



CITY OF CLEVELAND
Mayor Frank G. Jackson

Buying a Used Car

DCA

Department
Of
Consumer Affairs



BE A SMART CAR SHOPPER

Before launching your search for a good deal on a used car, spend some time considering many of the same factors that would apply to a new car purchase: how you will use the vehicle; how long you plan to keep it; the size, style, features, and appearance you need or prefer; and your budget or financing options for the purchase, as well as for operation, maintenance, and repair costs.

Do your research! Several publications are available to provide general guidance. Your library, bookstore, bank or insurance agent should

have a copy of the monthly National Automotive Dealers Association (NADA) Official Used Car Guide, monthly Kelley Blue Book (www.kbb.com), or Edmund's (www.edmunds.com) to estimate a car's resale value. Comparing prices of similar makes and models can give you an idea of which seller offers the best deals and what to expect when you get there.

ON-THE-LOT CHECKLIST

Get a thorough inspection—Have a mechanic inspect the car. Take the car to a reliable repair shop or auto diagnostic center and have the mechanic give it a once-over. You will have to pay for this service, but the money you invest up front may save you many more dollars down the road. Ask for a written estimate of the costs to repair any problems the mechanic finds, and use that estimate as a bargaining chip when you make your offer for the car. In some states an official state inspection may be legally required. Check with your Department of Motor Vehicles for specific laws in your locality. (A complete state-by-state listing of Departments of Motor Vehicles can be found online at www.usps.gov/moversnet/motor.html.)

ROAD TEST CHECKLIST

Test Drive—Drive on a variety of roads from city streets, to freeways, two-lane highways, and rough paved and unpaved surfaces. Does the car accelerate and decelerate well? Watch for unusual vibrations, noises or odors.

CLOSING THE DEAL

Take your time to read and understand the entire written agreement. Ask questions. Don't sign unless you are satisfied with the answers. Be sure that all blank spaces are filled in, that all of the salesperson's verbal promises are included, and that the type of warranty that comes with the car is spelled out.

Buying a used vehicle can be a rewarding experience but always remember, **“when in doubt, check it out!”**

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