

# Used Car Checklist

What to check when viewing a used car.

## Exterior

- Bodywork**  
Inspect the car's body for signs of rust, dents, scratches, or any inconsistencies in the paint job. Check for uneven panel gaps, indicating prior accidents or poor repairs.
- Lights and Signals**  
Ensure all exterior lights and signals, including headlights, taillights, and turn signals, are in proper working order.
- Tires**  
Check the condition and tread depth of each tire. Uneven tire wear could signal alignment issues or suspension problems.
- Windshield and Windows**  
Look for cracks or chips on the windshield and windows, as these may lead to safety concerns and costly repairs.

## Interior

- Seats and Upholstery**  
Check the seats and upholstery for tears, stains, or signs of excessive wear.
- Odour and Cleanliness**  
Take note of any peculiar odours inside the car, which may indicate mould, mildew, or other hidden problems.
- Dashboard and Controls**  
Ensure all dashboard lights illuminate upon starting the car and turn off after a few seconds. Test all controls, including air conditioning, radio, and windows.
- Trunk Space**  
Assess the trunk for water damage or wear and tear signs.

## Under The Hood

- Engine Fluids**  
Check the engine oil, transmission fluid, coolant, and brake fluid levels. Low or dirty fluids could indicate poor maintenance.
- Battery**  
Examine the car's battery for corrosion or leakage. A weak battery may lead to starting issues.
- Belts and Hoses**  
Inspect the belts and hoses for cracks or signs of wear. These components are crucial for the engine's proper functioning.
- Engine Noise**  
Listen for any unusual sounds while the engine is running, such as knocking or rattling, which might indicate engine problems.

## Test Drive

- Start-Up**  
Observe how the car starts. A smooth and quick start is a positive sign.
- Acceleration and Braking**  
Test the car's acceleration and braking capabilities. Ensure they are responsive and consistent.
- Steering and Handling**  
Check the steering for vibrations or pulling to one side while driving. The car should handle well without excessive play with the steering wheel.
- Suspension**  
Pay attention to how the car rides over bumps. Excessive bouncing or unusual noises might indicate suspension issues.

## Vehicle History and Paperwork

- VIN Check**  
Obtain the car's Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) and perform a VIN check online to review the vehicle's history for accidents, recalls, and title status.
- Service Records**  
Request the car's service records to ensure it has received regular maintenance.
- Ownership and Title**  
Verify the ownership history and check the car's title for any liens or discrepancies.