



## Internal Snagging Guide

A practical homeowner guide to common internal issues in new-build homes - what to look for, why it matters, and how to record it clearly.

### How to use this guide

Walk through your home room-by-room and take your time. Many internal snags are easier to identify in daylight, particularly paint finishes, plasterwork and alignment issues.

Stand back and look at finishes from normal viewing distances rather than inspecting from only a few centimetres away. New homes are not expected to be perfect, but workmanship should appear consistent and reasonable.

Take clear photos of anything that stands out and note the location. For example, “Living room — wall beside patio doors” is much more helpful than simply “living room wall”.

SnagClear helps you turn those observations into a structured, professional-style report that you can share more clearly with your developer.

### What this guide covers

- Walls and paint finishes
- Ceilings and plasterwork
- Internal doors and joinery
- Windows and internal trims
- Flooring and levels
- Skirting boards and woodwork
- Kitchen fittings and finishes
- Bathrooms and sanitaryware
- Electrical fixtures and fittings
- Heating and ventilation

This guide is for homeowner use. It does not replace a surveyor or specialist inspection, but it will help you check the most common internal snagging points in a clear and organised way.

## 1. Walls and Paint Finishes

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Walls are one of the most visible areas inside a home and one of the most common sources of snagging issues. Look at the finish in daylight where possible and from normal viewing distances.

### Uneven paint finish

- Roller marks or brush marks visible in daylight
- Patchy or thin paint coverage
- Visible differences in paint sheen or texture
- Areas that appear dull or inconsistent

**Why it matters:** uneven finishes can be noticeable once furniture is in place and may suggest rushed workmanship.

### Visible filler and surface preparation issues

- Visible filler patches showing through paint
- Poorly sanded areas creating rough patches
- Small dents or surface imperfections
- Visible plasterboard joints

**Why it matters:** poor preparation can lead to finishes that remain visible even after decorating.

### Cracking to walls

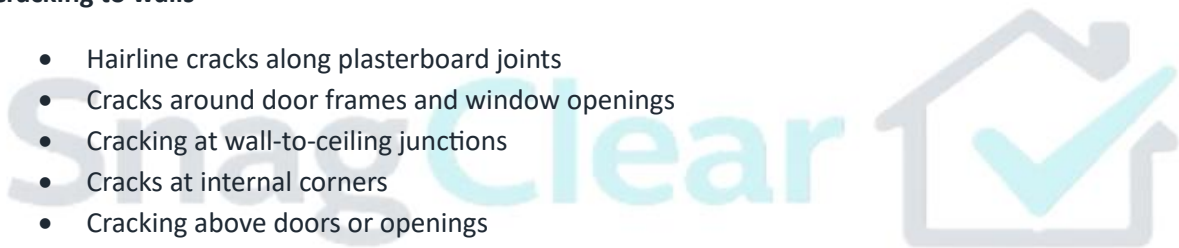
- Hairline cracks along plasterboard joints
- Cracks around door frames and window openings
- Cracking at wall-to-ceiling junctions
- Cracks at internal corners
- Cracking above doors or openings

**Helpful note:** Minor hairline cracking is common in new build homes as materials dry out and the building settles. These are often cosmetic and may be addressed during routine defect periods.

However, you should record:

- Cracks wider than hairline thickness
- Cracks that continue to grow over time
- Multiple cracks in the same area
- Cracks in prominent or decorated areas
- Cracks accompanied by movement, gaps, or uneven surfaces

Recording cracking early helps track whether it is improving, stabilising, or worsening over time.



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### SnagClear tip

When recording wall defects, describe what you can actually see. For example: "Paint finish to bedroom wall appears patchy beneath window with visible roller marks in daylight."

## 2. Ceiling and Plaster finished

Ceilings should generally appear smooth and evenly finished. Stand back and check surfaces in daylight where possible.

### Cracks and plasterboard joints

- Hairline cracks along plasterboard joints
- Cracks near corners or around fittings
- Visible joint lines

**Why it matters:** small cracks are common during settlement, but more noticeable cracking may require attention.

### Uneven ceiling finish

- Uneven surfaces or rippling
- Poor paint finish
- Visible screw or fixing marks
- Poor finishing around fittings
- Rough finishing around light fittings
- Uneven edges around ceiling fixtures
- Paint splashes or poor cutting-in

### SnagClear tip

Not all new build homes are fully plastered. Many modern developments use a taped and jointed finish, where plasterboard joints are taped and filled with jointing compound to create a smooth surface. This is a common construction method, but the finish should still appear consistent and well-prepared. If you are unsure which finish has been used in your home, you can ask your developer.

