

# THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU EVEN LOOK AT A CAR

- Source, Contact (Ad, Name, #) \_\_\_\_\_
- Year, Make & Model \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you physically have the title? Y / N If no, hang up now.
- (If your state requires it) has it passed SMOG within the last (XX) days? Y / N
- Mileage \_\_\_\_\_
- VIN - to run CarFax \_\_\_\_\_
- Title - Clean / Salvage \_\_\_\_\_
- Accidents? \_\_\_\_\_
- Color (Exterior) \_\_\_\_\_
- Condition of Exterior (dents, paint) \_\_\_\_\_
- Color (Interior) \_\_\_\_\_
- Interior Material \_\_\_\_\_
- Condition of Interior (rips/stains/wear) \_\_\_\_\_
- How long have you owned it? \_\_\_\_\_
- Why are you selling it? \_\_\_\_\_
- How was it maintained? \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you have service records for it? \_\_\_\_\_
- Last major service (when and what) \_\_\_\_\_
- Is there anything wrong with it? \_\_\_\_\_
- Approx. Gas Mileage (freeway): \_\_\_\_\_ (around town): \_\_\_\_\_
- Condition of Windshield (cracks/chips) \_\_\_\_\_
- Is registration current? Y / N
- When is it paid through? \_\_\_\_\_
- Original Engine? Y / N
- Smoking in the car? Y / N
- Pets in the car? Y / N
- Does it leak any fluids? Y / N
- 2-Door / 4-Door \_\_\_\_\_
- 2WD / 4WD / AWD \_\_\_\_\_
- A/C? Y / N
- Power Windows? Y / N
- Power Locks? Y / N
- Power Seats? Y / N
- CD Player? Y / N
- DVD Player? Y / N
- Navigation? Y / N
- Backup Camera? Y / N
- Sunroof/Moonroof? Y / N
- How old are the tires? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many keys/fobs? \_\_\_\_\_
- Spare tire and jack? Y / N

---

# THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU EVEN LOOK AT A CAR

- Source, Contact (Ad, Name, #) \_\_\_\_\_
- Year, Make & Model \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you physically have the title? Y / N If no, hang up now.
- (If your state requires it) has it passed SMOG within the last (XX) days? Y / N
- Mileage \_\_\_\_\_
- VIN - to run CarFax \_\_\_\_\_
- Title - Clean / Salvage \_\_\_\_\_
- Accidents? \_\_\_\_\_
- Color (Exterior) \_\_\_\_\_
- Condition of Exterior (dents, paint) \_\_\_\_\_
- Color (Interior) \_\_\_\_\_
- Interior Material \_\_\_\_\_
- Condition of Interior (rips/stains/wear) \_\_\_\_\_
- How long have you owned it? \_\_\_\_\_
- Why are you selling it? \_\_\_\_\_
- How was it maintained? \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you have service records for it? \_\_\_\_\_
- Last major service (when and what) \_\_\_\_\_
- Is there anything wrong with it? \_\_\_\_\_
- Approx. Gas Mileage (freeway): \_\_\_\_\_ (around town): \_\_\_\_\_
- Condition of Windshield (cracks/chips) \_\_\_\_\_
- Is registration current? Y / N
- When is it paid through? \_\_\_\_\_
- Original Engine? Y / N
- Smoking in the car? Y / N
- Pets in the car? Y / N
- Does it leak any fluids? Y / N
- 2-Door / 4-Door \_\_\_\_\_
- 2WD / 4WD / AWD \_\_\_\_\_
- A/C? Y / N
- Power Windows? Y / N
- Power Locks? Y / N
- Power Seats? Y / N
- CD Player? Y / N
- DVD Player? Y / N
- Navigation? Y / N
- Backup Camera? Y / N
- Sunroof/Moonroof? Y / N
- How old are the tires? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many keys/fobs? \_\_\_\_\_
- Spare tire and jack? Y / N

# ONCE YOU DECIDE YOU'D LIKE TO GO SEE THE CAR

- Call auto insurance to get a quote - \_\_\_\_\_
- Google what color the fluids should be and if the car should be hot or cold, running or turned off.
- Also know whether you should check levels when the car is hot or cold. Again, this fluctuates.

