

# Five tips to quickly recognize serious structural problems

George Scott



# Structure 101

Serious structural problems in houses are not very common, but when they occur they can be difficult & costly to repair.

These tips won't turn you into a home inspector, but it will give you some of the common indicators of structural concerns.

# Tip 1 - Leaning House

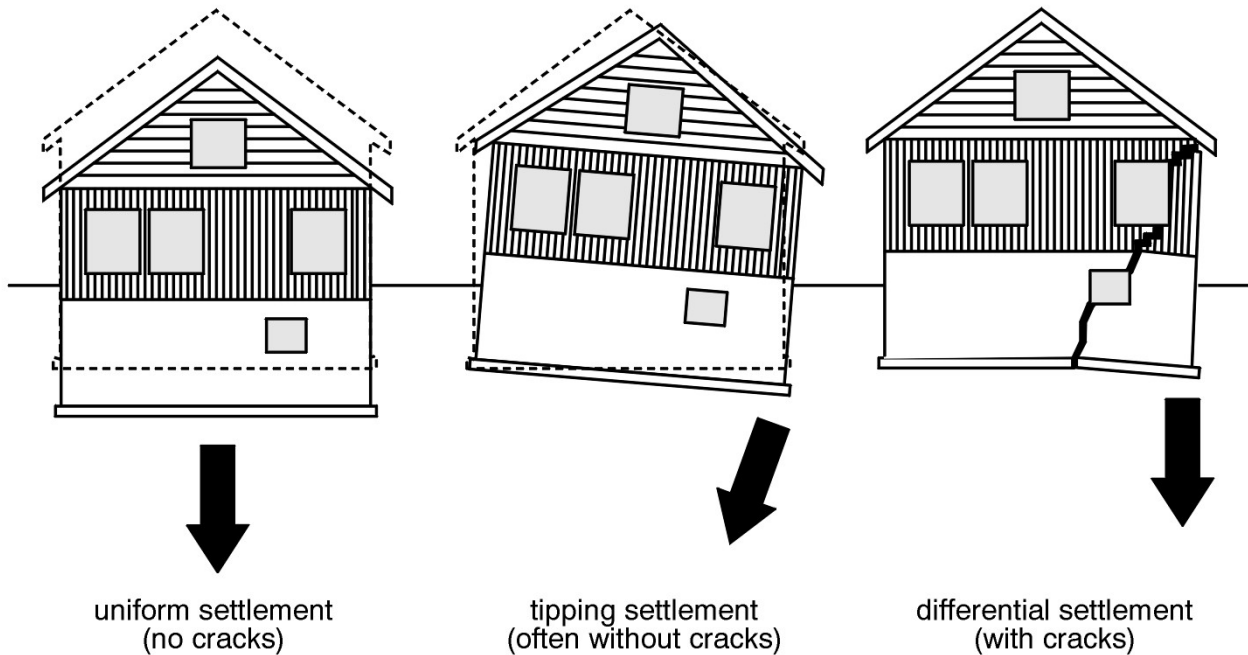
- “You’re going to love this place...”



