

Tips When Buying a Used Car

Buying a car can be a tricky, exhausting ordeal, especially if you're purchasing pre-owned vehicle. What you see isn't always what you get, and you can't really know what's hiding under the hood.

We've gathered a few tips to help you make an informed decision and buy a safe vehicle without any nasty surprises:

1. Buy For Your Needs and Budget

Take the time to think why you're buying a car and how you'll use it in the future. Do you need to drive to work every day? Will you take the kids to sport practice? Are you planning on taking long, cross-country road trips? Knowing your needs will help you choose the car that's perfect for you: an SUV is a better fit for a family with 2 or more children, while a compact car is better for daily commutes or places without much parking space. If you spend a lot of time on the road, consider getting a hybrid car. Hybrids reduce the gas costs and help the environment.

2. Run a VIN Check (and avoid getting a lemon!)

The Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) is a 17 digit number which is usually stamped onto a metal plate in several locations on the car. Start by making sure that all the VIN numbers on the vehicle match and are identical to the number on the V5 document. If they do not match, this indicates that large parts of the vehicle may have been switched or that it is stolen. Next, run a VIN check to get a full vehicle history report and see whether it's been through any accidents, undergone a mileage rollback, and more.

3. Inspect the Owner, Not Just the Car

They say you shouldn't judge a book by its cover, but learning about the car owner may tell you a lot about the car itself. Is he or she too eager to sell the car? Does he or she have a criminal history? Some services, such as eBay motors, let you to learn about the seller's rating and get feedback from previous buyers. If you want to dig deeper and find out even more about the owner, a good place to start would be a public records background check. Background checks are a few dollars spent that could save you a lot of money down the road.

4. Compare Insurance Offers

Think of car insurance as a long term investment. It helps protect you from unexpected and potentially expensive surprises. Keep in mind that not all policies were made equal, so it's important to compare plans and rates and make sure that your plan is tailored for your needs. Start by comparing quotes from different insurance carriers by [clicking here](#)

5. Don't buy on impulse

To buy the right car, it's important to be objective and do your homework: thoroughly research the specific make and model you're interested in, plan ahead before meeting with the seller or dealership (What do you want to ask? What's the highest price you're willing to pay? What's the market price?), take it for a ride and most importantly, make up your mind only after all of your questions have been answered. Cars can be sexy and exciting, but don't let your impulse overcome your common sense!

6. Get an Extended Auto Protection Warranty

If it's not the car's "first rodeo", getting an extended warranty is a great way to protect yourself from thousands of dollars in unexpected expenses down the road. A warranty helps you drive with peace of mind, knowing that you're covered whether the engine gives in or the transmission needs to be replaced. [Click here to get the best rates for an extended warranty](#)

7. Take care of your baby

Purchasing a car is only half of the story; if you want it to serve you for the many years and miles to come, then taking it for maintenance and check-ups regularly is a must! Checkups can increase the chance of identifying problems that require extensive repairs before they deteriorate. You might also consider keeping a log that documents the checkups and repairs. This way it will be easy for you to know when your next checkup is due. We hope you enjoy driving your new car!