• Oil	Cold / Warm	Engine Running / Engine Off	Color _____
• Transmission Fluid	Cold / Warm	Engine Running / Engine Off	Color _____
• Coolant	Cold / Warm	Engine Running / Engine Off	Color _____
• Brake Fluid	Cold / Warm	Engine Running / Engine Off	Color _____
• Power Steering	Cold / Warm	Engine Running / Engine Off	Color _____
• Clutch Fluid (sometimes)	Cold / Warm	Engine Running / Engine Off	Color _____

## THINGS TO TAKE WITH YOU

- License (for test drive and also Bill of Sale)
- Proof of insurance (for test drive)
- A shop rag (or a couple paper towels will work) to check fluid levels when you get there
- A CD to check the CD Player
- A DVD to check the DVD player
- The MAX amount of cash you are willing to pay
- Bill of Sale

## THINGS TO PAY ATTENTION TO WHEN YOU ARRIVE

- Are there any visible leaks on the ground where the car is parked?
- Condition of Exterior (dents, paint)
- Condition of interior (rips, stains, wear)
- Check body lines between fenders, doors, hood, etc. This tells the story of possible previous accidents the car has been in and how clean the repairs were.
- If you are meeting at the seller's house, and the car has been parked there, feel the hood to see if it's warm. Or when you start the car, check the temperature gauge. Is it already warm? If so, the seller may have started it and run the car for a while to hide a problem it has when it's cold. Just something to be aware of... (If you meet them somewhere, then they obviously had to drive it to the meeting spot, so this one doesn't apply)
- Take notice of the general care and condition of the car. In the words of my brother, "Has it really been loved, or did they just put lipstick on a pig?"

## THE TEST DRIVE: BEFORE LEAVING THE DRIVEWAY

### UNDER THE HOOD

- Check all belts and hoses and look for cracks.
- Check fluids for appropriate level and color for the fluids that should be checked when the car is cold (only if the car is on flat ground. If it is parked on a hill, you'll need to move it before checking fluids)
  - Oil:
  - Transmission Fluid:
  - Coolant:
  - Brake Fluid:
  - Power Steering Fluid:
  - Clutch Fluid

## INSIDE THE CAR

- Turn the key and look for all the lights that SHOULD illuminate when the key is turned. All lights should do a self-check, meaning they all come on (check engine, SRS, ABS, oil, traction control, etc.). Most of them should go off within a few seconds. A couple will stay on until the car starts and has pressure (like the oil light). IF THEY DO NOT ALL TURN ON, THEN THE SELLER HAS LIKELY PULLED THE BULB TO HIDE A PROBLEM AND YOU SHOULD HIGHLY CONSIDER LEAVING WITHOUT EVEN WASTING ANY MORE OF YOUR TIME. So just make sure those lights are actually working, so you can have confidence that you are getting any notices on the dashboard that you should be getting, as far as problems are concerned.
- Check the following:
  - All Locks
  - All Seat Adjustments
  - All Windows
  - Sunroof/Moonroof
  - CD Player
  - DVD Player
  - Rear Camera

## THE TEST DRIVE: ON THE ROAD

- Don't be scared to take it to someone you trust and have them take a look at the car, and/or go on the test drive with you!!
- Drive it long enough to test everything and get the car completely warmed up and functioning in different conditions.
- Check operation of:
  - A/C
  - Heater
  - Defroster
  - Cruise Control
- Accelerate quickly. Be aware of how the car seems to handle shifting gears.
- Brake quickly and slowly. Good brakes with a lot of life in them should feel firm.
- Turn off the radio and listen to the car as it drives
- Drive it at various speeds, paying attention to road noise, squeaks, rattles, and just how it handles overall
- Check the exhaust for excess smoke
- Let go of the steering wheel and see if it veers to one side (it may need an alignment which will cost you \$)
- Go to an empty parking lot and make tight turns in both directions. Listen for squeaking, clicking, or clunking when making tight turns.
- Check fluids for appropriate level and color for the fluids that should be checked when the car is warm and turned off, or warm and running.
  - Oil:
  - Transmission Fluid:
  - Coolant:
  - Brake Fluid:
  - Power Steering Fluid:
  - Clutch Fluid

**\*\*DO NOT BUY IF YOU DO NOT HAVE THE SIGNED TITLE IN YOUR HAND!\*\***

## COSTS

Write down anything you come across that will cost you money that you find during your inspection/test drive here, so you don't forget!

## MAKE SURE YOU GET ALL OF IT!

- Title (filled out with buyer and seller info)
- Copy/picture of seller's driver license
- Registration
- All service receipts
- ALL keys/fobs
- Spare Tire/Jack