- Take a macro-look at the home from across the street

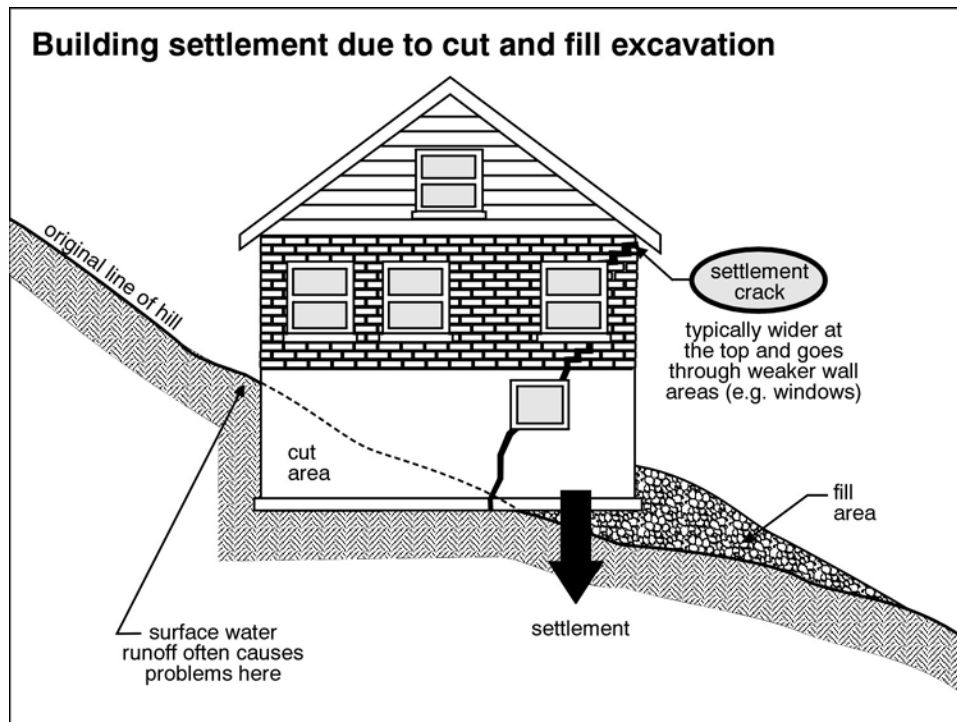
# Tip 1 - Leaning House

## Types of settlement



# Tip 2 – Exterior Walls & Entries

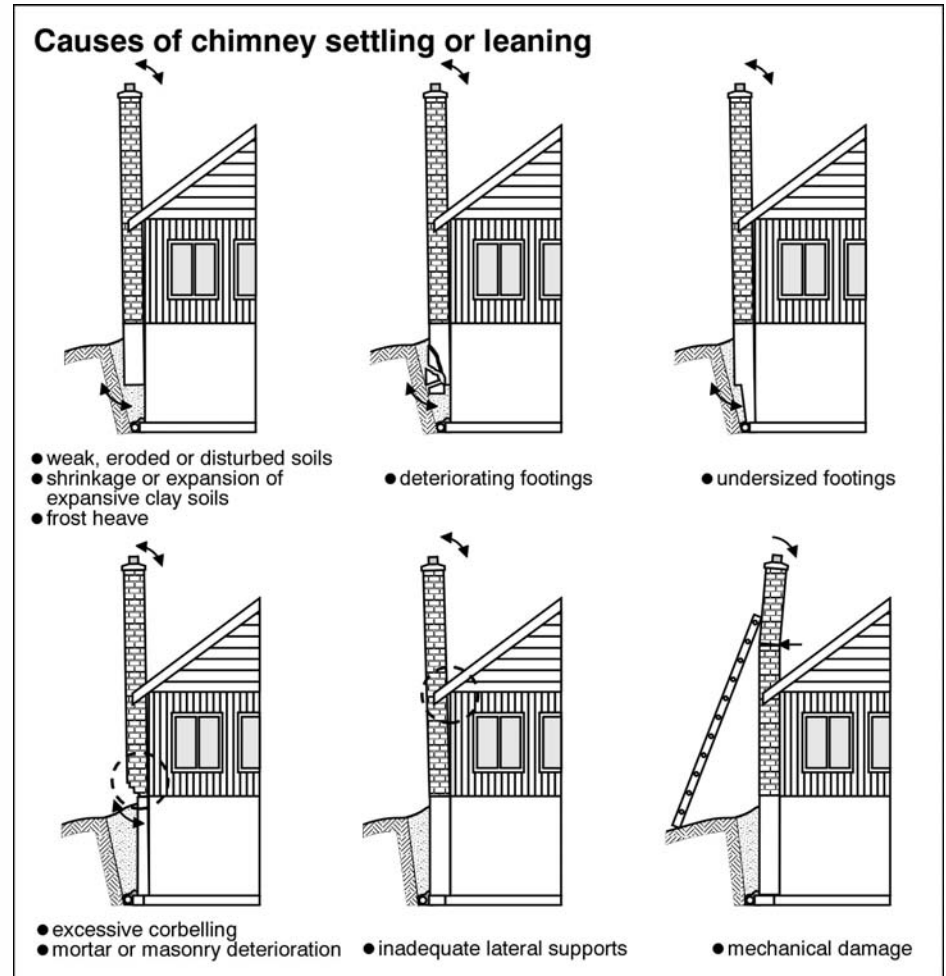
- Look for areas of wall separation greater than 1/2" in size





# Tip 2 – Exterior Walls & Entries

- Is the chimney separating from the home?

