Buying A Used Car Checklist

Bring along this checklist as well as:

___ Notepad ___ Pen/pencil ____ Flashlight ____ Small magnet

Also, before meeting current owner, check Carfax Vehicle History Report to see if any major damage has been repaired

Things to ask current owner:

-Does seller have maintenance records?
-How many people previously owned this car?
-Why are they selling the car?
-Any accidents or major repairs?
-Does the seller have a clear title to the vehicle?

Exterior of the vehicle:

YES	NO	
0	0	Are the exterior panels aligned properly (in a straight line)?
0	0	Do the doors open/close with ease?
0	0	Are the gaps, between the panels, hood and trunk, too wide? Too narrow?
0	0	Any rusty spots or possible rust cover-ups?
0	0	Any discoloration to paint? Mismatched paint?
0	0	Is there a hitch? Has it ever been used for towing?
0	0	Are all tires same brand and size?
0	0	Do all tires have same tire of wear and tread? Any cracks?
0	0	Is the spare tire inflated?
0	0	Do hub-caps need a key/special tool to remove them? Is it present?
0	0	Any rim damage?
0	0	To check suspension, does the car sit level? If you go to all 4 corners of the car, and press down on it, does it react the same? Any creaking or noise?
0	0	Does there appear to be a leak in shock absorbers? Any broken?
0	0	Is there a gas cap? Does it require a key?
0	0	Any signs of accident damage when you look inside the trunk? Under the hood? Wheels? (Look for areas that may have been straightened)
0	0	Under the vehicle, does there appear to be any fluid leaks?
0	0	Are there any scrapes or unusual marks on the bottom of the car?
0	0	Do any of the parts seem loose? Any bolts or brackets missing?
0	0	Any part of the exhaust rusty? When car is running, is there any smoke coming from the exhaust (a small amount is okay)?

Engine:

YES	NO	
0	0	Any signs of leaks? Oil? Coolants? Fluids?
0	0	Is engine dirty/oily?
0	0	When running the engine, are there any weird smells or does it smell hot?
0	0	When running engine, is there any noises? Metallic sounds?
0	0	When running engine, do any of the dash lights come on?
0	0	Any missing parts?
0	0	Any signs of poor maintenance?
0	0	Is oil level low?
0	0	Does the car hesitate when accelerated?

Transmission:

MANUAL-

YES	NO	
0	0	Any signs of leaks?
0	0	Trouble shifting gears?
0	0	Any unusual noises?
0	0	Does it shift into reverse smoothly?
0	0	Does the clutch slip?

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