowns	Instruction or local source to consult	Responsible follow-up	Review date I choose	Status
(room or area)	Visible marks, staining or peeling; condensation on glass; a smell I notice	Cause; whether it is new or recurring; whether anyone has looked at it	Landlord, building owner or management; a qualified professional for an assessment	(who)	(date)	☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded
						☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded
						☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded

E. Alarms and equipment instructions

This section records where instructions are, not how to do the work. Follow the maker's instructions for household electrical products and for checking, testing and cleaning smoke alarms; this sheet does not give those steps. Do not open, remove or test anything to fill in a row. For a heating or ventilation system, whether a filter is compatible depends on the actual system and its instructions, and professional advice may be needed.

Item or area	What I can see (no touching or dismantling)	Unknowns	Instruction or local source to consult	Responsible follow-up	Review date I choose	Status
(alarm, appliance, heating or ventilation system)	Whether a model name or label is visible; whether the maker's instructions are on hand	Whether the instructions I have are for this exact model	The maker's instructions for this model; local fire department for fire-safety questions; a qualified professional for the system	(who)	(date)	☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded
						☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded
						☐ Observed ☐ Question open ☐ Follow-up recorded

Escape plan note (optional)

Health Canada recommends a personalised emergency escape plan and practising it. This sheet does not create a plan. Use these lines to note who will help you make one.

Do I have a personalised escape plan written down?

Write yes, no or unsure.

Who I will ask for help preparing it

For example, my local fire department. Write where I will find their contact details.

When we will practise

A date or routine the household chooses.

Local sources I will look up

Write where you will find each contact, such as an official local website, a notice in the building or your tenancy paperwork. Do not write a number from memory.

Local fire department (non-emergency questions)

Where I will find their contact details.

Building management or landlord

Role and where their contact details are kept.

Local authority office for rules in my area

Which office, and where I will look it up.

Maker or supplier of a specific product

Product name as shown on its label, and where the instructions are kept.

Qualified professional for a question outside my knowledge

The kind of professional needed. Leave the name blank until you have chosen one.

Hypothetical examples of completed rows

These rows are invented for illustration. They describe no real home and predict nothing about any real situation.

Area	What I can see (no touching or dismantling)	Unknowns	Instruction or local source to consult	Responsible follow-up	Review date I choose	Status
Hallway cupboard	An unlabelled spray bottle on a shelf	What it contains; who filled it	Ask household members who filled it. Do not use an unidentified product, and never mix cleaning products. If its contents remain unknown, look up the local authority's advice on unidentified products.	Me	A date I choose	Follow-up recorded
Bedroom corner	A pale patch on the ceiling paint	Cause; whether it is new or old	Landlord or building management; send a written message and keep a copy	Me, to send the message	A date I choose	Question open

Before you put the sheet away

- [] Each entry describes something I saw or read, not a guess about its cause.
- [] Anything I could not tell is written as 'unknown'.
- [] Each open question has a named source or person.
- [] I used statuses as records only. None of them means safe or unsafe.
- [] I did not touch, open, move, test or repair anything to fill in the sheet.
- [] I left out my address, medical details and account numbers.
- [] If I plan to share the sheet with a landlord or manager, I re-read it first.

Questions about using this sheet

Does a completed sheet show that my home is safe?

No. The sheet records what you noticed and where you will take each question. It has no scoring and no pass mark, and it does not replace an inspection, advice from a product maker or a local authority's rules. A row marked Follow-up recorded means you have named a source and a person responsible. It does not mean the question has been answered.

Which rules apply to my home, and who should I ask?

That depends on your country or region, your building and your tenancy. Write the country or region at the top of the sheet and look up the local sources there. Product questions go to the maker's instructions. Fire-safety questions can go to your local fire department. Questions about a shared building, a leak or the flooring go to building management or the landlord. Guidance from another country, such as Health Canada's fire-safety page, is background only and not the law where you live.

Related reading

[An allergen-aware approach to cleaning your home](#)

[Cleaning versus disinfecting carpets and upholstery](#)

[Reliable sources on indoor dust, mould and carpet care](#)

[Questions about carpet care and household dust](#)

Sources and scope

[Fire safety in your home](#)

[When and How to Clean and Disinfect Your Home](#)

[Guide to Air Cleaners in the Home](#)

Personal paper worksheet only. It collects no data and has no scoring, certificate or pass mark.

Not a tool for an active emergency and not an inspection.

Gives no electrical, gas, alarm installation, fire-fighting, structural or remediation instructions.

Carries no legal compliance determination. Country and local rules must be checked separately.

Independent editorial resource. Contact the publisher: lukasz@alepo.co.