

Used Car Test Drive Tip Sheet

Before you get into the used car:

- Check the trunk. Will it haul what you carry (golf clubs, baby stroller, etc.)?
- Make sure there is a spare tire, jack and tire tool.
- Check to see if there is an owner's manual.
- Check the windshield for chips or cracks and the wiper blades.

When you get into the vehicle:

- Is the car easy or difficult to get in and out of?
- Is there enough head room and leg room?
- Take a deep breath. Does it smell like a used car? Does it smell like smoke or dirt? Often these smells will not go away without constant air freshener to mask them.
- Check the interior. Does it look like a used car? Is it clean or spoiled? Consider that some spots will be difficult to remove.
- Look around and adjust the mirrors. Take notice of blind spots – your personal height, and positioning of the driver's seat determines the size of your personal blind spots.
- Can you easily reach and read the radio controls?
- Turn on the radio, turn up the volume and the bass and listen for distortion or buzz. This gives signs of blown speakers caused by abuse. Remember, you are only testing the sound system, don't leave on during the entire test drive – you may miss out on revealing noises or rattles.
- Lower and raise every window, and check the sunroof if the car has one.

During the used car test drive:

- Choose a route with stop-and-go driving and both smooth and bumpy roads. If you do a lot of highway driving, be sure to go on the highway.
- Before you take off, take a moment to notice how smoothly the vehicle changes gears (from Park, to Reverse and to Drive).
- When driving, concentrate on the driving experience.
- As you drive, notice how smoothly the car shifts gears. An automatic used car should shift smoothly.
- Feel the brakes, notice how fast or slow the brakes respond.
- Does the car vibrate under your seat?
- If it is a 4 Wheel Drive, engage it and feel how easily the system operates.
- How does the car feel when getting into and out of a parking place?
- Test the windshield wiper and washer operation. Don't forget to check rear wipers on used SUVs, station wagons and hatchbacks.
- Check the air conditioning and heater. Do they run efficiently?
- If the passenger(s) are talking, ask everyone in the vehicle to be quiet so that you can listen to the motor. Is it loud or quiet? Does it make unusual noises?
- When driving on a bumpy road, ask everyone in the vehicle to be quiet and listen for any unusual rattles or squeaks.
- Notice how straight the vehicle drives. If it pulls to the right or left, it may be in need of a front-end alignment, an expense you may incur. (Note: The grade of the road can affect how straight the vehicle will drive.)

After the used car test drive:

- Do the tires match? Tires should match on the same axle, and all should be equally sized and rated as per the manufacturer specifications.
- Use a rag to remove the oil filler cap. Does white smoke come out of the hole? If yes, you may want to move on to the next used car of interest.
- Look at the underside of the oil filler cap. Is there water, rust or sludge? If yes, you may want to move on to the next used car of interest.
- Pull out your used car comparison worksheet and jot down your thoughts of the car you just drove.

Adverse Weather Conditions:

- Just because it's raining or snowing does not mean you should avoid looking at a used car. Test driving the car during these conditions will give you a good opportunity to try out how the vehicle drives in these conditions. Just make sure you also check the vehicle in daylight to check out the body condition, alignment, an expense you may incur. (Note: The grade of the road can affect how straight the vehicle will drive.)

Call 1-888-227-7253 for the location nearest you.

About Enterprise Car Sales

Enterprise Car Sales is a division of Enterprise Rent-A-Car, the largest rental car company in North America. Headquartered in St. Louis, Enterprise Car Sales was founded in 1962 with the goal of bringing a new level of professionalism and unparalleled level of customer service to used car sales.

Enterprise Car Sales offers more than 120 makes and models of late-model, and low-mileage certified used vehicles. With more than 130 locations nationwide and thousands of used cars online, you're sure to find the one that's just right for you.

