SNAGGING AND INSPECTIONS

Floors in new-build homes: movement, noise and damaged finishes

What a homeowner can observe and when a floor concern needs investigation

PART OF THE CHECKSURE HOMEOWNER KNOWLEDGE BASE

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General advice

The short answer: record excessive movement, persistent noise, damaged finishes, ridges, hollows and unsafe transitions. Some materials move during drying and seasonal change, but that does not explain every symptom. The finish, construction and applicable standard must be identified before applying a tolerance or recommending repair.

CheckSure's Homeowner Knowledge Base draws on practical experience of building, inspecting and resolving defects in new homes. Our aim is to explain what homeowners should reasonably expect, what may require further investigation and what steps they can take next.

Figure 1. A useful floor record identifies the symptom, location, conditions and type of finish.

Start with the visible finish

Inspect in ordinary light and from normal use positions. Record chips, scratches, staining, open joints, lifted edges and incomplete trims. Check the agreed specification: some finishes and thresholds are deliberate, while missing or loose transition strips can create damage or a trip concern.

Movement and noise

Walk normal accessible routes and note the exact location and conditions of pronounced movement, bounce, creaking or clicking. Occasional sound does not by itself identify a defect. Persistent local movement, worsening noise or a relationship with cracking and door distortion deserves investigation.

Levels and intentional slopes

A floor can be locally uneven without the whole room being out of level. Bathrooms, balconies, garages and other areas may have intended falls. Any measurement should use the method and tolerance that apply to that floor construction and finish; generic online figures should not be applied across timber floors, screeds and tiles.

Tiles and rigid finishes

- Cracked, chipped or loose-sounding areas.

- A noticeable raised edge where two tiles meet.
- Incomplete grout or perimeter movement joints.
- Poor interfaces at sanitaryware, thresholds and changes of finish.

Vinyl, laminate and timber finishes

- Lifted or curling edges, open joints and local swelling.
- Movement, hollow areas or separation during normal walking.
- Damage at doorways, radiator pipes and perimeter trims.
- Evidence of moisture that should be investigated before replacement.

Carpets and transitions

Look for damage, poor stretching, insecure edges and missing or loose threshold strips. Do not pull up fitted floor coverings during a non-invasive check. If the concern may sit below the finish, record the symptom and seek agreement before opening-up.

Before accepting a repair

Confirm that replacement pieces match reasonably, transitions are secure, doors still clear the finish and the original movement or noise has been retested. Keep evidence where work changes a larger area than the original defect.

Key takeaways

- Identify the construction and finish before applying tolerances.
- Record exact locations and conditions for movement or noise.
- Do not lift fitted finishes as part of a normal snagging check.
- Verify operation, appearance and safety after repair.

EXPLORE FURTHER Explore the CheckSure Homeowner Knowledge Base for related guidance on buying, inspecting and looking after a new home. Please visit checksure.co.uk/knowledge-base/

Sources & References

NHBC Standards — current technical standards landing page; the applicable edition depends on when the home's foundations were begun: https://www.nhbc.co.uk/technical/nhbc-standards

Need help with your new home?

Contact CheckSure for an independent assessment of your new home.

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