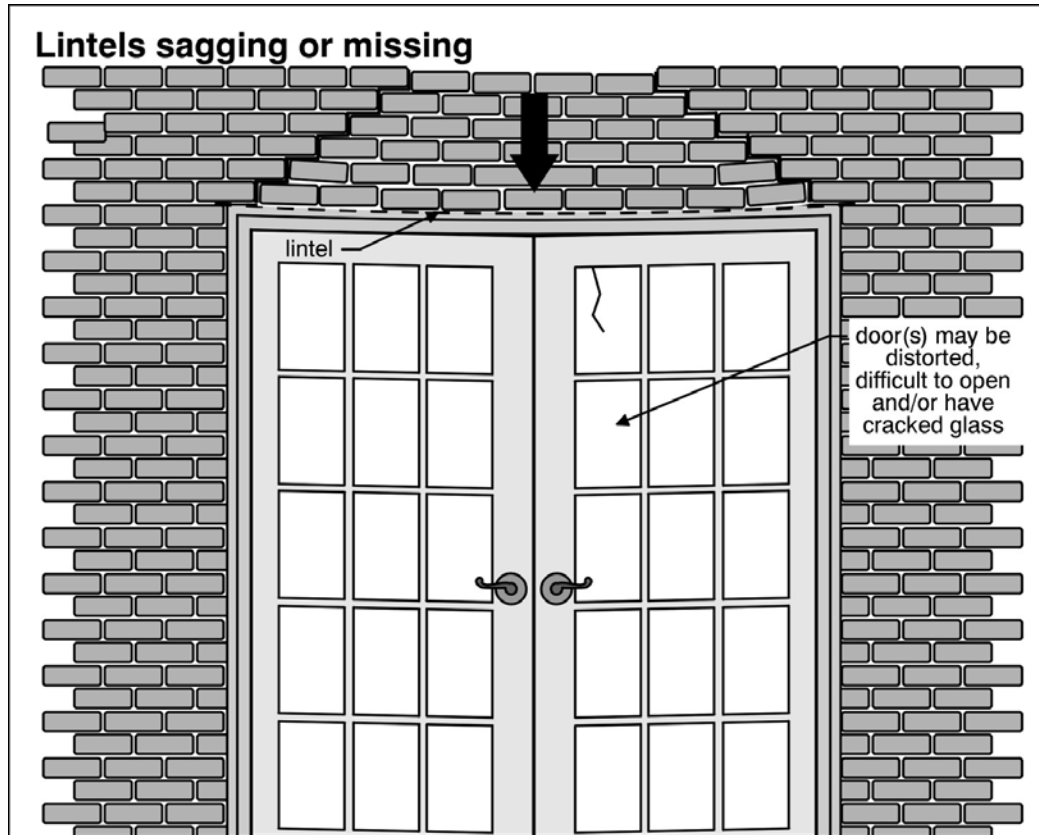


# Tip 3 – Doors & Windows

- Let's just step inside...



