

NEW CAR Buying Guide



Show Willingness to Walk Away

One of the most significant points of bargaining power buyers can show is their willingness to leave a deal on the table. Since many new vehicles come at exceptional costs, it's critical to avoid being stuck with regret.

Even if a car hits all the check marks on your list of must-haves, contain your excitement when negotiating.

Expressing your readiness to walk out of a showroom without the keys is easier if you know of another dealership that offers a similar vehicle. Perform research throughout your region to find pricing, terms and other types of cars.

Before closing the book on a deal, tell your salesperson your plan to visit another lot and find a better deal. They will sometimes be more willing to negotiate once realizing they could lose your business.



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TURN DOWN TRADE-IN

Negotiation or settling for a lackluster trade-in offer can be the difference between saving and spending thousands toward a new purchase. To find out an accurate value of your current vehicle, check out authoritative resources like the Kelley Blue Book

before hitting the dealership.

You can enter information regarding mileage, VIN and the condition to receive a general idea of its worth.

In addition to including the features that your car has, you will also be asked which category it qualifies regarding its integrity. Be honest when

deciding how to grade your vehicle as the dealership will likely be strict in their terms. Here is how the KBB will classify a vehicle.

- **Fair:** has some cosmetic defects that require repairing and/or replacing.

- **Good:** features repairable cosmetic deficits and is free of

major mechanical problems.

- **Very good:** minor cosmetic defects but is in excellent mechanical condition.

- **Excellent:** looks new and is in excellent mechanical condition.

Of all the vehicles valued by the Kelley Blue Book, only 3% fall in the excellent category.

AVOID DRIVING A VEHICLE HOME

If a salesperson suggests you take a car you're considering home for the evening, avoid the temptation. This sales tactic allows buyers to become familiar with the vehicle, making turning down the deal more complicated.

Hold off on the Credit Check

If you must apply for a loan at the dealership, avoid agreeing to a credit check early. Instead, ensure the deal is close to being finalized and you agree on the overall costs, trade-in value and length of a loan.

Allowing the dealer to investigate your records causes a “hard pull” on your credit, which can cause your essential score to lower.

According to the National Foundation for Credit Counseling, there are two common types of injuries.

A soft pull doesn’t always indicate that you are attempting to borrow money. This could be caused when you check your record personally to discover your score or a credit card company researches it to offer pre-approved offers. Or, if an employer requires a check before hiring, it’s also classified as a soft inquiry that won’t affect a score.

On the other hand, a hard check is performed when you apply for a loan. This includes money for an auto, education or property loan.

Bureaus define these inquiries as ways to track your intentions to borrow, which helps them see how often you



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ask for loans.

The NCFE reports that borrowers have a 45-day window where multiple inquiries are counted as a single mark by the Fair Isaac Corporation (FICO.)

Keep in mind that if you find yourself rate-shopping different lenders, to do so during this period.

BORROW FROM A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

When you have an established checking or savings account with a local institution, ask them about a loan before visiting a dealership. There, you will discover your approved amount, loan terms and interest and what you should expect for payments.

It’s also reassuring that your funding is within the local community, making it easier to resolve questions or concerns.

LOOK FOR BANKING PERKS

Customers who open multiple accounts at banks or credit unions may qualify for

banking perks. Check with your branch to find out about reward programs or other incentives that are included with loans.

While you should never acquire lending solely for the bonus offerings, they can be an excellent addition while financing your brand new vehicle.

Why the Paint Job Matters

When searching for a new vehicle, you are probably deciding between numerous tech features, drivetrain options and body styles.

One consideration that is often overlooked or settled on is the color of the paint job. You may not realize the importance that the shade has for keeping the coating clean and how it affects your selling power down the road.

If you find your dream car at the dealership, but the color isn't quite what you have in mind, ask if they can order the same model with a different exterior.

They likely have contacts at other lots around the local area and more distant locations. A salesperson can possibly order a custom vehicle straight from the manufacturer.

Keep in mind that it may take several weeks before your ride arrives. Another option is to negotiate a fresh coat of paint in the color of your choice into the final sale price.

RESALE VALUE

Unless the new vehicle will be the last one you own, it's beneficial to choose a neutral color, rather than a flashy paint job. According to the Varsity Driving Academy, the average owner sells their car after four to five years of the initial pur-



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chase. If possible, look for shades of grays or whites to maintain its value, instead of brownish or golden colors which are commonly less popular.

