

YOUR LOAN. YOUR INSURANCE. YOUR ADVISOR.

PROPERTY VIEWING CHECKLIST

So you don't miss anything important at your next viewing

Viewing date:

Purchase price:

Comparable monthly rent:

Price-to-rent ratio¹ (average purchase price in the area / average monthly rent in the area) =

Property address:

Agency:

Apartment: General	
Year of construction	
Size in m ²	
Floor / total floors in the building	
Number of rooms	
Terrace or balcony ¹⁸	☐ Yes ☐ No m ² :
Elevator	☐ Yes ☐ No m ² :
Attic/storage	☐ Yes ☐ No m ² :
Cellar	☐ Yes ☐ No m ² :
Garage/parking space	☐ Yes ☐ No m ² :

Property: Exterior	
Condition of the façade ¹⁹	
Ease of parking ²⁰	

Public transport nearby ²¹	
Shops nearby ²²	
Orientation (which direction it faces) ²³	
Distance to the building opposite ²⁴	
Sources of noise or disturbance nearby (train, etc.)	
Additional notes	

Property: Interior	
Type of intercom (video/audio), condition ²⁵	
Condition of the building entrance door ²⁶	
Condition of the entrance hall ²⁷	
Condition of the landing ²⁸	
Condition of the elevator ²⁹	
Apartment entrance door ³⁰	

Apartment	
Flooring material ³¹	
Condition of interior walls ³²	
Is the electrical system up to code? ²	
Kitchen: are there ventilation grilles? ³	
Is the gas system up to code? ²	
Type of heating (individual or central) ³³	
Heating fuel ³⁴	☐ District heating ☐ Gas ☐ Heating oil ☐ Pellets/Biomass ☐ Heat pump ☐ Other:
fGEE value according to the Energieausweis ⁶	
Brightness of the apartment ³⁵	☐ Very bright ☐ Bright ☐ Not very bright ☐ Dark
Condition of the windows ³⁶	☐ Like new ☐ Good condition ☐ Needs replacing
Window material ³⁶	☐ PVC ☐ Wood ☐ Aluminium ☐ Wood-aluminium ☐ Other:
Condominium fees ³⁷	

Reasons & Extras: Questions to Ask the Estate Agent

Current condominium reserve fund ⁴	
Why is the property being sold? ⁷	
How long has the property been for sale? ⁸	
Have any offers already been made? ⁹	
Are there other interested buyers? ¹⁰	
How much room is there for negotiation? ¹¹	
What has been renovated and when? Are renovations planned for the building? ¹²	
Is there a renovation loan? How much is still outstanding? ⁵	
What defects might the property have? ¹³	
What improvements would you make to the apartment? ¹⁴	
What are the advantages of this property? ¹⁵	
What do you think this property is worth? ¹⁶	
Net monthly rent ¹⁷	

Glossary of Terms

1. Price-to-rent ratio (GRM)

What it shows: whether the purchase price is in line with the local market.

How to calculate it: look up 3-4 listings of similar apartments for sale in the same area and average their prices. Do the same with 3-4 rental listings, then divide the first number by the second.

How to read the result (Austrian market): under 300 = favorable, 300-360 = average (in Graz, for example), above 360 = high, only pays off with expected price appreciation.

Example: price 250,000 € ÷ average area rent 750 €/month = 333 → average value.

2. Electrical/gas system "up to code"

What it means: the system meets current safety standards.

What to do: you can't check this yourself during a viewing: ask the seller or agent for the compliance certificate or inspection report.

3. Kitchen ventilation grilles

What it means: they prevent dangerous gases from building up in the apartment when there's a gas-powered kitchen.

Why it matters: if missing, this can be a safety risk and an extra cost to budget for.

4. Condominium reserve fund

What it means: savings that all owners in the building contribute to together, used to pay for future repairs (roof, façade, elevator, etc.).

Why it matters: the higher the reserve, the lower your risk of unexpected special payments as the new owner.

Example: a 50,000 € reserve across 20 apartments = a solid buffer; a reserve near 0 € = risk of a special payment coming soon.

Tip: ask about it casually. If they do not know it by heart, ask for the minutes of the last owners' meeting, so you have a real document rather than just a spoken answer.