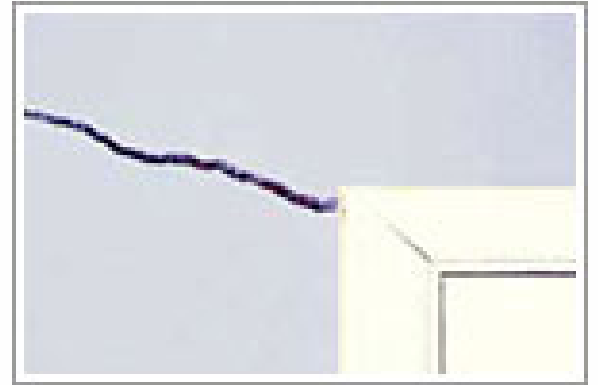
# Tip 3 – Doors & Windows





## Tip 4 – Floors & Walls

- Drywall cracks > ¼”
- Uneven floors near corners



# Tip 5 – Basement Foundation Crack

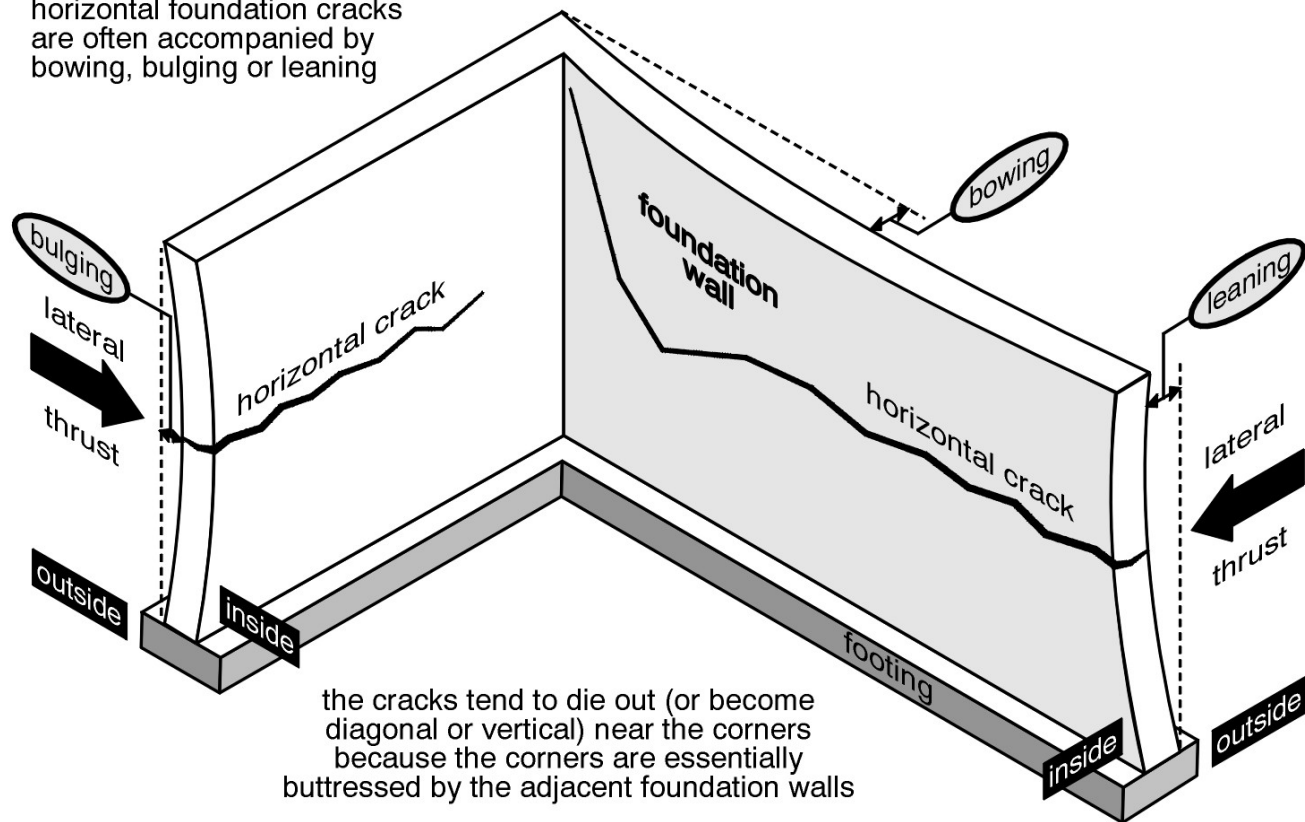
- Look for significant cracks both inside and outside on the foundation



