

SECRETS OF THE HOME INSPECTION BUSINESS

A GUIDE TO ACHIEVING YOUR GOALS



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Home inspection is a niche market, but just like the old expression “[There’s more than one way to skin a cat](#),” there is more than one way to be a successful home inspector.

Though home inspectors are free to set up their businesses as they see fit, there are certain fundamental steps which should not be skipped if you want to be successful as a home inspector. Here are some secrets of the home inspection business.

Get the Proper Training

Whether you are a licensed contractor with a strong background in the building trades or you are the Mr. Fixit of the neighborhood, real estate agents want to see reputable credentials specific to home inspection before they refer business your way.

The way to get those credentials is through the right training school. Throughout your research, you have probably encountered two different types of training schools.



The first type is the school that “specializes” in home inspection. They tell you that you must pay thousands or more for their course because that is the only way you will ever be successful. They tell you that your background doesn’t mean anything unless you take their courses. Then, they teach you nothing but the basics and expect you to spend hundreds or even thousands of dollars later on for software and training for things like mold, radon, and commercial inspections.

The other type of school is one that doesn’t specialize in home inspection but has a relatively inexpensive course that will teach you the bare basics and nothing more. This type of school often offers training in everything from becoming a paralegal to massage therapy and everything in between. Home inspection may just be one of fifty types of training they offer.

Here’s the truth: Neither of these types of schools is ideal for someone entering the home inspection business. Why?

You can get your home inspection certification online, but be sure you choose the right school!

First of all, your background and experiences do count. You don’t need to spend \$3,000 or more on training to get into the home inspection business, especially if you are already familiar with most home components.

What you do need, though, is proper training credentials from a school that specializes in home inspection and is state-approved.

Enter the third, and best, option, Inspection Certification Associates.

At ICA, we offer a comprehensive Real Estate Inspection Certification Program, which covers all aspects of the industry including, commercial inspection, mold inspection, radon detection, and even code inspection for an affordable one time price. Since a typical home inspection pays \$400, less than two home inspections will cover the complete cost of your training! When you finish our course, you will be an ICA Certified Home and Commercial Property Inspector, and you will be ready to begin building your business.

Build Success One Relationship at a Time

When you start your inspection business, you will need to build relationships with real estate agents and mortgage lenders in your area. With the proper training and credentials, you will be able to confidently walk into a real estate agent’s office and introduce yourself. Of course, you will want to look professional, act professional, and build a good rapport with agents so that when they have a client who needs a home inspection, the real estate agent will give his or her client your phone number so that you can perform the inspection.

Building a relationship with real estate agents in your area will help you to be successful.

In addition to stopping in at your local real estate offices, you will want to stop in at the banks and mortgage lending offices in your area. Why? Lenders also refer home inspectors to prospective buyers, and you want to make sure that you're the one they refer!

Bonus Tip:

Here's another great but often overlooked reason to make a good impression on banks. There are plenty of foreclosures on the market that need to be inspected. Banks will often pay for a pre-listing inspection, where a home inspector goes through and does a full inspection before the bank puts the property on the market. This way the bank has the opportunity to fix any major defects before putting the home on the market and get a better price.

Now, here are two questions you may be wondering.



Why would an agent refer me, a new home inspector, to their client? Don't they already have someone they use?

Here's what you need to remember to be successful in building relationships with real estate agents: Most real estate agents do have inspectors that they refer to clients, but that doesn't mean they're 100% happy with their current inspectors. Real estate agents welcome new home inspectors for two main reasons: professionalism and availability.

Professionalism:

There are plenty of home inspectors out there who don't present themselves in a professional manner or who come across as alarmists during inspections. Smart real estate agents are always on the lookout for someone who embodies professionalism and helps the inspection process go more smoothly.

Let them know you will show up on time. You will report all the defects you are supposed to report, but you will not be over the top. You will not be an alarmist, and you will not be a deal killer. This is how you will sell yourself and make you become the inspector of every real estate agent's dreams.