5. Building renovation loan

What it means: a loan the condominium association took out for renovation work already carried out.

Why it matters: the remaining balance is paid off by all owners through the monthly condominium fees, so it affects your future running costs.

Example: a 30,000 € outstanding balance across 15 apartments ≈ 2,000 € per apartment to be paid off over the coming years.

Tip: ask for the exact amount and ask clearly whether that debt transfers to you or stays with the seller.

6. fGEE value (Overall Energy Efficiency Factor)

What it shows: how efficient the building (including its heating system) is compared to a reference building built to the Austrian 2007 standard.

Where to find it: in the Energieausweis (energy performance certificate), which the seller is legally required to provide.

How to read it: under 1 = more efficient than the reference (better), over 1 = less efficient. Up to 0.55 = excellent (A++/A+), up to 0.75 = very good (A), up to 0.85 = good (B), up to 1.00 = average (C), above 1.30 = poor.

Example: fGEE 0.70 → the building uses 30% less energy than the reference (class A, very good).

7. Why is the property being sold?

Why we ask: a neutral reason does not say much, but a seller in a hurry to sell is a seller you can negotiate more with on price.

Tip: listen to whether the answer sounds natural or rehearsed. If in doubt, ask a simple follow up question, for example where they are moving to, and see if the story holds together.

8. How long has the property been for sale?

Why we ask: a property that has been listed for many months, maybe already reduced in price, tells you the price probably is not convincing the market.

Tip: check online yourself before the viewing how many days the listing has been up. If the agent's answer does not match, that is an important signal.

9. Have any offers already been made?

Why we ask: this line is sometimes used only to make you feel rushed.

Tip: do not believe it right away. Simply ask if you can still submit a written offer. If the answer is yes without hesitation, everything is fine.

10. Are there other interested buyers?

Why we ask: like the previous question, this helps you tell real demand apart from sales pressure.

Tip: do not let yourself be rushed. Take the time you need to decide calmly.

11. How much room is there for negotiation?

Why we ask: it tells you openly how much room there is on the price.

Tip: do not ask this question first. Ask it last, after you already know how long the property has been on the market and why it is being sold. That gives you real arguments for the negotiation, not just a generic request for a discount.

12. What has been renovated and when? Are renovations planned for the building?

Why we ask: future work on the building is an extra cost that adds to the purchase price.

Tip: always ask for an exact date and who carried out the work. A vague answer, such as "a few years ago", often means the work was never done or was done poorly.

13. What defects might the property have?

Why we ask: the seller has a duty to tell you about problems they know of.

Tip: ask this question once you are already inside the apartment, in front of something concrete, such as a stain or a crack. This gets you more honest answers than a generic question at the start of the viewing.

14. What improvements would you make to the apartment?

Why we ask: this is an easier way of asking about the same defects, but the answer is often more honest because the question feels less direct.

Tip: ask this question halfway through the viewing, once the agent is already more relaxed with you.

15. What are the advantages of this property?

Why we ask: it shows you what the agent genuinely sees as a strength, and gives you a first comparison with what you see with your own eyes.

Tip: ask this first, right at the start of the viewing, before you have already formed your own opinion.

16. What do you think this property is worth?

Why we ask: if the agent's estimate is lower than the asking price, that confirms there is room to negotiate.

Tip: ask with a curious tone, not like a challenge. People answer more honestly when they do not feel tested.

17. Net monthly rent

Why we ask: you need this to check the price to rent ratio calculated at the start, with a real number instead of your own estimate.

Tip: if they do not know it exactly, have them estimate it anyway and compare it with the research you already did online.

18. Terrace or balcony (value)

Why it matters: the price per square metre of a terrace or balcony is usually not the same as the apartment itself, but lower, typically between 25% and 50% less.

Example: if the apartment is worth 4,000 € per m², a 10 m² balcony usually does not add 40,000 € to the fair price, but rather a value between 20,000 € and 30,000 €. Keep this in mind when judging whether the asking price is fair.

19. Condition of the façade

Why it matters: besides cracks and dirt, the most important thing to check is whether the façade has exterior thermal insulation. If it does, this has a positive effect on energy savings and heating costs.

