Vehicle Inspection Checklist

**Exterior**

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**Tires**

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Windshield free of cracks Body panel colors match

Magnet adheres to all steel body panels

Fresh paint job (if yes, it could be to conceal rust)

Seams where the trunk and hood close are properly aligned Seams where doors and fenders meet are properly aligned Free of body scratches

Free of body dents

Windshields wipers and blades fully functional

Headlights and directional lights intact and fully functional

Tires are a reputable brand name (Michelin, Bridgestone, Goodyear) Tires are all of the same make

Tires are of free of any cuts, bubbles or cracks

Tread worn evenly (uneven wear indicates alignment and suspension problems) Spare tire, jack and lug wrench on car and fully functional

Spare tire inflated

**Engine**

Free of fluid or oil leaks

Oil filler neck not coated with thick, black deposits Battery terminals free of corrosion

Oil dip stick free of dark, black oil Free of odors while engine is running

Exhaust pipe emissions are neither blue (indicates engine burns oil) or black (indicate excessive oil consumption)

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**Suspension**

* Vehicle rests levelly
* When bouncing the vehicle's corners, no creaking noises are made
* All corners respond the same when bouncing

**Interior**

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Seats unworn and free of cracks All doors open and close freely Trunk opens and closes freely

Lacks a heavy scent of air freshener (may indicate something is being concealed) All gauges work

No dashboard warning lights remain illuminated Stereo works

Heater works

Air conditioner works Windshield wipers work

Windshield wiper fluid dispenses properly

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[Source:](http://www.dmv.org/) <http://www.dmv.org/buy-sell/used-cars/used-car-work-sheet.php>

Vehicle Inspection Checklist

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**Frame**

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All seats equipped with functional seat belts All seats adjust properly

Power windows operate properly

Sunroof opens and closes properly (if applicable) Car alarm works (if applicable)

Trunk and driver-side door lock and unlock with key Hazard lights function properly

Headlights, including brights, work properly

Chassis is neither bent nor cracked

No signs of crumpling or straightening inside the trunk Frame holes just inside outer edge clean and free of scratches

**Automatic Transmission**

* Transmission fluid looks clean, not dirty or gritty (no indicates possible internal transmission problem)
* Transmission neither slips nor delays when driving

**Manual or Standard Transmission**

* Each gear shifts smoothly
* No grinding noises when in reverse

**Brakes**

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Vehicle steers straight and does not pull to one side when applying brakes Parking brake engages and disengages freely

No grinding noises when applying

Wheels do not lock when applying antilock brakes (if applicable)

**Steering**

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Vehicle does not drift to one side without prodding Vehicle is stable; no shaking or vibrating

No resistance in the steering wheel when turning No clicking or clunking when turning

**Miscellaneous**

* Car manual located in the glove compartment
* Instructions included for any accessories
* Service and repair records available
* Owner has [title](http://www.dmv.org/title-transfers.php)

**Other Insights**

* Walk away if the seller objects to your inspection

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Don't feel rushed while inspecting

Try to get a mechanic to assess checklist results Use any flaws against the asking price

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