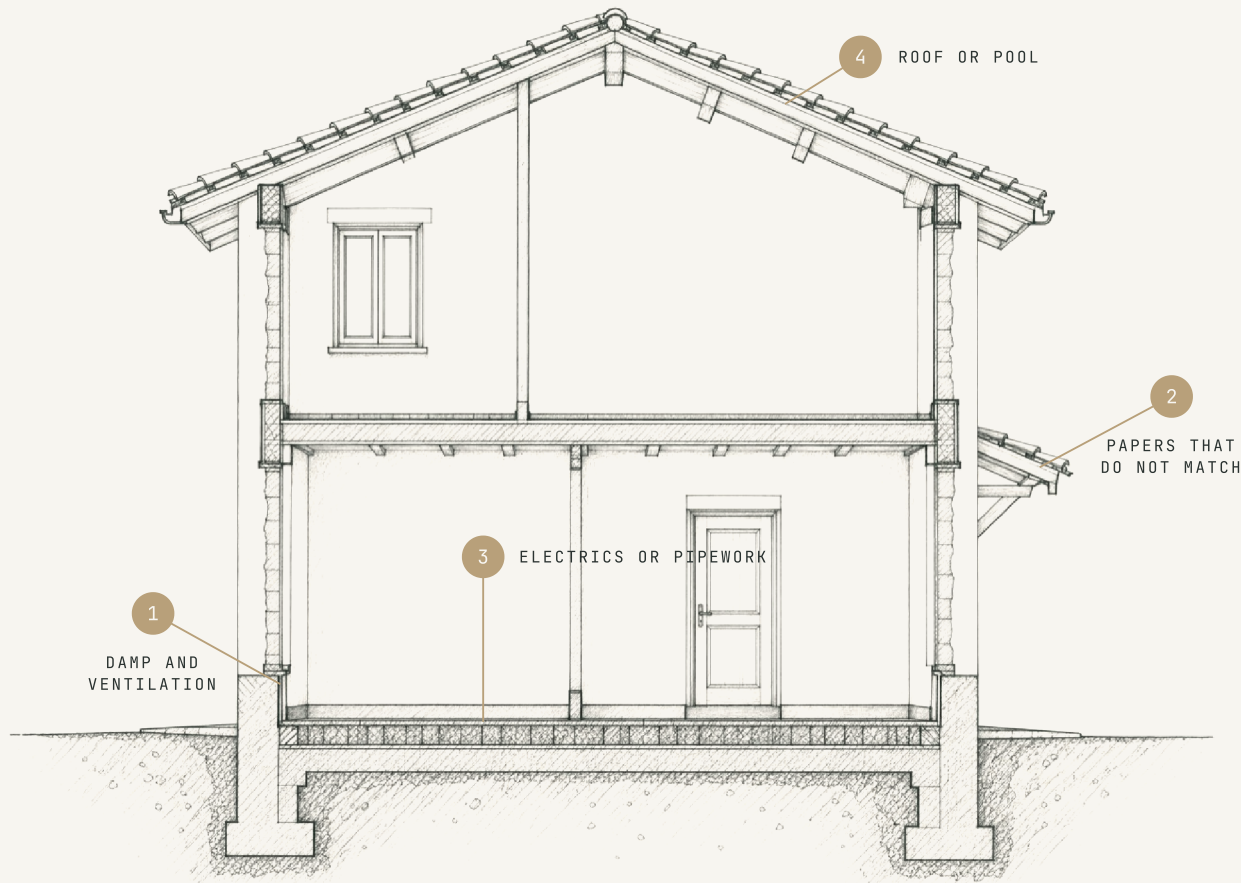


The building survey

We do 50 surveys a year. What comes out most often is damp, not cracks.



What a survey finds most often, in order. TREE's own figures, 17 September 2026.

WHAT IS INSIDE

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SURVEYS PER YEAR

50

PROPERTY IN MIND

€800

SEARCHING ONLY WITH US

included

After the reservation, before the purchase is final

By then the property is off the market, but the purchase is not yet final. Anything that comes to light can still be raised when you talk about the price.



WHAT IT COSTS

YOUR SITUATION	WHO PAYS	SURVEY
You already have a property in mind	You, as the buyer	€800
You search only with us	No one, it is included	€0

Fixed fee, TREE's own figures. The seller pays the agency fee, as is usual in Spain.

WHY YOU PAY FOR THE SURVEY YOURSELF

Our building surveyor is on our payroll and has no stake in any particular sale. When you pay for the survey, he works for you and for no one else.

AND IF YOU SEARCH ONLY WITH US

Then we are paid on the property you actually buy, not on the first one that comes along.

WHAT YOU GET BACK

1 A report

Written, with photographs and a conclusion. In English, translated on request.

2 An order of magnitude

For each finding, an estimate of what putting it right would cost, so you know the figure.

3 A signature

A signed statement from the building surveyor, with qualifications and years of experience.