## 3. Internal Doors and Joinery

Internal doors should open and close smoothly, sit squarely within their frames, and appear consistently aligned. Poor alignment is a common snag in new build homes and is often straightforward to adjust if identified early.

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## Door alignment

- Doors rubbing against frames, flooring, or carpets
- Uneven gaps around door edges (larger on one side or at the top)
- Doors that do not latch properly or require force to close
- Doors that swing open or closed on their own (may indicate the frame is not level)
- Doors that appear twisted, bowed, or not sitting flush in the frame
- Hinges that appear strained, misaligned, or poorly installed

### SnagClear tip

Example description:

“Bedroom door rubbing slightly at top corner and uneven gap visible along hinge side.”

## Door Operation

- Stiff or difficult door operation
- Handles that feel loose or poorly fitted
- Latches that do not engage smoothly
- Doors that catch on flooring transitions or thresholds
- Soft-close mechanisms (where fitted) not working correctly

## Frames and Finishing

- Gaps between door frames and walls
- Poor finishing or filler around frames
- Marks, dents, or damage to frames
- Uneven or poorly finished architraves (decorative trim around doors)

**Why it matters:** Poorly aligned doors can become more noticeable as the building dries and settles. Identifying these issues early allows adjustments to be made before finishes are completed or flooring settles further.

## Door finishes

- Scratches, dents, or chips to door surfaces
- Poor paint or varnish finish (e.g. visible brush marks, patchy coverage, rough texture)
- Marks, scuffs, or damage to door frames and architraves
- Inconsistent finish between doors within the same area
- Damage to door edges, particularly at top and bottom corners

## Handles and hardware

- Loose door handles or handles that move when operated
- Loose hinges or visible gaps between hinge and frame
- Doors that drop, rub, or do not close smoothly
- Misaligned latch plates or difficulty engaging the latch
- Screws missing, loose, or not fully installed

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- Handles or hardware with scratches, marks, or damage

**Helpful guidance:** Doors in new build homes should open and close smoothly, sit square within the frame, and have a consistent finish. Any damage, looseness, or poor alignment is worth recording, particularly as these issues are usually straightforward for the developer to rectify.

## 4. Windows and Internal Trims

Internal window finishes should appear neat, secure, and consistent with surrounding wall finishes.

### Window frames and trims

- Scratches, marks, or damage to window frames
- Poorly fitted or uneven trims
- Gaps between trim and wall finishes
- Rough or untidy paintwork around frames
- Visible filler or unfinished joints to trims
- Trims that appear loose or not securely fixed

### Sealant

- Messy or uneven sealant lines
- Gaps or missing sealant between frame and wall
- Cracked or poorly finished sealant
- Excess sealant left on frames or surrounding finishes

**Why it matters:** Poor finishing around windows can affect the overall appearance of the room and, in some cases, may contribute to draughts or reduced air tightness. Recording these issues early helps ensure they are addressed as part of the developer's finishing works.

## 5. Flooring and Levels

Check flooring carefully by walking slowly across the room and paying attention to how the floor feels underfoot.

### Uneven floors

- Noticeable slopes or uneven areas
- Movement or bounce underfoot
- Creaking or squeaking when walked on
- High or low spots within the floor
- Changes in level between areas of the same room

### Gaps and finishes

- Gaps between flooring and skirting boards
- Poorly finished edges around the perimeter of the room
- Inconsistent or uneven floor levels at doorways
- Poor transitions between different floor finishes (e.g. carpet to vinyl)
- Damaged, marked, or poorly fitted flooring
- Loose flooring or areas that feel unstable

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**Why it matters:** Uneven or poorly finished flooring can become more noticeable once furniture is installed and rooms are in regular use. Recording these issues early helps ensure they are addressed before they become more difficult to rectify.

## 6. Skirting Boards and Woodwork

Skirting boards and joinery should appear straight, securely fixed, and consistently finished throughout the room.

