

44 Auto Dealer's Tips For Choosing The Best Used Car

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1. Examine the car's exterior thoroughly. Look for rust, dents and evidence that portions of the car have rusted out and been repaired with body putty.
2. Look under car for breaks in the frame and signs that frame has been welded.
3. Check for excessive rusting of frame.
4. Examine condition of muffler, tailpipe and exhaust pipe.
5. Look for signs of oil or transmission fluid leakage under the car.
6. Check for signs of fluid leakage from shock absorbers.
7. Examine condition of tires, including inside surfaces.
8. Look for signs of brake fluid leaking on the inside of tires.
9. Walk around the car and check the condition of window glass.
10. Examine the condition of lenses of all lights - front, back and sides.
11. Test all lights to make certain they are functioning - headlights, taillights, flashers, backup lights, brake lights, turn signals, etc.
12. Push down on the corners of the car, front & back, to check the shock absorbers. If the car bounces up & down several times, the shocks are worn.
13. Stand back and see if the car is level. If not, the springs may be weak.
14. From a distance, look for evidence of an accident, dents, paint that doesn't match, ripples in the fenders, etc.
15. Check the spare tire. If it is cupped or worn unevenly, something may be wrong with the front end and a front tire is being used as a spare.
16. Make sure the car has a jack and that it is in good working condition.
17. Lift the hood of the car & examine the condition of the belts & hoses.
18. Check the battery to see if it is cracked.
19. Pull out the oil dipstick to see how dirty the oil is.
20. Check stickers (on doorposts or under hood) to see when the car had its last oil change & lubrication, and whether it was serviced regularly.
21. Examine the upholstery, safety belts and carpeting.
22. If the car has seat covers, look under them for wear, tears, dirt.
23. Badly worn carpeting or upholstery may be a sign of heavy vehicle usage.

24. Check the break pedal for free play.
25. Turn on all the lights one at a time and check to see they are working.
26. Take the car for a test drive over various types of roads.
27. While on the road, test the brakes for pulling.
28. Be alert for vibrations during the drive, for signs of front-end trouble.
29. If the car has manual transmission, be alert for excessive play, grabbing or rattling of the clutch.
30. Look for vibrations or unusual noises from the engine, transmission, rear end or wheels, that may be a signal of trouble.
31. Push the gearshift through its various positions and see how the car reacts.
32. Let the engine idle and be alert to noises or vibrations that could indicate a badly tuned engine or one with bad valves.
33. Be alert for any unusual odors. These could tell you that all is not well.
34. If the automatic transmission doesn't shift smoothly or there is hesitation when it shifts, the transmission may be in need of repair work.
35. When test driving, step on the gas & look into the mirror for smoke from the exhaust. White or bluish smoke may mean an overhaul is needed.
36. Check to see how much power the car has on a hill.
37. Turn on the heater to see if it works.
38. Check out the air conditioning to see if it is working.
39. Turn on the radio.
40. Try the windshield wipers.
41. If possible, run the car through a car wash to see if it leaks.
42. If possible, before you sign on the bottom line, have your own mechanic check out the car or take it to a diagnostic center.
43. Never buy a used car at night, in the rain or when you are in a hurry.
44. Have the man in charge put in writing & sign all promises **BEFORE YOU BUY!**