

5 Common Mistakes To Avoid When Buying A Used Car

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The used car market is huge, and every day lots of people are spending way too much money when they buy a used car. Dealers count on this. In fact, the used car section of most new car dealerships is one of the most profitable departments for the dealer. There are usually very common mistakes that most people make that cost them money. Let's review them here:

1. Not doing advance research to know what their current car is worth. This is a very common mistake that is so easy to solve today. There are two major providers of used car value information in the US and they are (1) Kelly Blue Book and (2) the NADA Guide. It used to be that you had to find someone who had a copy of one of either of them to find out what your vehicle is worth. But now all you have to do is just log onto the internet and go to their websites to get a quick, easy figure with no hassle. It's worth the time taken to know what your car is worth as you start to negotiate a trade-in or sale.
2. Not doing the homework needed to find out what car will be best for you. All too often shoppers make the mistake of getting too focused on one particular brand or model and not even considering alternatives, simply because either they don't know about the others, or they are just allowing emotions to rule their buying decision instead of being well-informed. If you get too emotionally attached to one car, this plays into the hands of the dealer and you will most likely pay a lot more for the car than you would if didn't let emotion control the process.
3. Not arranging financing beforehand. These days it just makes no sense to rely on a car dealer to finance your vehicle for you after you have picked it out. When you do that you are now allowing the dealer to mark up the financing arrangements and get paid a portion of the loan profits as a result. You will never usually notice it though because it is hidden in the monthly payments. Instead, there are many great loan companies that offer loans direct to consumers over the internet, and you can get all of your financing needs taken care of in advance. This leaves you free to negotiate the very best deal for the car you want without financing entering the picture and muddying the waters.
4. Not doing a thorough test drive. It's amazing how many people only spend a few minutes in a car that they plan to use for the next several years and call it a test drive. Especially with used cars you need to get to know that car and make sure that it performs as you desire in whatever kind of driving conditions that you plan to use it, and take the time necessary to test it thoroughly. Also make sure that anyone else can fit into the car comfortably if you have family and friends that travel with you often.
5. Not having the car inspected by a qualified mechanic. This is perhaps one of the most significant reasons that buyers wind up with a car that has problems. Unless you are a mechanic yourself, you most likely will not be able to truly determine the mechanical condition of the car. By taking it to an independent mechanic and asking for a written report on the vehicle's condition, you should have a pretty good idea of whether this car is in sound condition or not.

If you avoid the common mistakes mentioned above, you can often buy a used car at the right price, that fits your needs and wants, and get peace of mind in the bargain. Jim Johnson writes on many consumer related topics including autos. You can find out more about used car buying tips and cheap used cars for sale by visiting our Auto Review website.