Tip: ask explicitly whether and when exterior insulation was added, and compare that with the energy efficiency value (fGEE) you already asked about for the building.

20. Ease of parking

Why it matters: if the building is in a paid or time limited parking zone (common in central Graz) and the apartment has no assigned parking space, you may need to pay for a resident parking permit or spend time every day looking for a spot.

Tip: ask whether the area is a restricted parking zone and whether a discounted resident permit is available. This matters even more if the apartment has no garage or parking space of its own.

21. Public transport nearby

Why it matters: what matters most is the walking distance (ideally under 300 to 500 metres) and the type of connection. A tram line is generally valued more than a simple bus line, in Graz especially within the Graz Linien network.

Tip: ask which line is closest, how frequent it runs, and consider whether this genuinely reduces the need for a car and therefore for your own parking space.

22. Shops nearby

Why it matters: a well served area (groceries, pharmacy, everyday services) makes daily life more convenient, but it also affects the property's value over time: areas with good local amenities hold their value better and are more sought after both for future resale and for renting out.

Tip: check what you can reach within a few minutes on foot, not just whether there is a shop somewhere in the area in general.

23. Orientation (which direction it faces)

Why it matters: the orientation (north, south, east, west) affects natural light and heating costs, but also the property's value: a south or southwest facing apartment is usually more sought after and therefore worth more, while a north facing one gets less light and can weigh the price down.

Tip: ask for the exact orientation and do not just trust "it's bright": check for yourself what time of day the sun comes in.

24. Distance to the building opposite

Why it matters: a short distance to the building opposite reduces the natural light that comes in, reduces privacy (you are easily seen by the neighbours across from you) and can weigh on the property's value, which is usually worth more with more open space in front of it.

Tip: judge this distance both from inside the apartment (how much sky you can see from the windows) and from outside, and ask yourself whether you would feel watched with the curtains open.

25. Type of intercom (video/audio), condition

Why it matters: looking at the intercom can reveal a few useful clues about the building.

Tip: check how many names appear compared to the number of apartments (can indicate vacant or sublet units), whether the nameplates are well kept or damaged/handwritten (a weak but real clue about the building's general upkeep), and whether there are company names (a mixed residential and commercial building, which can affect noise and opening hours).

26. Condition of the building entrance door

Why it matters: the condition of the entrance door is one of the first signs of how well the building is generally maintained. A neglected entrance door often points to other maintenance issues in the shared areas.

Tip: look at it together with the condition of the entrance hall and the staircase: if they all look neglected together, that is a sign that the condominium's routine maintenance is not being handled well.

27. Condition of the entrance hall

Why it matters: the entrance hall is the first shared space you see, and a good indicator of how the building is managed overall.

Tip: check the lighting (working and sufficient), cleanliness, damaged mailboxes, bicycles or items left lying around (a sign house rules are not enforced), and bad smells or damp on the walls. If the entrance hall looks neglected but the apartment itself has just been renovated for the sale, that is a sign the money went only into the unit being sold and not into the shared maintenance. Also check whether the notice board has complaint letters from the building management (Hausverwaltung) to the owners, for example about waste being disposed of incorrectly: problems like this can push the running costs (Betriebskosten) up.

28. Condition of the landing

Why it matters: this is the shared space closest to your future apartment. Personal items left on the landing (shoes, bicycles, strollers) are not just a sign of poor upkeep, but in Austria can also break fire safety rules if they block escape routes.

Tip: also check how many other doors open onto the same landing: the more neighbours share the same space, the more noise and foot traffic you will have right outside your door.

29. Condition of the elevator

Why it matters: an old or poorly maintained elevator is a hidden cost. It must be inspected regularly by law, and its upkeep weighs on the running costs. If it is nearing the end of its life, replacing it can cost tens of thousands of euros, often split among the owners as a special payment.

Tip: ask when the elevator was installed or last inspected, and whether a replacement is already planned. This matters even more if the apartment is on a higher floor, since without a working elevator it becomes much harder to sell or rent.

30. Apartment entrance door

Door type: there is a big difference between a standard door and a security (burglar resistant) door. A security door protects better against break ins, insulates better against noise from the landing, and is often required or rewarded with a discount by home insurance policies.