Availability:

The other issue is availability. When a prospective buyer makes an offer on a property, both the buyer and the real estate agent want that inspection to take place as quickly as possible. Rather than waiting five or six days for an opening in "Inspector A's," schedule, many times real estate agents will reach out to you to perform the inspection tomorrow, even if you are new to home inspections!

Bonus Tip:

When you first start your business, you might even tell real estate agents that you can guarantee an inspection within 24-48 hours. Real estate agents appreciate this because time is of the essence. Every day that goes by before the inspection is an opportunity for the deal to fall through, and no real estate agent wants to see that happen!

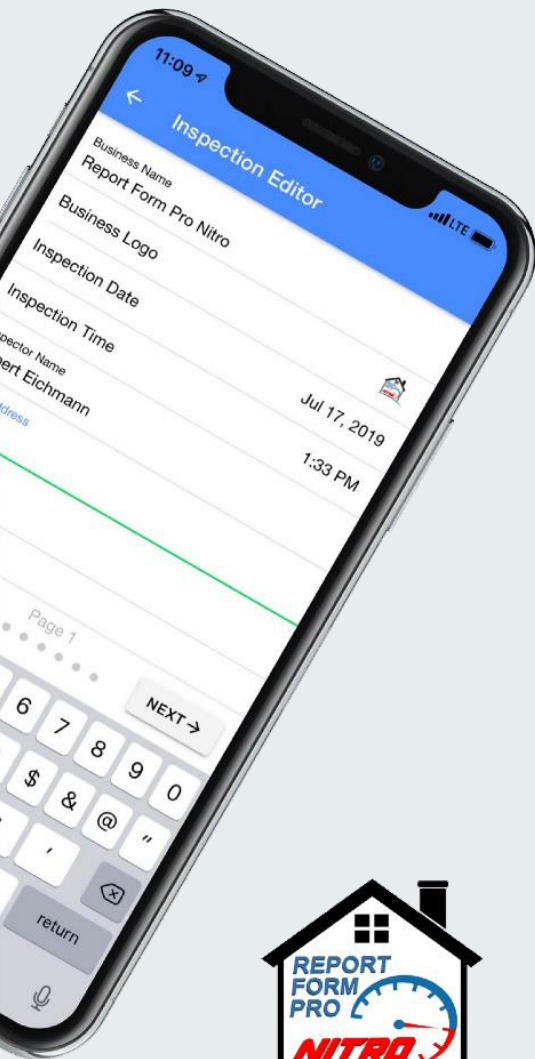


Have The Essential Tools

Now that you know about the type of training to choose and the way to build a network to grow your business, there are a few other tips we'd like to share regarding the tools you will need.

Home Inspection Reporting Tools

We have partnered with www.homeinspectionform.com to provide ICA students with a free copy of their reporting software package – unlimited access with no fees!



Report Form Pro **NITRO**

This report can be used as a mobile app on your Android or iOS device. You'll even get a version that can be printed and filled out by hand in the field if that is your preference.

The software normally sells for \$399, but as an ICA student, you will get it free. (Yes, that means no fees whatsoever!) The report also comes with a pre-inspection agreement template for you to use with your clients. It is recommended that you have your attorney to review the pre-inspection agreement before using it, but that is entirely up to you.

Of course, Report Form Pro NITRO is not the only report option for home inspectors, so don't feel that you have to use the Report Form Pro template. That is your choice. At the end of the day, you will want to have a report that is easy for you to use, that's all that matters.

That said, most ICA students start with the Report Form Pro word version. Why? They like that they can either print it and fill it out by hand, or check the boxes and add in photos on their computer or mobile device. If you have a smartphone or tablet, you will want to download the pro-software so you can easily create, edit, and deliver professional inspection reports onsite with [Report Form Pro NITRO](#).