# Tip 5 – Basement Foundation Crack

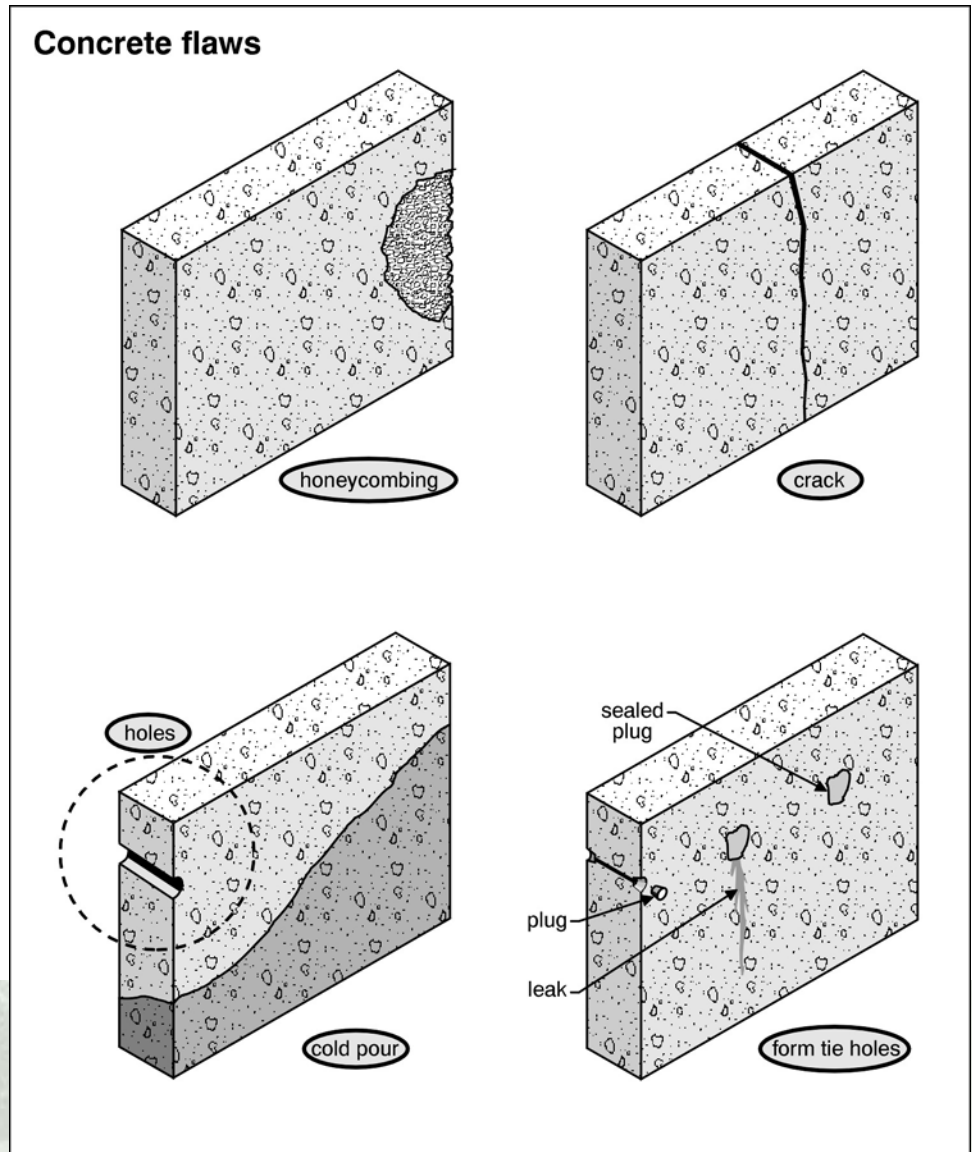
## Foundation movement associated with horizontal cracks

horizontal foundation cracks  
are often accompanied by  
bowing, bulging or leaning



# Tip 5 – Basement Foundation Crack

- Some foundation flaws are not indications of structural issues, but are construction defects.



# Summary

- Tip1 – Is the house obviously leaning?
- Tip 2 – Are there large external cracks?
- Tip 3 – Are doors & windows sticking?
- Tip 4 – Are walls cracked or floors uneven?
- Tip 5 – Are there basement cracks present?

Any of these may indicate a structural issue that should be inspected or reviewed



# Resources

- Colorado Geological Survey
  - “Guide to Swelling Soils for Colorado Homebuyers and Homeowners” – pub 43
  - <http://geosurvey.state.co.us/>
- Scott Home Inspection
  - We can assess structural issues for seller's or buyer's as a single component, or as part of a standard home inspection
  - <http://www.scotthomeinspection.com/>