KEEPING IT CLEAN

You may be enticed to pick up a sedan or pickup with an

attractive dark sheen and chrome accents. While it is calling your name sitting on the dealer's lot, you may form a different opinion after a rain or dust storm or a flock of birds flies over your parking spot.

Darker-colored cars are simply harder to keep clean as the

smallest speck of dirt can become an eyesore. If you choose a black or deep gray vehicle, remember to pick up a monthly pass to the nearest car wash.

WILL IT AFFECT YOUR INSURANCE PREMIUM?

Have you ever heard the

rumor that a red or flashy colored car always costs more to insure? Fortunately, it is merely a myth.

The Insurance Information Institute states that the color of your vehicle does not affect the price. Premiums are based on the cost of a car, an operator's age and their driving history.

Avoid Voiding your Warranty

Depending on the manufacturer of your new vehicle, it should carry a guarantee for a few years or the lifetime of specific components.

Unfortunately, warranties can be easily voided, even unintentionally. While you're at the dealership, ask for a thorough outline regarding what's covered and what may disqualify the protection plan.

If you are buying a car and planning to soup it up with modifications to enhance the horsepower or performance, it can sometimes be a dealbreaker. To maintain the full coverage of what the automaker covers, play it safe and ask a customer service representative if this type of tinkering is allowed. Routine modifications are OK, but major work might be problematic.

Check out three other easy ways to void a warranty, as suggested by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

MISUSE OF THE VEHICLE

Many passenger vehicles are just that, intended for daily driving on American roadways. If the damage is experienced while off-roading or drag racing, the manufacturer often has the right to disqualify the car for coverage. If you read the warranty guidelines, it should list its terms and what is considered normal operation.

NEGLECTING MAINTENANCE

One of the most significant reasons a warranty department will turn down a claim is due to a lack of proof of maintenance.

For coverage to remain intact, you must follow the manufacturer's recommendations for service intervals like oil changes, tire rotations and transmission services.

Receiving services at the dealership where the vehicle was purchased makes it simple to keep track, as they will have records in their system.

If you choose to perform the maintenance yourself, you must save all receipts and ensure the dates are marked.

Another way to ruin a warranty is by using unapproved fluids. Engines and other

important components require specific viscosities of oil, transmission lubrication and anti-freeze. Mixing the chemicals or using the wrong type can cause severe damage to a vehicle while leaving it unprotected by warranty.

TAMPERING WITH THE ODOMETER

Attempting to change the

mileage of your vehicle is a serious offense. While it will automatically void a covered vehicle's coverage, it also can land you in serious trouble.

According to the United States Department of Justice, altering the mileage reading on a motor vehicle is a felony. Make sure you trust the mechanic who will be performing repairs.



The Class of 2021

If you have been holding off on making a purchase of a new vehicle, 2021's lineup has something that will surely impress.

From the newly redesigned Ford F-150 to BMW's unprecedented i4 sedan, the options are loaded with fuel savings, aggressive exteriors and lush cabins. Check out what is to come in upcoming models, as reported by the Kelley Blue Book.

CADILLAC ESCALADE

With the moniker, "crown jewel" for Cadillac, the three-row full-size luxury SUV has big expectations to meet. This year, the brand is making a splash with significant technological advances, larger interiors and exteriors and a new suspension to improve ride quality.

For the first time, the Escalade will be offered with a non-gasoline engine, loaded with the popular Duramax 3.0 turbodiesel, which is found on GM's light-duty eco diesel trucks.

One of the most impressive features found in the Escalade is the newest version of Cadillac's Super Cruise. The smart software uses adaptive cruise and lane-keeping to allow the vehicle to drive itself on more than 200,000 miles of roadways in the



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United States and Canada.

FORD F-150

The long-standing most popular truck in America is getting a serious overhaul and introducing its first hybrid option in the lineup's history. The interior receives a fresh upgrade with an 8-inch infotainment system, with the option for a 12-inch screen

and digital clusters that display the type of terrain.

For the exterior, the F-150 stands slightly wider than its predecessor and offers buyers to choose from 11 different grilles and three headlight designs.

The base engine offered is a 3.3-liter V6, paired with a 10-speed automatic transmission to influence gasoline

savings. Another option is the long-awaited hybrid engine. With the PowerBoost, Ford suggests the truck will achieve 700 miles on a single tank of fuel.