Condition of the door: check whether it is well kept (properly painted, no scratches or dents) or neglected. A neglected door often goes together with other signs of poor upkeep in the apartment overall.

Compared with the other doors on the landing: if this door is much newer or more secure than the neighbours' doors, it was probably replaced recently, perhaps specifically for the sale. If instead all the doors on the landing look equally old and neglected, that is a sign the building generally does not invest much in the upkeep of personal spaces.

Tip: ask whether the door is a security door and what resistance class it has (RC classes range from RC1 to RC3, the higher the number, the stronger it is). If it is not, keep in mind that replacing it usually costs between 1,500 and 3,000 €.

31. Flooring material and condition

Why it matters: knowing whether it is real parquet, laminate, or tile affects both the value and future costs. Real solid wood parquet can be sanded and resealed several times over the years, so it lasts practically forever and is considered higher quality. Laminate, on the other hand, only imitates wood and cannot be sanded: once damaged, it has to be replaced entirely.

Tip: if the floor looks old or damaged, ask for the exact material to work out whether sanding is enough (moderate cost) or a full replacement is needed (much more expensive).

32. Condition of interior walls

Why it matters: you need to distinguish between surface cracks (thin, hairline, usually just cosmetic and normal over time) and structural cracks (wider, diagonal, which can point to serious problems with the foundation or the building structure). Also look for signs of mould or damp, which point to insulation problems or water ingress and can affect both health and repair costs.

Tip: be suspicious of fresh paint in just one specific spot on a wall: this is often done on purpose to hide damp stains or cracks before a viewing. If something looks suspicious, ask directly whether there have been water ingress or damp problems in that spot.

33. Type of heating (individual or central)

Why it matters: with individual heating you control the temperature yourself and only pay for what you use, but you are also responsible for maintaining and replacing the boiler. With central heating the cost is usually shared among all owners (by consumption or by square metres) and is already included in the condominium fees, but you have less control over when and how much heating runs.

Tip: when comparing the total monthly cost of two properties, remember that with individual heating the gas or electricity bill is separate and does not show up in the condominium fees, while with central heating it is already included. So do not compare condominium fees alone.

34. Heating fuel (district heating or heating oil)

Why it matters: these are two very different systems. District heating arrives ready made through pipes from a central plant: you need neither your own boiler nor a tank, and it is generally considered cleaner and more convenient. Oil heating, on the other hand, needs its own boiler and a tank (usually in the cellar), needs refilling regularly, and its price follows the oil market.

Tip: in Austria oil heating is increasingly being discouraged by law (the Raus aus Öl programme promotes switching away from it), so a property with this system may require an investment to convert it in the future. Ask how old the boiler is and whether there are already known obligations or incentives for replacing it.

35. Brightness of the apartment

Why it matters: a bright apartment is not only more pleasant to live in, but is usually worth more on the market and saves you money on artificial lighting during the day. It is, however, a subjective assessment that is influenced by the time of your viewing.

Tip: take into account the time and the weather on the day of the viewing: an apartment seen at midday in sunshine always looks brighter than it actually is on a cloudy day or in the evening. If you can, try to see it again at a different time of day before deciding.

36. Condition and material of the windows

Why it matters: old windows or single glazing let a lot of heat escape, significantly increasing heating costs. The frame material (PVC, wood, aluminium, wood-aluminium) affects durability, maintenance needs, and the perceived value of the property.

Tip: always ask about the type of glazing too (single, double, or triple), not just the frame material: the glazing makes the biggest difference to heating costs. Single glazed windows are a sign that replacement work will be needed soon.

37. Condominium fees

Why it matters: condominium fees usually cover building insurance, water, waste disposal, cleaning of shared areas, elevator maintenance, and the property management fee. Heating and hot water are not always included, sometimes they are billed separately.

Tip: always ask for the most recent annual settlement statement (Betriebskostenabrechnung), not just the monthly figure mentioned verbally: the monthly instalment is often just an estimate, and you could face an additional payment at year end if it was set too low. To compare different properties, work out the cost per square metre, not just the total.

This checklist helps you avoid overlooking anything important when viewing a property. Questions about financing your next property? Feel free to reach out. Contact details above.