

# USED-CAR CHECKLIST ADVANCE



<b>MAKE</b>		<b>MILEAGE</b>	
<b>MODEL</b>			
<b>VIN</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>ASKING PRICE</b>	
<b>SCAN-TOOL CODES (IF ANY)</b>			

## KEY



## THE BASICS

- |                                                                            | Yes                      | No                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>1</b> Is the owner's manual missing?                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>2</b> Are there large gaps in the service history or no records at all? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>3</b> Do you suspect the mileage isn't legitimate?                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>DEAL BREAKER</b>                                                        |                          |                          |
| <b>4</b> Does the title include the word "salvage"?                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## EXTERIOR

- |                                                                                            |                          |                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>5</b> Is there evidence of curb damage on the wheels?                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>6</b> Are the windshield wiper blades damaged?                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>7</b> Are any hubcaps missing, damaged or loose?                                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>8</b> Are all the tire pressures properly set?                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>9</b> Is the paint faded or cracked?                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>10</b> Are any panels a different shade or color?                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>11</b> Are any of the panel gaps markedly different than the others?                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>12</b> Are any of the trim pieces loose or missing?                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>13</b> Does a magnet fail to adhere to the sheet metal? (Try several spots.)            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>14</b> Are any of the tires a different brand or size?                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>15</b> Is there evidence of accident damage that has been poorly repaired?              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>16</b> Are lug nuts missing?                                                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>17</b> Are there any small dark spots or oily film on the bumper near the exhaust pipe? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>18</b> Are there any small rust spots?                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>DEAL BREAKER</b>                                                                        |                          |                          |
| <b>19</b> Is there rust everywhere?                                                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## INTERIOR

- |                                                                                            |                          |                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>20</b> Are there any tears or wear marks in the seats?                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>21</b> Are there any cracks, blemishes or broken trim?                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>22</b> Are the spare tire, jack and tools damaged or missing?                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>23</b> Do any of the windows go down or up slower than the others? Do they make noises? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- |                                                                                                                         | Yes                      | No                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>24</b> When the climate control is turned on, does the fan squeak or rattle or operate on only one speed setting?    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>25</b> Does the air conditioning blow warm air?                                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>26</b> Turn on all the accessories (windshield wipers, radio, power mirrors, etc.). Do any fail to operate properly? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>27</b> Is the brake pedal worn more or less than the mileage on the odometer would suggest?                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>28</b> Is there any rust or evidence of water in the spare-tire well?                                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>29</b> Does the sunroof operate slowly, as if it's struggling to move?                                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>DEAL BREAKER</b>                                                                                                     |                          |                          |
| <b>30</b> Is there a stale smell, like mildew or spoiled milk?                                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>31</b> Is there evidence of water damage in the glovebox or under the rear seat?                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## CHASSIS/UNDERBODY

- |                                                                                                                                                     |                          |                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>32</b> Are any of the inner fender shields missing or broken?                                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>33</b> Put your knee on the bumper, bounce the car three times, then stop. Does the body move up and down more than two times?                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>34</b> Is there uneven wear on any of the tires?                                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>35</b> Does oil coat any of the shock absorbers?                                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>36</b> Jack up the car and safely support it so the wheels are off the ground. Tug and push on the wheels. Is there any lateral play at the hub? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>37</b> Pull on the tie rods and the suspension mounts. Do you detect any movement?                                                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>38</b> Are the brake pads and rotors worn out?                                                                                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>39</b> Is there rust on any of the underbody surfaces?                                                                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>40</b> Check the engine bottom. Any sign of fluid leaks?                                                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>41</b> What about transmission and differential leaks?                                                                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>42</b> Is there any bent or dented metal?                                                                                                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>43</b> Are there shiny marks on the pinch welds?                                                                                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>44</b> Is there fluid seepage around the brake caliper or from the bottom of the brake drums?                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>45</b> Check the ground under the car. Are there any puddles of oil or fluid?                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>46</b> Look at the bottom of the radiator. Is it wet from coolant?                                                                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

