

Trade Me Car Buying Checklist

This isn't intended to be an exhaustive checklist, nor does it need to be strictly followed. We do however hope that it's a useful guide that makes buying a vehicle easier.

Visual inspection

- Inspect the interior: look for rust, bubbling paintwork, scratches, chips in the windscreen, and panels or doors that don't line up which could indicate a crash.
- Inside, look for damp areas or water damage. Sit in all the seats and check they're comfortable. Make sure there aren't any unexplained smells.
- Try the lights, electric windows, sunroof and mirrors, heater/air conditioner, radio and anything else that could be faulty.
- If you have some vehicle knowledge, check the engine; look for cracks or wear.
- Check the paperwork is up to date and ask the seller if there is anything else you should know.

Credentials checklist

- Pre-purchase inspection.**
Unless you're a mechanic or know a lot about cars, it's wise to get a professional pre-purchase inspection. Use a professional company such as VTNZ.
- Vehicle Information Report (VIR).**
Invest in a MotorWeb VIR to reveal legal status and registered history. This includes whether the car has money owing, been reported stolen, is a damaged import or has been re-registered.

Test drive checklist

- Check the registration and Warrant of Fitness are up to date. If not, you could be fined.
- If it's being sold privately check that the owner's insurance covers you.
- On the test drive, try the car on a hill, urban roads and the motorway to gauge performance. Park it in a place you'd usually park.
- On the road, feel how the car handles corners and take note of any noises, squeaky brakes, burning smells, vibrations, fumes or anything else that seems strange.

Congratulations, you bought a new vehicle! But now what?

- Paperwork will need to be completed on purchase. This may include:
 - Change of ownership
 - Insurance
 - Vehicle licensing (Rego)
 - Warrant of Fitness (WoF)
 - Road user charges for diesel vehicles (RUC)
 - Registration

Happy trading!