### Jointing and alignment

- Gaps at joints between skirting lengths
- Poorly aligned or uneven corner joints
- Uneven skirting heights along walls
- Visible gaps between skirting and wall or floor
- Skirting boards that appear bowed or not sitting flush

### Finishing

- Poor paint finish (e.g. brush marks, patchy coverage, rough texture)
- Visible filler at joints or fixing points
- Marks, dents, or damage to skirting boards
- Loose skirting boards or movement when lightly pressed
- Inconsistent finish compared to other areas of the home

**Why it matters:** Skirting boards are a prominent finishing detail, and poor alignment or finishing can affect the overall appearance of the room. Loose or poorly fitted skirting may also lead to gaps opening over time, making early recording worthwhile.

## 7. Kitchen Fittings and Finishes

Kitchens contain multiple fitted elements and should be checked carefully for both finish and functionality.

### Cabinets

- Misaligned cupboard doors or drawers
- Uneven gaps between doors or drawer fronts
- Doors or drawers that do not open or close smoothly
- Loose hinges or handles
- Soft-close mechanisms not working properly
- Scratches, dents, or marks to cabinet doors or drawer fronts

### Worktops

- Scratches, chips, or damage to worktop surfaces
- Poorly finished or uneven joints between worktop sections
- Gaps between worktop and wall
- Messy, uneven, or missing sealant at edges and joints
- Worktops that appear uneven or not level
- Damage around sink or hob cut-outs

### Units and panels

- Loose base or wall units

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- Gaps between units or between units and walls
  - Poorly fitted or unfinished end panels
  - Visible filler or rough finishing to panels
  - Units not sitting flush against walls or floors

#### **Under-Sink Pipework and Internal Areas**

- Exposed pipework not neatly installed
- Loose or poorly supported pipework
- Gaps around pipe penetrations into cabinets
- Missing or poorly cut service holes
- Signs of leaks, moisture, or staining within cabinets
- Waste pipes or traps not securely connected
- Limited access to isolation valves (where provided)

**Why it matters:** Kitchen defects can affect both appearance and day-to-day usability. Recording issues early helps ensure finishing items, adjustments, and any installation concerns are addressed before the kitchen is heavily used.

## **8. Bathrooms and Sanitaryware**

Bathrooms contain multiple finishes and plumbing elements that should be checked carefully, particularly around wet areas.

#### **Sealant**

- Poor silicone application or uneven bead lines
- Gaps in sealant around baths, showers, or basins
- Messy or excessive sealant application
- Sealant not properly bonded to surfaces
- Missing sealant in corners or joints
- Sealant already splitting or pulling away

#### **Tiling**

- Uneven tile alignment or inconsistent spacing
- Poor grout finish or patchy grout lines
- Loose or hollow-sounding tiles
- Damaged, chipped, or scratched tiles
- Uneven tile cuts around fixtures or corners
- Inconsistent grout colour or finishing

#### **Sanitaryware**

- Scratches, chips, or marks to baths, basins, or shower trays
- Loose basins, toilets, or baths
- Poor alignment of fittings or fixtures
- Movement when gently pressed
- Poor finishing where sanitaryware meets walls or floors

#### **Plumbing and Pipework**

- Exposed pipework not neatly installed
- Loose or unsupported pipework
- Gaps around pipe penetrations

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- Poor finishing around boxed-in pipework
  - Signs of leaks, moisture, or staining
  - Waste pipes not properly aligned or supported
  - Isolation valves missing or difficult to access (where provided)
  - Under-basin pipework poorly finished or loosely installed

**Why it matters:** Bathrooms are high moisture environments. Poor sealing, tiling, or plumbing installation can lead to water ingress, damage to finishes, and potential issues developing over time. Recording concerns early helps ensure defects are addressed before regular use.

## 9. Electrical Fixtures and Fittings

Electrical fixtures should appear securely installed, neatly finished, and consistently aligned throughout the room.

### Safety Note:

Do not remove covers or attempt to test electrical installations yourself. If something appears loose, damaged, or unsafe, record the issue and raise it with your developer.

