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Questions to Ask a Seller When Buying a Used Car

General Information and Features

What is the year, model and color of the car? _____
How many miles are on the car? _____
Is the car manual or automatic transmission? _____
What options are on the car? _____
Are the seats vinyl, cloth or leather? _____
If the seats are electric are they working normally? _____
Does the car have an alarm and does it work? _____
Does the car alarm ever false trigger? How often? _____

Ownership and History

Why is the owner selling the car? _____
How many owners has this car had? _____
Was the car driven by a person who smokes? _____
Has the odometer ever been rolled back? _____
What is the 17 digit VIN# of this car? _____
Does the car have an extended warranty? _____
If so, is the Extended Warranty transferable to a new owner? _____
(This can only be verified in writing from the existing policy).
Has the title been branded as junked, flooded, totaled, etc.? _____
In some states they are required by law to disclose this in the ad _____
Has the car been in an accident, if so, was there frame damage? _____
What was the cost of the repair? _____
Has the car ever been repainted? _____
How often was the car waxed? _____
Has the car been used for hire as a taxi or limousine? _____
Does the seller have the title in their possession for inspection? _____
Is the seller acting on behalf of a dealer? _____

Maintenance and Condition

Do they have all maintenance records? _____
Proof of tune ups and oil change receipts? _____
What are all the major problems with the car? _____
What is the condition of the paint on the car? _____
Are there any major scratches, dents or dimples in the paint? _____
Is there any rust on the car? _____
How is the condition of the interior, seats, dash & roof? _____
Are there any transmission problems? _____
If manual transmission, when was the clutch last replaced? _____
Does the A/C blow cold and does the heater blow warm? _____
Is the battery, alternator and starter in good condition? _____

Any electrical problems with the car? _____
Does the Radio work? _____
Does the car have an oil leak, transmission leak or radiator leak? _____
When was the last time the radiator was flushed? _____
When was the last time the A/C system was worked on? _____
Does the car burn oil or have white exhaust? _____
What month was the last oil change? _____
When was the last tune up or fuel injector cleaning? _____
How old are the tires and when were they last replaced? _____
If the car has headlight motors do they work properly? _____
Do the power doors and power windows work? _____
Is the dashboard cracked? _____
Is there a CD changer and is it working? _____
Any skipping problems with the CD player? _____
Are all speakers working properly? _____
Does the water pump make any strange rattles or noises? _____
When was the battery or alternator replaced last? _____

Drivability Issues

Does the car drive straight or does it pull to the right or left? _____
When was the last time the tires were aligned? _____
Any problems with excessive wear and balding on the tires? _____

Logistics

How low in price is the seller willing to go? _____
When can the car be picked up by the buyer? _____
Can the car be brought to a mechanic for an inspection? _____
Does the seller have the title to the car? _____
Does the seller have proof that the car is theirs to sell? _____
Does the seller have a valid driver's license to prove ownership? _____
Is any money still owed to a bank for a loan on the car? _____
How many people have looked at the car? What are the offers? _____