NOT THE SAME AS THE STATUTORY BUILDING REPORT

If a property is more than 50 years old, the owner must have a statutory report on the condition of the building: the Informe de Evaluación del Edificio. That is an obligation on the owner, not a pre-purchase survey.

WHAT THE LAW REQUIRES

The report is valid for 10 years. Not having one counts as a planning infringement.

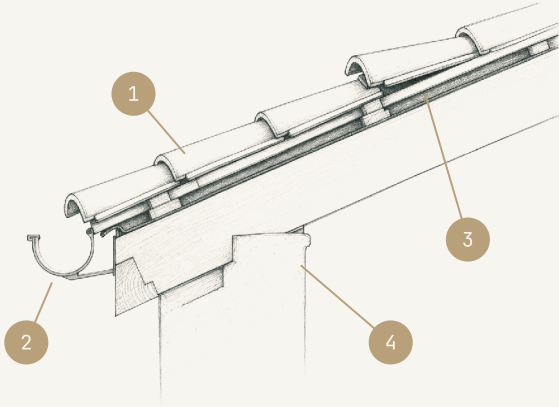
WHAT YOU DO WITH IT

For an older property, ask whether one exists. It does not replace our survey, and our survey does not replace it.

What happens to the reservation if the survey goes badly differs from seller to seller. Check what you agree to before you reserve.

Eight parts, from the eaves to the pool

A survey works through the house systematically. The roof shows how: the tiles, and everything the water runs over after them.



1	Tiles: broken, slipped, loose
2	Gutter and downpipe: where does the water go
3	Underlay: the layer that keeps the water out
4	Where the roof rests on the wall: damp, cracks

THE EIGHT PARTS

PART	WHAT WE LOOK AT
Walls, facade, ceilings	Finish, cracks, damp
Roof structure	Tiles, waterproofing
Windows and doors	Alignment, glazing, fittings
Plumbing	Pressure, leaks, hot water
Drainage	Flow, septic tank
Electrics	Standards, fuse board, capacity
Swimming pool	Structure, pump, filter cycle
Other	Terraces, air conditioning

And alongside the condition of the house: whether the building matches what is registered. An extension that is not on the papers only shows up when you put the two side by side.

THE FIVE LEVELS

A report that lumps every finding together reads as one big warning. That is why each finding gets a level.

1	Immediate safety risk	Act now, before use	ON THE TABLE
2	Urgent repair needed	Factor into the price, or have it repaired before completion	
3	Repair in due course	Plan and budget for it, no rush	
4	Routine maintenance	Part of owning the house, a yearly cost	
5	Further investigation needed	No verdict yet, measure first	

HOW TO USE IT

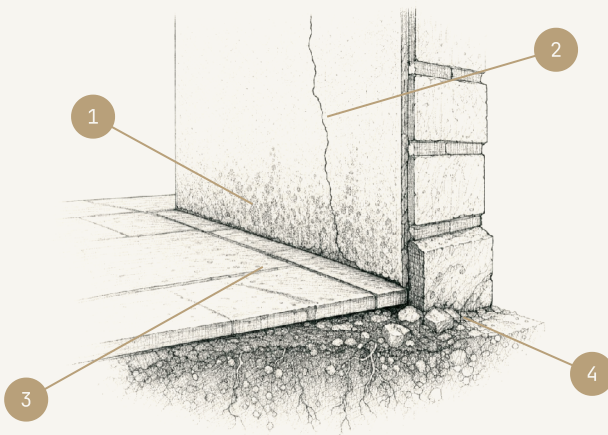
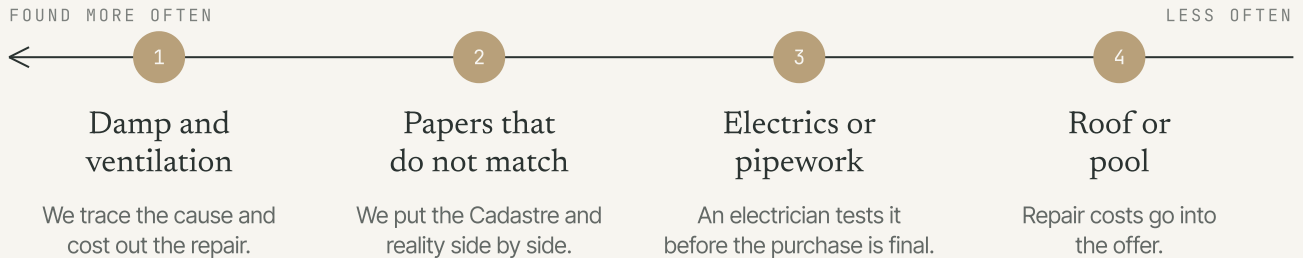
Levels 1 to 3 are the price discussion. Level 4 is the budget for the first few years. Level 5 is the question you want answered before the purchase is final, not after.

WHY LEVEL 5 IS HONEST

A survey is mainly visual. Hidden defects cannot be ruled out, and keeping quiet about that helps no one.

