

# BUYER BEWARE – TIPS ON BUYING A USED VEHICLE

**Start with a general visual inspection of the entire vehicle. As you walk around the exterior and look into the vehicles interior, make note of the following:**

- What is your first impression? Is the vehicle clean? Is it clean inside and out? Does the vehicle look “loved”? Does it appear to be leaking any fluids?
- Make note of how much wear is visible on the seats, rubber pedal pads, and around the door openings (weather stripping, door handles, scuff plates and kick panels).
- Test the Climate Control System as well as any features available (radio, PWR windows/seats)
- Inspect the vehicle for Road Rash (damage from rocks/gravel impacting the vehicle) and be sure to check the rocker panels and rear bumper as well. Heavy road rash damage can indicate the vehicle was used primarily on rough or rugged surfaces. This could lead to excessive wear of the suspension and steering components.
- Check the VIN plate is on the vehicle, is in good condition, and record the VIN number.
- Open the driver’s side front door and look for a sticker on the door jamb. If you find a yellow sticker on the door jamb, this indicates that the vehicle was previously registered in a different province and had to pass a mechanical inspection in order to be legally registered in Saskatchewan. If you find a red sticker in the door jamb, this indicates that the vehicle was involved in an accident or incident that required major structural repairs and/or was deemed a total loss as a result of a collision and subsequently rebuilt. This is not a desirable vehicle.

**After you have completed a visual inspection of the exterior and interior, you should always check the following items under the hood:**

- Inspect the battery for dirt, corrosion, or leaks.
- Check the condition of the fluids such as the engine oil, transmission oil and brake fluid. These fluids should be clean, and they should be “full” or in the “safe zone” on the dipstick. If the car is cold (has not been running yet), check the antifreeze level as well.
- Inspect the engine compartment itself for signs of leaks, excessive grime/filth, or rodent nests or damage.

**When considering purchasing a used vehicle, it is also a good idea to research the vehicles history in the following ways:**

- Request the seller provide you with a full Service History for the vehicle.
- Consider purchasing a “CAR PROOF” report.
- Using the VIN# you recorded earlier, do a “VIN SEARCH” on [www.sgi.sk.ca](http://www.sgi.sk.ca). This quick and easy online search will show you a complete accident/damage history for the vehicle.
- Request permission to have a Pre-Purchase check-up performed at a service facility of your choice.

**Vehicles should always be test driven before they are purchased. There are many things to look, listen and feel for when test driving a vehicle. It is often a good idea to take a friend along who is experienced with vehicles to be a second set of eyes and ears. Be sure to test the vehicle at both low speeds (city driving) and high speeds (highway or freeway driving). Things to be aware of are:**

- Excessive noise, foul smell and/or vibration from the engine, transmission, or differential.
- Excessive Noise and/or vibration from the wheels and tires at any speed
- Road noises, body noises, or wind noises when operating
- Vehicle wanders, pulls to the left or right, does not shift smoothly
- Steering Wheel pulling to the left or right or shaking/vibrating when you apply brakes
- Warning or Service lights on the dash or gauges that are not functional