# USED-CAR CHECKLIST ADVANCE

## ENGINE

	Yes	No
<b>47</b> With the engine off, squeeze the hoses (be careful, they may be hot). Do they feel stiff or brittle?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>48</b> Are there cracks in the belt(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>49</b> Are there any wires not covered by sheathing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>50</b> Are there any loose hose clamps?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>51</b> Are there any loose and corroded battery clamps?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>52</b> Is the battery more than 4 years old?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>53</b> Is there any sign of fluid leaks at the accessories (power-steering pump, brake reservoir)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>54</b> Any evidence of nesting mice or other animals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>55</b> Is the air filter dirty?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>56</b> Are fluid levels (power steering, brake, coolant, oil and transmission) below the minimum?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>57</b> Check for oil change stickers. Is the car long overdue?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>58</b> Is there seepage at the bottom of the brake reservoir?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>59</b> Is there sludge in the bottom of the coolant reservoir?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>60</b> If the engine has a timing belt, is it older than 4 years? If unknown, answer "yes."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## ENGINE, ADVANCED (REQUIRES A MORE RIGOROUS INSPECTION; CLEAR WITH OWNER FIRST)

<b>61</b> Check the battery for parasitic drains. Is the standby current more than 75 milliamps?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>62</b> Check the voltage between the coolant and battery ground. Is it higher than 250 millivolts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>63</b> Plug in a scan tool. Are there any pending codes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>64</b> Pressure-test the cooling system. Does it leak?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### DEAL BREAKER

<b>65</b> Do a compression test. Are any of the cylinders 25 percent lower or more than the highest?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>66</b> Do a cylinder leak-down test. Do any cylinders leak more than 15 percent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## POWERTRAIN STARTUP

<b>67</b> Are there any strange noises (belt squeak, exhaust leak)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>68</b> Turn the key to the "on" position. Do the warning lights fail to illuminate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>69</b> Start the car. Do the warning lights remain on?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>70</b> Does the airbag light stay on or blink?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>71</b> Does the engine fail to settle into a consistent idle within a couple of minutes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>72</b> Automatic transmission: Put the car in drive. Does it clunk into gear?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>73</b> Manual transmission: Depress the clutch. Does it feel stiff or jerky?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## ON THE ROAD

	Yes	No
<b>80</b> Drive the car in tight circles in a parking lot. Does anything rub or clunk?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>81</b> Brake firmly. Does the pedal feel soft and mushy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>82</b> Does the feel of the brake pedal change (e.g., soft one stop, firm the next)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>83</b> Does the car veer to one side while braking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>84</b> Drive over some bumps at normal speeds. Does the car bounce up and down after hitting a bump?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>85</b> Do you hear any loud noises from the suspension, such as clunks or creaks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>86</b> Get up to highway speeds. Is there any vibration?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>87</b> Is the steering wheel off-center when the car is going straight?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>88</b> Do you hear excessive wind noise?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>89</b> Do the interior pieces rattle over bumps?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>90</b> Does the car pull to one side?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>91</b> Accelerate briskly. Does the transmission jerk at the shift points?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>92</b> Does the car accelerate in fits and starts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>93</b> Manual transmission: Put the car in top gear while driving at 30 mph. Floor the throttle. Do the engine revs climb quickly, as if the clutch is slipping?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### DEAL BREAKER

<b>94</b> Do you hear any knocking noises from the engine that get faster with higher engine speed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>95</b> Does the car feel tired, as if it's worn out?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## TEST DRIVE (WITH A FRIEND)

<b>96</b> Have someone watch the headlamps and marker and brake lights as you operate them. Are any burned out?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>97</b> With your friend standing behind the car, start the engine. Is there sustained visible smoke?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>98</b> With your friend following, drive the car. Do the wheels wobble, or does the vehicle have an odd stance (e.g., it rides low in the rear)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>99</b> Is there smoke coming from the exhaust during acceleration?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## POST-TEST-DRIVE INSPECTION

<b>100</b> Look under the hood. Do you hear a hissing noise?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>101</b> Check under the car again. Any sign of fresh fluid leaks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## WHAT IT MEANS

Number of "yes" answers	Conclusion
Fewer than 5	<i>Probably a cream puff</i>
5 to 10	<i>Relatively easy to fix</i>
More than 10	<i>Potentially a time sink, but nothing serious</i>
Fewer than 5	<i>Nothing to fret about—it's a used car</i>
5 to 10	<i>Enough DIY fix-its to last a year</i>
More than 10	<i>Just walk away</i>
Fewer than 3	<i>Make a lowball offer</i>
3 to 6	<i>Proceed with extreme caution</i>
More than 6	<i>Abandon all hope, ye who enter here</i>

### DEAL BREAKER

One or more deal breakers: Dodge this bullet.