It is almost never about the foundations

Anyone opening a survey report for the first time expects cracks. Across 50 surveys a year the order comes out differently.



DAMP AT THE BASE OF THE WALL

1	Damp patches low on the wall: rising damp or condensation
2	Crack in the plaster: often where the damp is
3	Where terrace meets wall: water with nowhere to go
4	Soil against the wall: higher outside than inside

A house that stays shut for months with the shutters down does not dry out. Where the ground outside sits higher than the floor and there is no drainage around it, rooms built against the ground take damp from both sides.

2 Papers An extension built without a building licence, or a difference between the Cadastre and reality. More in guide 06 (The papers that must be right).	3 Electrics or pipework A fuse board that is no longer up to what is connected to it, or a leaking pipe behind the tiles.	4 Roof or pool Water getting in along the eaves, or a pool losing water through its structure or its pipes.
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FROM FINDING TO OFFER

Every finding gets a level and an order of magnitude. Levels 1 to 3 add up to one figure, and that figure is what you take into the price discussion. Without a number a finding stays an impression, and no one negotiates on that.

WHAT THE ORDER DOES NOT SAY

This is the order we come across them in, not how serious they are. Damp comes first and is often the cheapest to put right. Papers come second and usually cost the most time.

What looking alone cannot see

For some questions a look is not enough: they need a measurement, or a specialist. The survey shows where, and so what that investigation will cost before the purchase is final.

SUBJECT	WHY LOOKING IS NOT ENOUGH	WHAT IS NEEDED
Structural cracks and foundations	A crack does not show whether it is still moving	Monitoring over time, ground investigation
Hidden leaks and sewer pipes	Pipes run inside the floor or the wall	Camera inspection, pressure test
Electrical safety	A fuse board can look fine at a glance	Testing by an electrician
Gas installation and flues	Neither a leak nor the flue can be seen	Certified installer
Asbestos, radon, termites	Nothing visible gives them away	Sampling or measurement
Concrete corrosion and high-alumina cement	It happens inside the concrete	Material testing of the structure
Pool pipework	Underground or behind the pool wall	Pressure test of the pipework

YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION

before 2002

May contain asbestos cement: corrugated sheets, waste pipes, flues, water tanks. The ban, set out on 7 December 2001 and fully in force in 2002, covers production and sale, not what is already in a building. So intact material is not an offence and not a defect. It counts as soon as someone works on it: removal is a job for a specialist firm.

YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION

around 1950 to 1970

May contain prestressed precast floor beams made with high-alumina cement. That cement grows more porous over time, which can let the reinforcement corrode. It does not make a house uninhabitable, and there is often enough strength in reserve to renovate in the normal way. You cannot see it from outside: only testing the beam itself will tell you.

Year of construction is an indication, not a diagnosis. It tells the survey where to look harder.

THE COAST PLAYS ITS PART

Sea air speeds up corrosion, and reinforced concrete is where it costs most. Moisture and salt reach the steel. The steel expands as it rusts, and that pressure pushes the concrete off. That is why we go over terraces, balconies and pool edges separately here.

THE VISIBLE SIGN

Rust-brown streaks along a balcony edge are not a blemish. They are the only thing you see from outside of corrosion that is carrying on within. If it stays at the edges, repair is straightforward to cost.

6 things you can already see at a viewing

They do not replace a survey. They do tell you what to ask about.

NO.	WHAT YOU SEE	WHAT IT OFTEN POINTS TO
1	Mould in corners and behind cupboards	Too little ventilation, or damp from outside
2	Hollow-sounding or loose tiles	Damp behind the tiling
3	Flaking paint, or paint that looks suspiciously fresh	A patch that has been covered up, not fixed
4	A damp stain above a suspended ceiling	Usually a pipe
5	Rust-brown streaks along a balcony edge	Corroding reinforcement in the concrete
6	An extension, terrace or outbuilding that looks newer	The question of whether it is on the papers

A property in mind?

Then in 30 minutes we go through what is likely to come up with this property, and when the survey has to be booked so it is not too late.

[Book a call](#)

CALL

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EMAIL

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SUBJECT	SOURCE
Timing, fee and number of surveys	TREE's own figures, 17 September 2026
Order of the findings	TREE's own figures, 17 September 2026
Parts and five levels	Our own building surveyor's report structure and defect list
Statutory building report, properties over 50 years old	Generalitat Valenciana · Decreto 53/2018 · habitatge.gva.es
Asbestos cement	INSST, technical note 1006 (2014) · ban of 7 December 2001
High-alumina cement	Informes de la Construcción, journal of the Spanish building research institute, 44 (422), 1992

General information, not building advice on a specific property. This guide carries a reference date and is reviewed every quarter.

THE TREE GUIDES SERIES

01 Buying in Spain	02 What it costs	03 The building survey	04 Renovation and permits	05 Buying a plot and building on it
06 The papers that must be right	07 After the keys	08 Inheritance and wills	09 Renting out	10 Mortgages for non-residents