FLAT ROOF WALK CHECKLIST

This is a walk checklist for a flat or low slope commercial roof. It is written to be carried rather than read, and it runs in the order the walk should go.

It does not replace an inspection by a roofer. It is what a facilities team can do between professional visits, so that the professional visit starts from something rather than from nothing.

BEFORE YOU GO UP

Do not go up alone, on a wet or icy roof, or in high wind. Know where the edges, the rooflights and any fragile areas are before you step out, and use the building's permit system if it has one.

Take a camera, a numbered roof plan, the last report and something to write on.

THE DRAINAGE

LOOK AT	WHAT A PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE
☐ Outlets and sumps	Debris or silt in the sump, water still sitting in it
☐ Strainers and domes	Missing, broken, loose or packed solid
☐ Clamping rings	Bolts loose or missing, the membrane not gripped evenly
☐ Scuppers	A blocked throat, damaged flashing, staining down the wall
☐ Overflows	None present, blocked, or evidence that one has run
☐ Gutters and downpipes	Debris, sagging, water marks, an open joint
☐ Standing water	Water a day or two after rain, or a tide mark where it stood
☐ Falls	Water running away from an outlet rather than toward it

THE PERIMETER

LOOK AT	WHAT A PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE
☐ Edge metal and coping	Open joints, lifted sections, staining on the wall below
☐ Termination bars	Loose or missing fasteners, a bar that has pulled away
☐ Parapet upstands	Membrane pulling away, a gap at the top, a slumped corner
☐ Corners	The first place wind lifts and the first place a detail fails
☐ Ballast at the edge	Scoured on the upwind side, piled on the downwind side

THE DETAILS

LOOK AT	WHAT A PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE
☐ Seams and laps	An edge you can lift, a dirt line, a step, hand applied mastic
☐ Curbs around units	Gaps at the corners, flashing slipped, fixings through the membrane
☐ Pipe boots and collars	Split at the top, clamps missing, standing away from the pipe
☐ Penetrations and supports	Anything resting or fixed directly on the membrane
☐ Rooflights and hatches	Cracked domes, failed seals, flashing lifted, a hatch left open
☐ Expansion joints	Covers lifted, sealant failed, movement visible at the joint

THE FIELD

LOOK AT	WHAT A PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE
☐ The open membrane	Splits, cuts, punctures, scuffs, anything dropped and left
☐ Blisters	Raised, soft underfoot, larger than in the last photograph
☐ Surfacing	Bare patches, granule or gravel loss, chalking on a coating
☐ Color and texture	Areas darker, harder or more brittle than the rest

LOOK AT	WHAT A PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE
☐ Walkways	Pads missing or worn, or ending short of where people walk
☐ Anything green	Moss or organic matter, marking a spot that stays damp
☐ Loose material	Offcuts, packaging, fixings, washers, tools

INSIDE THE BUILDING

LOOK AT	WHAT A PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE
☐ Ceilings and finishes	New stains, stains that have grown, sagging tiles
☐ The deck, where visible	Damp, rust lines, drips running along a beam
☐ Walls below upstands	Damp at high level, blown plaster, staining at a corner
☐ Light fittings	Water near a fitting, which is a safety issue first
☐ Insulation in the void	Damp, compressed or stained material
☐ What the occupants say	Where it drips, and in which weather

WHAT TO DO WITH IT

1. **Walk the same route every time.** Comparability is the point of the record.
2. **Give every finding an area number and two photographs.** Wide and close.
3. **Rate on three levels with a reason.** Fix now, fix this year, watch.
4. **Never lift, cut or probe anything.** Record it and send the photograph.
5. **Compare with the last visit before you leave.** The change is the finding.

Want the reasoning behind these checks? Read how flat roofs work and what the membranes are.

Walked by _____ Date _____ Roof _____