Home Inspection Tools

The legally defined scope of the home inspection is “visual and non- intrusive.” That means, truth be told, there are very few tools you need to perform a home inspection. Most of them are relatively inexpensive, and some of them you probably already have.

You will need: a ladder, flashlights, outlet testers, & a smartphone to get started. There are more complex tools you can pick up along the way as you build and grow your business. We go into this in detail for all students.



Marketing Tools and Materials

Your success as a home inspector will mainly be dictated by your ability to build relationships with real estate agents who can refer their clients to you. However, there are some marketing materials that you should purchase.

You should have professional business cards printed, which are very inexpensive if you go through an online printer like www.vistaprint.com. You should also consider a company website. Don't worry, though. Your website does not need to be elaborate. Just having a web presence will make you seem more established in the eyes of real estate agents and clients. Companies like www.web.com will actually build your website for free and just charge you a low monthly fee to maintain it. In this way, you can keep your startup costs as low as possible



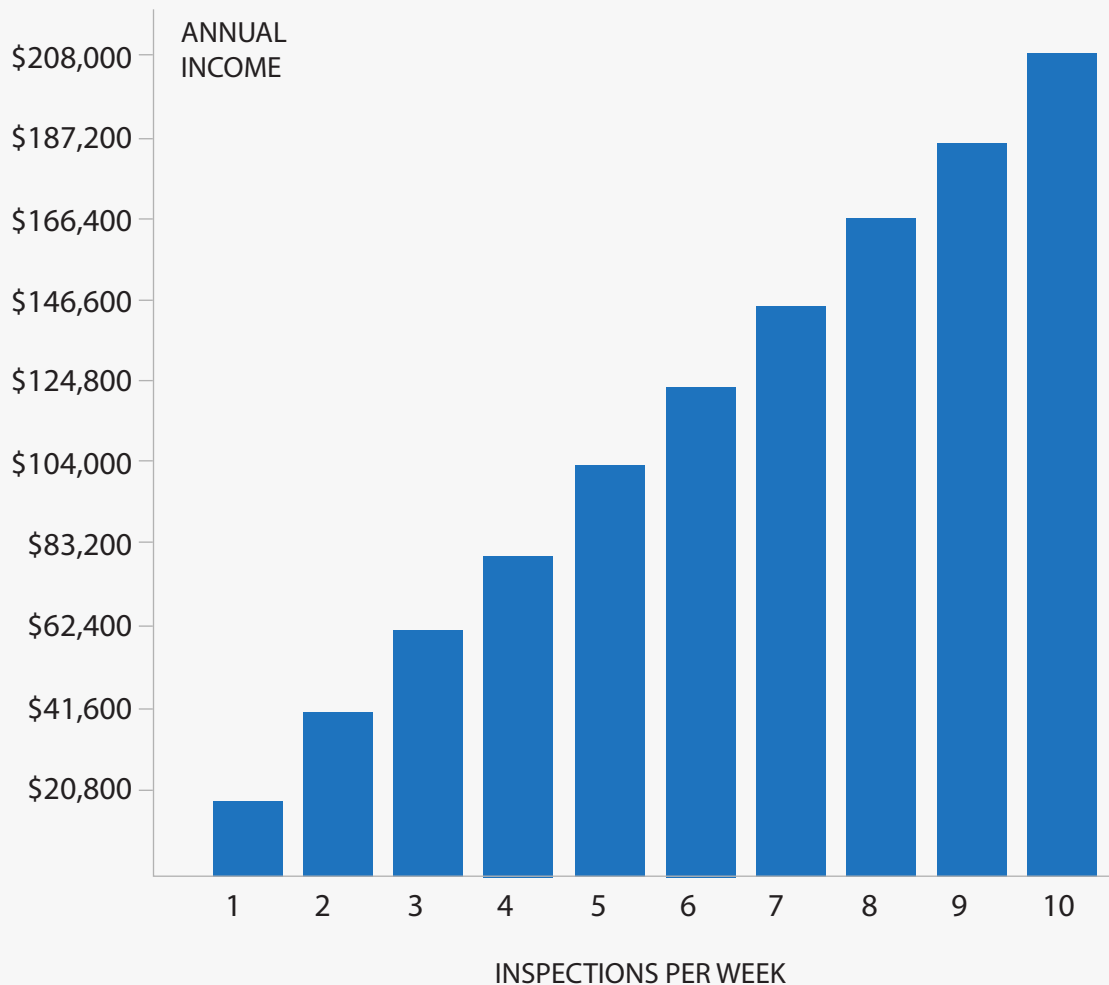
Set Up Your Business

There are a number of different ways you can set up your business. You can run it as a sole proprietorship, an LLC, or an S-Corp.

Most home inspectors run their business as an LLC or limited liability company. This means that the business' liability is separate from your personal liability. This is a good way to protect yourself financially in case someone attempts to bring legal action against your business for some reason. This is very rare in the home inspection business, but it is best to be prepared for any circumstance. Using a service such as www.legalzoom.com or www.llc.com you can set up your LLC for as little as \$99 online in a matter of minutes.

How much money can a Home Inspector earn per year?

The typical home inspection fee is \$400 for an average home. The graph below illustrates the annual income for a home inspector based on the number of inspections performed per week.



Based on typical \$400 fee for an average sized home (2 hours on site)

The ICA Difference

These are the types of things you will learn in ICA's Real Estate Inspection Certification Program. We're not just going to teach you how to perform inspections. We will teach you how to market yourself, how to sell your services, and how to successfully build your business from day one.

