

Durham Trading Standards

Checklist for buying a used car



Bodywork	
Check that the windshield is free from cracks and chips	
Check that the paintwork matches and that paint is not fresh (this could indicate rust or previous body damage)	
Check for body work damage	
Tyres	
Check that all tyres are the same	
Check that tyres are free from cuts, bubbles or cracks	
Check to see if the tread is even (if uneven, this could indicate alignment or suspension problems)	
Engine	
Check to see if the engine is free from fluid or leaks	
Check the battery is free from corrosion	
Check the exhaust pipe for blue or black emissions	
Check the gearbox is smooth	
Check that there is no grinding noise when reversing	
Suspension	
Check the vehicle is level	
Check for creaking noises by bouncing the vehicle	
Check the chassis is neither bent or cracked	
Interior	
Check the are unworn and free of cracks	
Check that all doors open freely	
Check that the boot opens freely	
Check all gauges to ensure they are working correctly	

Check that the dashboard warning lights are not displayed	
Check the heater and air conditioning	
Check the wiper and wiper fluid	
Check all seatbelts	
Check all door locks	
Check that all windows open and close correctly	
Brakes	
Check the vehicle does not pull to one side when braking	
Check that the hand/parking brake works	
Check the wheel moves freely when applying the anti-lock brakes	
Steering	
Check the vehicle does not drift to one side	
Check there is no shaking or vibrating	
Check that there is no resistance when the steering wheel is turned	
Paperwork	
Check the MOT certificate	
Check the service history	
Check the DVLA V5 certificate	
Check the manufacturers warranty	
<p>Additional checks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a full vehicle history check carried out before you buy • Have the car independently inspected • If purchasing a warranty check the terms and conditions <p>NOTE: If a seller objects to you inspecting the vehicle, be suspicious. A reputable trader will have no objections to you or an independent mechanic checking the vehicle before you buy.</p>	

For further advice on your rights when buying a used car, please contact the Citizens' Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 04 05 06