

Guide

# 5 Minute Guide to Standardized Building Inspections

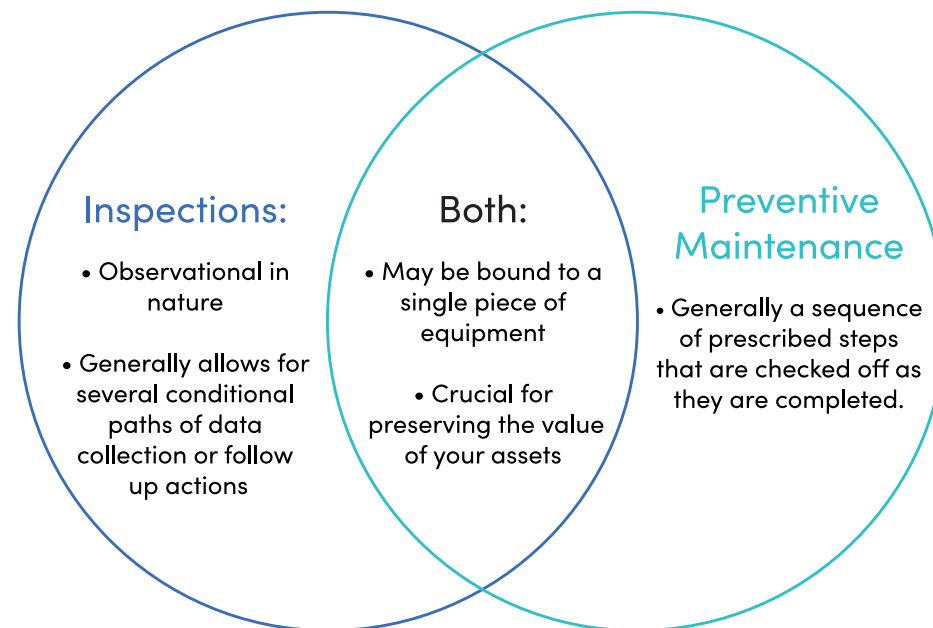
# Introduction

Since property managers today are being asked to operate on razor-thin margins, they can't afford to wait until something on their property breaks down to fix it. To prevent this "downtime" and keep your property running optimally, you need comprehensive insight into the condition of your building. This can only be accomplished by performing routine inspections of your buildings and grounds.

Traditionally, conducting inspections has been a highly manual, paper-based process. This makes it hard to keep organized and to find the data you need to monitor trends over time. The right building inspections software will make it easy to conduct regular, standardized inspections across multiple properties, and to quickly see if things are going downhill.

When done correctly, inspections give property managers insight into property performance, keep properties compliant with safety standards, and improve the tenant experience.

## Inspections vs. Preventive Maintenance Tasks



## Type of Inspections:

### 1. Proactive Inspections – General Conditions

These concern the general condition of your property. Aimed at identifying issues and correcting them before tenants are impacted. Inspection list includes vacant space, foundations, HVAC systems, grounds, roofs etc.

### 2. Proactive Inspections – Safety and Comfort

Evaluating properties and overall equipment health to ensure safe conditions in and around buildings as well as safe operating status of key equipment. Inspection list includes building security, fire and life safety, hazardous materials inspection, and OSHA inspections.

### 3. Reactive Inspections

Reactive inspections involve making sure that protocols are followed, and requests are fulfilled to ensure safety and comfort for all building occupants. Inspection list includes work performed post-tenant service requests.

## Why are regular inspections important?

Taking the time and resources to implement a formal inspections program can seem daunting. However, without a solid inspections program in place, your building is vulnerable to risk and chaos.

Monthly inspections keep properties from falling into disrepair and help to prevent costly, large-scale equipment breakdowns down the road. During a time in which tenant expectations for their buildings are rising rapidly, inspections help keep occupancy rates high while reducing overall operating costs.

As property managers know, there are many standards and regulations with which your building and equipment must comply. Assessing your building regularly against standards plays a significant role in shielding your property from legal and regulatory risk.

Furthermore, any successful inspections program will involve regular data collection. Having robust data that tracks repairs and related expenses makes it possible to manage operating costs more effectively. This data also allows owners to see what systems need to be replaced and where future problems may occur so that they can budget accordingly.



## Take action now

Are you ready to make your team more efficient and stay ahead of costly repairs? Here are six steps to standardize your building inspections:

1. Establish a schedule
2. Create a standardized inspection template
3. Set targets
4. Access full historical data
5. Mobilize your team
6. Automate reporting



**“Whether you own commercial or residential properties, regular inspections can ensure the care and safety of your valuable investment and help avoid unnecessary costs related to the failure of that care.”**

**— Timmi Ryerson, Forbes**

## Establish a schedule

Begin standardizing your inspections process by creating an initial equipment list in a digital format. This would include all manuals, warranty information, recommended maintenance, purchase costs and estimated useful life. Then, create a comprehensive inspections log to determine what should be done daily, weekly, etc. Continually update the inspection log to incorporate additional tasks that have popped up over time. A firm schedule makes sure that no assets fall through the cracks, and keep everyone on your team on the same page about what needs to be done and when.



