

NEVER buy a used car “AS-IS”

Dealers acquire used cars knowing their value, and what the car will sell for. Dealers no more want to get stuck with a lemon than you do. They appraise cars before buying them. Used cars bought at auctions come with disclosures and rules permit return of misrepresented cars. Sellers who violate auction rules lose their right to buy and sell cars.

When a dealer offers to sell you a car “AS-IS,” it knows well what it’s doing. It knows it will take a bath guaranteeing that car. If a dealer will not guarantee a used car, there’s a good reason behind that decision. It amazes us how many people buy a used car “AS-IS,” and then call us complaining it doesn’t run. Of course it doesn’t run. That’s why the dealer sold it “AS-IS.”

Nevertheless, there is a distinction between selling a car “AS-IS,” and knowingly concealing material facts the dealer knows or should know about the car. It’s OK to sell a used car “AS-IS.” There is nothing wrong with that, but selling a used car “AS-IS,” does not mean it’s OK to conceal major engine or transmission defects, such as a blown head gasket, slipping transmission, sludge-filled engine and oil pan with signs of overheating.

The most important thing to remember is a dealer who will not guarantee a used car knows it will lose its shirt doing so. If a dealer will not guarantee a used car, don’t buy it. The dealer knows more about that car than you do.