#### Sockets and switches

- Crooked or poorly aligned switches and sockets
- Loose socket or switch plates (movement when lightly pressed)
- Gaps between faceplates and wall finishes
- Damaged or scratched faceplates
- Uneven heights between switches or sockets in the same area
- Poor cutting or rough plastering around electrical fittings

#### Lighting

- Poorly fitted ceiling lights or pendants
- Gaps around light fittings or ceiling roses
- Crooked or misaligned fittings
- Loose fittings or movement when lightly touched
- Marks or damage around lighting installations
- Poor finishing where fittings meet ceilings or walls

#### Other Electrical Fixtures

- Extractor fans not sitting flush with ceilings or walls
- Doorbells, thermostats, or control panels poorly aligned
- Loose or poorly fitted smoke or heat detectors
- Poor finishing around fitted electrical accessories

**Why it matters:** Electrical fixtures are used daily and should feel secure and properly installed. Poor alignment or loose fittings may indicate rushed finishing work and should be recorded so they can be safely corrected.

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## 10. Heating and Ventilation

Heating and ventilation elements should be securely installed, neatly finished, and functioning as expected. These systems are important for comfort, airflow, and moisture control within your home.

### Radiators

- Radiators not level or sitting unevenly on the wall
- Loose radiator brackets or movement when lightly touched
- Radiators not sitting flush against the wall
- Scratches, dents, or damage to radiator surfaces
- Poor finishing around pipe penetrations through walls or floors
- Visible gaps around pipework
- Radiator valves that appear loose or poorly aligned
- Missing or poorly fitted pipe covers (where provided)

### Pipework and Valves

- Exposed pipework that appears poorly installed or loosely fixed
- Pipework not neatly aligned
- Rough or unfinished holes where pipes pass through floors or walls
- Poorly fitted boxing around pipework
- Signs of leaks, moisture, or staining around valves or connections

### Ventilation

- Loose or poorly fitted air vents
- Extractor fan covers not sitting flush
- Crooked or poorly aligned vents
- Blocked or obstructed vents
- Missing vent covers or trims
- Poor finishing around ventilation openings

### Extractor Fans

- Extractor fans not securely fitted
- Excessive gaps around fan housings
- Noisy or loose fan covers (when operating)
- Poor finishing around installed fans

**Why it matters:** Heating and ventilation systems help regulate temperature and moisture within your home. Poor installation or finishing may affect performance, comfort, and long-term durability, so it is worth recording any concerns early.

#### Use SnagClear with this guide

As you work through the outside of the property, use SnagClear to photograph each issue, note the exact location, and keep everything organised room-by-room or area-by-area. You can then generate a structured, professional-style report to communicate your observations more clearly.

## Glossary of helpful terms

Term	Meaning
Settlement	Natural movement that occurs as a new home dries out and materials adjust. This can sometimes result in minor cracking, particularly around plasterboard joints, corners, and door frames. Minor hairline cracks are common, but larger or widening cracks should be recorded.
Tolerance	An acceptable level of variation in construction work. Not all elements will be perfectly uniform, but finishes should still appear neat and consistent when viewed under normal lighting conditions.
Sealant (Silicone)	A flexible material used around baths, showers, sinks, windows, and other joints to prevent water ingress and movement cracking. Poor sealant application can lead to water damage over time.
Snag	A minor defect or finishing issue identified after construction. Snags typically relate to finishing quality, alignment, or minor installation issues rather than major structural concerns.
Plasterboard joint	The join between plasterboard sheets, usually taped and filled to create a smooth surface. These areas are commonly where minor settlement cracking may occur.
Cutting-in	The neat line where paint meets another surface such as ceilings, skirting boards, or window frames. Poor cutting-in may appear uneven, wavy, or messy.
TRV (Thermostatic Radiator Valve)	A valve fitted to radiators that controls the temperature of individual rooms. TRVs should feel secure, operate smoothly, and not appear loose or poorly fitted.
Isolation Valve	A small valve fitted to pipework that allows water to be turned off locally, often found: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under sinks</li> <li>• Behind toilets</li> <li>• Near appliances (dishwashers/washing machines)</li> </ul> These should be accessible and securely installed.
Waste Pipe	Pipework that carries used water away from sinks, basins, baths, and appliances. Waste pipes should appear neatly installed, properly aligned, and securely fixed.
SVP (Soil Vent Pipe)	A vertical pipe that carries waste from toilets and allows air to circulate within the drainage system. Typically found externally, but sometimes boxed internally.
Plinth	The removable board at the bottom of kitchen units that hides legs and creates a finished appearance.
Cornice	Decorative trim fitted at the top of kitchen wall units to provide a finished appearance.
Boxing-In	Enclosures built around pipework or services to hide them from view. These should appear neat, secure, and properly finished.

