THE FORMAL VISUAL INSPECTION

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR BEFORE ANY TEST?

No testing at this stage — you're looking, and writing down what you find. The book gives you the checklist.

CHECK	LOOKING FOR
Suitability	Right equipment for the task and the environment. Manufacturer's instructions being followed
Environment	Mechanical damage, weather, natural hazards, high or low temperature, **ingress of moisture**
Switching and isolation	Can it be turned on and off for normal use, disconnected for maintenance, and isolated in an **emergency**?
Good housekeeping	Cables not run over by trolleys, trip hazards covered, adequate ventilation, **no cups or plants on equipment**
Guards and covers	Protective covers in place — drills, angle grinders, machinery
The flex	No nicks, cuts or splices. Right length for the job. Properly secured in the cord grip
The socket	No signs of overheating, no cracks, not loose
User feedback	Ask them first

Manufacturer's instructions can outrank the book.
As in BS 7671, where the manufacturer specifies something, that generally supersedes the general rule.

✋ **A faulty socket outlet is not an appliance fault.** If the socket is damaged or the fuse holder falls out, you can't test into it. The appliance is taken out of use and the duty holder gets an electrician to replace the socket — that's a separate job, and not yours as the PAT inspector.

Failed equipment is **labelled and removed from service**, and stays out until it's been put right.

And a reality check from the book:
frequent inspection won't prevent damage. Equipment used in the wrong place or the wrong way will break quickly no matter how often it's looked at.

Section 8 · formal visual inspection checklist

Appendix 6 · user check and FVI table

Free section from Sparky Study Notes. The full Level 3 notes, 1,463 practice questions and the video lessons: sparkystudynotes.co.uk