We will teach you how to stop by open houses and network with the agents and with the prospective buyers who are attending the open house. We will teach you how to target buyers in your area with direct marketing efforts. For instance, if you see a "For Sale" sign in the front yard of a home, chances are that the owners are planning on buying another home. This is the perfect opportunity to introduce yourself.

At ICA, we have a proven system for success, and we'll provide you with all the knowledge and support you need to succeed in the inspection industry.

Home inspection is a numbers game. What does that mean? It means that if you visit with ten real estate agents in your area, five of them might tell you that they're happy with the inspector they currently use and they are not interested in your services. Three of them will probably tell you that they'll keep your card on file and perhaps use your services down the road. The other two might say, "That's great! I'm so happy you are in the area! I don't like any of the other inspectors I've worked with and I will call you the next time a client of mine needs an inspection!"

That's business. Don't be frustrated by the five that might not use your services. Focus on the two that will.

As for the three agents that said maybe, keep following up with them. Send them emails and drop off doughnuts at their office once in a while.

All it takes is for one or two agents to use your services. If you do a great job, word spreads among other agents. That is how you grow in this industry.

The best news is that, if you're an ICA graduate, we'll be right there supporting you every step of the way as you build your business!



About Inspection Certification Associates (ICA)

Our mission is to provide hassle-free, cost-effective education to obtain or maintain your home inspection license. We are dedicated to providing an industry-leading educational experience that rivals all others.

We are passionate about helping our students get prepared for a successful career as a home inspector.

That's why our motto is... Best Training, Best Service, and Best Value!

Some of the benefits of choosing ICA include:

- Over 125 years of combined instructor experience
- Career-long coaching and mentoring
- Complete the program at your own pace
- Online courses are compatible with any device
- Free one month InterNACHI membership
- No hidden fees!

ICA's Most Popular Bonus Courses



 Well Inspection	 Thermal Imaging	 Radon	 Septic Inspection
 Mold Certification	 Led Based Paint	 Pool & Spa	 Commercial
 Multi-Inspector Business	 Asbestos Inspection	 Irrigation and Sprinkler Systems	 Wood Destroying Organisms

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To enroll call (888) 374-4096 or visit www.icaschool.com