BMW i4

The popular "i" family offered by BMW is growing in 2021 with the introduction of the i4. The pure-EV sedan is

expected to reach 370 miles on a single charge.

Impressively, the sedan will achieve an 80% recharge in only 35 minutes, making long-distance road trips possible.

While the official design is still under wraps, KBB estimates that it will be roughly the same size as the current 4 Series Gran Coupe.

Understanding the Lemon Law

When buying a vehicle, most owners aim to upgrade to a more reliable car while protecting it with a solid warranty.

Unfortunately, even brand-new automobiles are susceptible to malfunctions right off the lot or early into their operation.

Know how to protect yourself if the investment experiences a manufacturer's defect. It may be considered a lemon under state law.

While the specific term has different meanings and requirements throughout states, there is a level of federal protection.

According to the National Lemon Law Center, there may be grounds for a case if the manufacturer has been unable to properly repair your defective product in a reasonable number of attempts.

For example, the Better Business Bureau's National Program lays out how manufacturers determine that a vehicle is a lemon in Illinois. The qualified time for malfunctions begins from the delivery date or purchase, up to one-year or 12,000 miles, for either of these reasons:

- The same nonconformity has been subject to repair four or more times by the manufacturer, its agents or authorized dealers and the problem continues to exist.



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- The vehicle has been out of service by reason of repair of nonconformities for a total of 30 or more business days.

Check your local laws to determine the time intervals of coverage and what is considered a malfunction in your state.

Don't hesitate to take your new car to the dealership for inspection if you notice an unfamiliar noise or its driving integrity worsens. You don't

want to find yourself stuck with a lemon after the law's protection expires.

COMPENSATIONS

If it is deemed that the new car you leased or purchased is a lemon, you are entitled to receive the full amount you put toward the vehicle.

According to the Center for Auto Safety, this includes:

- Taxes, tags, title and other fees.

- Costs acquired through towing, repairs or insurance.

- Interest payments and finance charges.

- Rental car, loss of use damages and alternate transportation.

- Inconvenience.

If the manufacturer is unwilling to provide total reimbursement, you may benefit from hiring an attorney who is proficient with local lemon laws.

DON'T TURN ON THE DEALERSHIP

The staff at your community dealership are mostly on your side when determining if a vehicle is a lemon.

They simply resell the vehicles that are built by the respective automaker. Rather than blaming them for the inconveniences and spreading distaste for buying a defective car, lean on them for assistance in finding a resolution.

Remain Loyal to a Dealership

The asking price for new vehicles isn't always what a dealership expects to obtain after the sale.

In most cases, they expect a customer to negotiate on both the car's cost and the value of their trade in. If you have a connection in the industry, you may even be qualified for a significant discount on purchases and services.

Have you seen the commercials or newspaper advertisements from dealers that offer employee pricing for specific vehicles? The sales pitch is made to entice consumers into getting a once-in-a-lifetime deal on a new purchase.

However, the dealership may have access to money-saving rebates, year-long, under specific circumstances. Remaining loyal can place you in a category where you're eligible for significant discounts.

LOYALTY CREATES BUYING POWER

A dealership relies on each of its departments to remain profitable, not just selling new cars. Support its operations and the employees who keep your vehicles running by purchasing from the parts department, bringing the vehicle in for service and buying a professional detail.

As you become a regular customer, a representative may introduce you to loyalty



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programs like pre-paid services. Essentially when you purchase a vehicle, you can add a small fee to the monthly payment and avoid paying out-of-pocket for things like oil changes, inspections and tire rotations.

Even if you're not in the market to make a purchase, it's good to familiarize yourself with a dealership where you

will ultimately buy a new car. Expressing your loyalty for service and an interest in eventually investing can set you up for great pricing and a comfortable buying environment.

UNPRECEDENTED SUPPORT

The dealership sometimes gets a bad name because of the costs for parts and ser-

vices. However, genuine components are higher than aftermarket because the manufacturer chose them for optimal performance. Especially with the technology found on modern vehicles, some repairs aren't possible at an independent auto shop.

One reason the costs for labor at a dealership may be higher is the intense training

provided for their technicians.

Addressing intricate tech features requires classes, hands-on instruction and sometimes access to a manufacturer's engineer. The next time you balk at a quote for service at a dealership, remember that part of the cost ensures there are mechanics capable of making these repairs.