

Basement Finishing Prevention Checklist

Six questions to answer before framing starts

Before you call a contractor

1 Check foundation walls for staining or a musty smell

Walk the perimeter and look closely, including behind any existing storage, before assuming a wall is dry.

2 Measure ceiling height in more than one spot

Check under any beams or duct runs separately from the open middle of the room.

3 Note the location of the sump pit and floor drain

Mark them on a rough sketch of the space so they are accounted for when a layout is drawn.

4 Decide which rooms, if any, are meant as bedrooms

This decision affects whether egress needs to be part of the design conversation.

Questions for the design and layout stage

1 How will moisture be managed at the foundation wall

Ask what gap and vapour strategy is planned between framing and the concrete.

2 Where does the return air path go

Ask this before rooms are finalized, not after framing is complete.

3 How will the sump and drain stay accessible

Ask for a specific access point in the layout, not a general assurance.

4 What permits apply to this specific scope

Ask your contractor to confirm in writing which applications your project needs.

Before drywall closes the walls

1 Confirm egress window sizing has been checked

Do this before the opening is cut, not after.

2 Walk the rough-in with your contractor

Look at ductwork, plumbing, and electrical with the walls still open, while changes are still simple to make.

3 Photograph the open walls before they close

A record of what is behind the drywall is useful for years, not just during construction.

Answer these before framing starts and most call-backs never happen.

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