

# Car Check List

Date:		Dealer Name:	
Car description:			
Mileage:			
Blue Book Price:		Asking Price:	
Notes:			

Bring:

- Flashlight
- Rag
- Mirror
- Scan tool
- Vacuum gauge
- Tire pressure gauge
- Magnet
- White paper
- DVM

As you examine car, please place a grade for each major bullet, A-F.

Area	Grade	Area	Grade	Area	Grade
VIN		Smogged		Hood	
Under Car		Run Engine		Suspension/Tires	
Brakes		Body		Radio	
Alarm		Driving		Transmission	
Air Conditioning		Heater		Interior	
Maintenance History		Cruise Control			

# Car Check List

- VIN
  - Matches door
  - Matches title
- When was car last smogged, if applicable in your state
- Open hood
  - Any abnormal odors
  - Check fluids for level and cleanliness
    - Check oil
    - Check brake fluid
    - Check coolant
    - Check transmission, should be read
    - Check clutch
  - Check hoses
  - Check belts
    - For tension
    - For tears
    - Ask for when the timing belt was replaced
  - Check condition of vacuum hoses
    - If too hard, they will break if any work is done
  - Check air filter
  - Check battery
  - Super clean; scary since they might be hiding something
- Under car
  - Look at shocks for leaks
  - Look under for dents
  - Look for fluid leaks
  - Check differential(s) for leaks
  - Check transfer case for leaks
  - Check CV joints
  - Check bushings

# Car Check List

- Run engine
  - Place key in ignition and turn to on
    - Ensure all lights come on
      - Check engine
      - Abs
      - Idiot lights
      - ....
  - Does it start well when engine is COLD. At same time, have someone watch tail pipe, looking for smoke.
  - Does it start well when engine is warm
  - Rev engine while looking at tail pipe to ensure no smoke
  - Rev engine to ensure smooth pick up. At same time, have someone watch tail pipe for smoke
  - Listen to engine
    - Listen for a miss or a non-smooth idle
    - Turn on and off accessories listening for whining
      - Heater
      - A/C
  - Snap throttle to see if engine moves and brake torque. If engine moves more than normal, engine mounts might be bad
  - Does it idle smooth, listening for Knocks, Hisses, Ticks
  - Ensure all gauges in dashboard function
  - Ensure radiator hoses aren't too firm, indicating excessive blow by
  - If possible
    - Drive street
    - Drive highway
    - Check oil filler cap or dip stick for blow by
    - Determine if fans come on
    - Check compression (using clear flood crank)
    - Check vacuum
      - Idle vacuum should be 18 to 20 inches of Mercury
      - Needle fairly solid. A bouncing needle indicates internal engine issues
    - Use scan tool
      - Pending codes
      - Current codes
      - Readiness monitors all have been completed
      - Check for misfires
    - Use DVM
      - With car off, ensure battery voltage is around 12.5
      - With car running, ensure battery voltage is somewhere between 13.5 and 14.5 volts

# Car Check List

- Check suspension/tires
  - Bounce test shocks
  - Check treads
    - Compare remaining tread height as compared to wear bar
    - The outsides of tire, indicates under inflation
    - The middle of the tire, indicates over inflation-rare
    - The inside of tire, indicates alignment issues
    - Look for scalloping, indicates either poor balance or suspension issues
    - Brand new tires all around; scary since they might be trying to hide something.
  - Wheel locks present? If so, does vehicle have wheel lock socket
  - Does vehicle have all the necessary road-side jacking equipment
  - Check spare tire's condition and type (full, compact)
  - Rims/hub caps present, match
- Check brakes
  - Rotor
    - Look for discoloration
    - Look for wear grooves
  - Caliper
    - Looks for leaks
    - Look at pad for wear
  - Parking brake level
    - How far do you have to engage it before car stops moving
- Body
  - Look for quality of paint
  - Look for uneven lines in body panels
  - Look for replaced lights
  - Look for different color paints
  - Look for rust
  - Do all door shut well
    - Hood
    - Trunk
    - Doors
  - Gas cap in good condition
- Radio
  - All bands work, AM or FM
  - Full screen functionality
  - CD/Tape/Satellite/GPS
  - Aux/blue tooth connectivity
  - Balance and Fade; I suggest using these two controls to listen to each speaker individually
  - Subwoofer

# Car Check List

- Alarm
  - Unlock all doors
  - Valet mode
  - Auto start
  - Siren works
- Driving
  - Check out all lights
    - Driving lights
    - Headlights
    - High beams
    - Emergency
    - Brake
  - Note
    - Don't let dealer cut into your driving evaluation.
    - If possible, drive car with everything off
    - After silent test, run car with a/c on
    - After silent test, run car with heater on
    - Turn off radio
  - Any non-normal noises
  - Assuming a straight, flat road, drive straight and brake; does it pull to a side? If so, that is an issue.
  - When turning wheel, are any noises, clunks, ,... noticed? If so, that is probably indicates an issue. Be sure to turn in both directions
  - Turn wheel extreme left and turn wheel extreme right
  - Drive for four minutes. Pull to side of road, stop and restart car. This increases the probability that the ECU will report drivability issues.
- Transmission
  - Automatic
    - When shifting, are any clunks observed
    - While driving, does it shift smoothly
    - Are you able to accurate smoothly
    - Any whines perceived
  - Manual
    - Does it engage smoothly
    - How does the pedal feel
    - How crisp is transmission
    - Any whines perceived

# Car Check List

- Air Conditioning
  - Does it get cold
  - Does it get cold in a fair amount of time
  - Do you hear any A/C noises, whines, vibrations
  - How does the car idle?
    - Did the engine RPM increase appropriately
  - Do all ducts work
  - Do all climate controls work
- Heater
  - Does it get hot
  - How long does it take
  - Do you notice any coolant inside? If so, the heater core is bad.
  - Do all ducts work
  - Do all climate controls work
- Interior
  - All power and cigarette outlets work
  - Interior lights all work
    - fading
  - All locks work
    - Inside
    - outside
  - All windows work
  - Any cracks in any of the windows
  - Seats
    - All levers work
    - Moves back and forward
    - Any tears
  - Carpet
    - Any stains
    - Any tears
    - Floor mats present; be sure to look under them as well
  - Smells
    - Animals
    - Smoker
  - Check glove box
    - Owner's manual present
  - Is anything wet

# Car Check List

- Ask for maintenance history
  - Look for recommended maintenance
  - Look for major fixes
  - Who did the work?
- Cruise control
  - Turn on/Turn off/Turn on
  - Set
  - Resume
  - Accelerate
- Purchase
  - Get all and test all keys
  - Get all and test all alarm fob
  - Owner removes all personal affects
  - Title
    - Should have a green bar around it. If red, it is salvage title
    - Get title first and then pay
    - Don't leave a deposit to hold car while they get title, typical scam

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