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Welcome to the little known, but very profitable world of field inspections. It’s an opportunity that’s made to order for anyone who wants a flexible work schedule. You choose which assignments to accept, and how many hours to work. You can stay close to home, picking drive-by inspections right in your area, or travel in a bigger circle to take advantage of one-time jobs that may be a bit farther away.

Your start-up costs are low, as a clipboard, cellphone, tape measure and a digital camera are all that are needed. After completing your inspections, you’ll use your home computer to send the report and pictures to the Field Service Company. For most inspections, there are no requirements for special tools, licenses or insurance, just the ability to follow simple instructions and take a few digital snapshots.

Drive-by inspections are ideal for folks who want or need the flexibility of part-time work, yet it can easily be “scaled up” to a full-time lucrative career.
How to Get All the Jobs You Want

It’s not hard to stay busy doing field inspections if you understand what the field inspection companies value. For a moment, place yourself in their shoes, and think about the “ideal” freelance field inspector. He or she would be:

1. **Easy to reach.** Successful field inspectors stay in touch via the internet, email and cell phone. With an email-enabled cell phone, inspection orders can quickly be locked in, and if there are any questions, answers are just a call away. In addition, mobile cell phone/email access means a field inspector can get more rush orders, which typically pay twice as much.

2. **Focused on quality.** If you’re a sloppy field inspector, you won’t last long, get many repeat orders or make much money. Field inspection companies value inspectors that can produce a quality field report, with all the facts detailed that were requested in the original inspection order. If the request isn’t clear, or you’re not sure exactly what is needed, call or email to find out. Quality also includes meeting
the time requirements for each inspection order. If it has to be turned in by 5 p.m. on Thursday, do it. Better yet, get your orders back early! Field inspectors who routinely wrap up orders early stand a better chance of getting rush orders, where timing is critical.

3. **Take high quality pictures.** Thanks to today’s advanced digital cameras, it’s easy to set the camera to auto focus, point, click and you’re done. Just to be sure, always glance at the picture in the LCD screen to make sure it captures all the information requested by the field inspection company, and is as bright and clear as possible.

The list of national field inspection companies listed in this guide includes over 60 firms. When you’re starting out, it’s important to sign up with as many as possible to increase the volume of orders you’ll receive. Set a reasonable goal for signups – two new companies a week, for example – and you’ll be busy with field inspections in no time.

If the companies offer any training or certification, think about enrolling, as it may boost your chances of getting repeat business from that firm. You’ll also be able to mention completed training or certifications on your resume as well.