## Create a standardized inspection template

Data collected during manual inspections can vary from day to day and from person to person. This makes it hard to monitor your property's progress and to identify erosion over time.

Having no standard inspection template also drastically increases the risk that equipment will be skipped over during inspections, leading to large-scale asset failure. To begin standardizing their inspection processes, property managers should create a standard inspections template.

Forgo time wasted on creating a manual template in Word or Excel, and use a building operations software to create templates quickly with a drag and drop builder.

Select from a variety of questions to be answered – in formats like checkboxes, dropdowns, and text responses, and save time coming up with these questions on your own. Require that responses include photos for greater detail, via standard smartphone features.

Property teams can then use this template across every property at every inspection, so they get the same data every time to track performance and monitor trends.



## Set Performance Targets

The right inspections software will give you the ability to score each inspection to evaluate performance against set targets. If an area falls below benchmarks, you need to be able to automate escalations, notifications and task creation to remedy the issue quickly. This addresses asset failure before it impacts the tenant experience. You can also set targets for specific team members to gain a better understanding of who is performing well and who isn't.

By setting and tracking performance against targets, you can see how your building is performing against prior years in order to make key operating decisions.



## Access full historical data

To truly understand an asset's value, property teams need access to its full service history. Upon each inspection, automatically prompt engineers to record all important details related to inspections, answer from a list of questions, and capture images for full visibility into an asset's performance.

Having this visibility later helps you know how buildings are performing at each moment in time and helps to predict the lifespan of key equipment in order to budget accordingly. Recording comprehensive reports, summaries of inspection work orders, inspection statuses, and in-depth historical details related to all past inspections all give property teams a full understanding of each building to fuel critical business decisions.



## Mobilize your team

Property managers and engineers can't conduct efficient inspections while relying on desktop monitors. And using manual pen-and-paper processes require them to take data collected in the field and spend time recording it retroactively, oftentimes outside of normal work hours. This can lead to errors, wasted time and dissatisfied team members.

To modernize this process, empower your team with a mobile platform that lets them work on the go. Your inspections solution should let team members complete inspections and initiate work orders from any mobile device or platform, and track the creation of corresponding work orders to resolve issues. The ideal solution should have a mobile app that comes complete with an offline mode, since much of your equipment is located in areas of poor service, such as basements, crawlspaces and elevator shafts. This mobility eliminates the need to log inspections data retroactively.



“CRE players deserve better technology than they’ve historically had. Trusted pillar platforms have the opportunity to transform the industry by providing the power to deliver an exceptional experience for occupants while maximizing efficiency and profitability for owners.”

— Tim Curran, CEO, Building Engines

## Automate reporting

Collecting data while performing inspections serves no purpose if these records sit in a file cabinet unreviewed. Find an inspections software solution that offers an actionable analytics dashboard, including visual reports and summaries that make it easy to spot problems and trends early. Segment these reports by equipment type, or by team member so you can see quickly which team members are most productive, and which are falling behind.

Reports should be easily downloadable so they can be shared with your management and clients. These reports can reinforce your results as a manager and prove to your higherups that you’re the right person for the job.

[Watch the  
Prism Inspections Video](#)



## 4 tips to make your inspections more efficient:

1. Do an initial walkthrough to plan the inspection route. Think beyond the equipment and consider everything that needs to be clean, operational and safe in order to give tenants an optimal experience.
2. Don't use pen and paper: this leaves no way to track if inspections are completed on time. Information can just be stored in a file cabinet and forgotten about.
3. Analyze the data you collect: Just gathering data isn't enough. You need to analyze this data routinely to improve your program and quickly identify red flags that you could be addressing.
4. Keep inspection information in a centralized database: A centralized dashboard for inspections will give you the details related to any inspection task, and will give you the insight you need to make data-driven decisions.

## Conclusion

Prism's Inspections module gives you the tools you need to increase productivity, ensure compliance and gain insight into your entire portfolio's performance. Your team can avoid costly breakdowns and stay ahead of potential issues by regularly assessing property conditions and quickly capturing critical data. By accessing completion percentages, status updates, professional report summaries and photo attachments, you'll have the complete story of your property's condition.

Prism Inspections also makes it easier to establish portfolio-wide inspection consistency with easy-to-build inspection templates. Ensure that every member of the team is performing their best by leveraging the mobile app with offline mode. Your team will be able to perform inspections from anywhere, even in areas of poor reception, without losing any work or data.



## Get Started Today

**Are you looking for a better way to manage property performance and ensure compliance?**

[Schedule a demo of Prism Inspections.](#)

# About Building Engines

For over 15 years, Building Engines has delivered on its mission to help customers improve NOI, increase revenue, reduce operating expenses and deliver greater tenant satisfaction. Building Engines is trusted by hundreds of commercial real estate organizations who manage billions of square feet. With our latest release, Prism, Building Engines is reaching a new level of building operations innovation. Prism comes equipped to help you exceed today's goals while preparing you and your team to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

**Exceptional Building Operations. Extraordinary Business Outcomes.**



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