

Checklist

Helping you to get the best deal when buying a used car

This checklist should be read with the booklet "Buying a used car?". It is a guide to help you decide whether a car is worth buying. If you find yourself ticking a lot of 'yes' boxes in one or more sections, it may be best to walk away. If you don't feel confident about carrying out these checks yourself, get an expert's opinion.

If you find yourself ticking a lot of 'yes' boxes in one or more sections, you should seriously consider whether to go ahead with the purchase.

Before the test drive

YES **NO**

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are sills, wheel arches and door bottoms rusty or the paint bubbling? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the paintwork faded, blemished or excessively damaged? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are there oil leaks or damaged hoses/drive belts under the bonnet? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are tyres worn or damaged? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are seat belts showing signs of fraying? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do door and window seals show signs of leaking? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are electrics faulty (lights, washers, horn and indicators)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | When you start the engine and before you drive away does the vehicle emit blue or black smoke from exhaust (indicates badly-worn engine)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the car in reasonable condition? |

During the test drive

YES **NO**

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are brakes defective (e.g. car takes a long time to stop)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does car pull to one side when you brake? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do brakes squeal? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the brake pedal soft or spongy? Do you have to put the pedal to the floor to brake? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Park the car on an incline with the handbrake on. Does the car roll backwards? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does the steering wheel vibrate? Is there a lot of free play? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does car pull to one side? |

- Is changing gear difficult?
- Does gear lever jump out of gear when you brake or accelerate?
- Is the clutch difficult to use when moving through the gears?
- Does engine sound different if clutch is pressed when car is idling?
- Is there a strong smell of petrol or oil?

After the test drive

Open the bonnet and take a look while the engine is running. Then switch the engine off.

YES **NO**

- Does the engine make unusual noises?
- Are there water or oil leaks?
- Is there excessive smoke from the exhaust?
- When engine has stopped, remove oil cap - do you see white liquid like mayonnaise?
- Look under the bonnet and underneath the car, with a torch if necessary. Are there any leaks?

Is it an insurance write off?

YES **NO**

- Have body panels been repaired?
- Is colour/texture of paintwork patchy?
- Has welding been carried out under the bonnet?
- Have repairs been carried out on the boot (check under the carpet)?

Has it been clocked?

YES **NO** **PHYSICAL CHECKS**

- Are mileometer numbers out of line?
- Is wear and tear heavy, given mileage?
- Have pedal rubbers/gear knob/steering wheel been changed?

YES **NO** **PAPER CHECKS/QUESTIONS TO ASK**

- Does mileage on service record contradict mileometer reading?
- Does mileage on service documentation contradict mileometer reading?

- Does mileage when car was last sold contradict mileometer reading?
(Check with previous owners - named on Log Book)

Is it stolen?

YES NO PHYSICAL CHECKS

- Has the vehicle identification number (VIN) been tampered with?
- Are glass areas such as windows, lights or sunroof etched with incorrect VIN? (As a security measure some cars have the VIN etched on their glass)
- Have surface areas of glass been scratched off windows, head lights, tail lights, sun roof?
- Do stickers conceal altered etching?
- Are there signs that the car has been resprayed, for example, is there paint on the wheels or seals?
- Are there signs of forced entry?
- Has the locking petrol cap been forced and replaced?
- Do the locks differ? (Thieves often change locks they have damaged)

YES NO PAPER CHECKS/QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Is the seller unable to produce the registration document (Log Book)?
- Does the seller give an inadequate reason for not having the Log Book?
- Are there spelling mistakes or alterations to the Log Book?
- Is seller's name and address different from Log Book? (Ask seller for proof of identity and address, e.g. driving licence, utility bill)
- Is number plate different from Log Book?
- Is engine number different from Log Book?
- Is vehicle identification number (VIN) different from Log Book? (Check VIN plate in engine compartment and under both bonnet and driver's seat)
- Is the seller unable to produce an insurance policy and an up-to-date Road Tax Disc for the car?