Buying a used car or truck is a big decision. Be a wise consumer; be certain of what you’re getting into.

This brochure gives you tips and ideas to help you in making your decision to buy a used vehicle.

ODOT does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission or access to our programs, services, activities, hiring, and employment practices.

To report any complaints or concerns related to discrimination, contact our Office of Civil Rights:
Office of Civil Rights Complaint Form 734-5008
ODOT.TITLEVI@odot.oregon.gov 1-855-540-6655

This information can be made available in an alternative format by contacting a local DMV field office.

A Consumer Protection Guide for Used Car Buyers

SPONSORED BY DMV BUSINESS REGULATION AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Tips for the Smart Car Buyer

Buying from a certified vehicle dealer allows you some protection. Vehicle dealers are required to be bonded and insured to operate. They also are required to follow specific laws and rules of the state.

• If you decide to buy from a private party, ask the following questions:
  – How long have you owned the vehicle?
  – Do you have the title, and is it in your name?
• Check their ID. Does it match the name on the title?
• Ask to test drive the vehicle.
• If a purchase is made, make sure the title is signed by the seller indicating release.

When buying from a certified dealer:
• Test drive the vehicle.
• Make sure the vehicle equipment—brakes, lights, horn, seat belts, wipers, etc.—is in good working order. If items are in need of repair, ask the dealer to repair them and get the agreement in writing.
• Ask the dealer for permission to have your own auto expert check out the vehicle.
• Consider obtaining vehicle history information from an online service provider.
• Remember, in Oregon, car buyers do not have three days following purchase to change their minds.*

*The “lemon law” deals with mechanical defects in new vehicles. Contact the Department of Justice regarding lemon law issues.

A Big Decision

Your used car or truck purchase is a big decision. Don’t hurry into it.
• Make sure the odometer is working. Obtain an odometer disclosure statement from the dealer.
• Don’t sign anything until you are ready to buy.
• Keep copies of all documents you signed, including any warranty statements.

Trading In a Vehicle

• If you have a trade-in vehicle, tell the dealer about any known problems so the next buyer of the vehicle won’t have any unexpected problems.
• If the trade-in has a lien attached, tell the title holder so the dealer can pay off the lien holder and obtain the title.
• The dealer has 15 days to pay off all liens. If this doesn’t happen, you may want to consider filing a complaint with DMV Business Regulation.
• If you consign a vehicle to a dealer, it must be registered to you.
• Give a copy of the title or registration to the dealer and make sure a consignment agreement is filled out and signed by both you and the dealer.
• Be sure to get a copy of the written consignment agreement from the dealer.
• When a dealer sells your consigned vehicle, they have 10 days to pay you. You have 30 days to furnish the title to the dealer, but try to provide the title upon payment.
• If you sold your vehicle to a private party, you have 10 days to notify DMV of the sale. Notification can be completed online at DMV2U.Oregon.gov. If you traded or consigned your vehicle with a certified dealer, they are responsible for notifying DMV of the sale.
• If you have title transfer questions, please contact DMV at (503) 945-5000.

Where to File a Complaint

Please complete a complaint form at DMV2U.Oregon.gov

Also, check out the web page at https://www.oregon.gov/odot/DMV/pages/dealers/complaints.aspx — your questions may be answered there.

Consumer issues involving warranties, contracts, safety issues or advertising should be directed to the Oregon Department of Justice (DOJ). The DOJ can be reached at (503) 378-4320 from Salem, (503) 299-5576 from Portland or (877) 877-9392 elsewhere in Oregon (toll free). You may also visit the DOJ web site at www.doj.state.or.us.