

How Not To Buy A Used Car - Dos & Don'ts

The poor and uneducated pay more. The rest simply pay for their mistakes.

Yesterday, we got 3 calls from consumers eviscerated by used car dealers who belong in jail. Here are dos and don'ts with instructions you won't find anywhere. No one tells it like it is. Here are the cold hard facts. Future postings will provide more detail for each item.

- ▶ **NEVER** buy a used car “AS-IS”;
- ▶ **NEVER** buy a used car without having it thoroughly tested and inspected by an experienced and certified ASE mechanic or technician;
- ▶ **NEVER** buy a used car without ***knowing*** its value;
- ▶ **NEVER** buy a used car without studying its repair history;
- ▶ **NEVER** buy an expensive exotic used car;
- ▶ **NEVER** rely on CARFAX™;
- ▶ **NEVER** fail to study the car before touching the key;
- ▶ **NEVER** buy from someone selling for another;
- ▶ **NEVER** believe anything a dealer tells you unless it's **handed** to you, in writing, signed by the dealer, and safely in your pocket;
- ▶ **NEVER** buy a warranty NOT from the manufacturer of the car;
- ▶ **NEVER** accept or believe a car salesman's explanation as to why a car doesn't seem right during your test drive;

- ▶ **NEVER** accept or believe the dealer will repair something free of charge **after** you put money down;

DO:

- ▶ Buy from Avis, Hertz, Enterprise, etc.;
- ▶ Read *Consumer Reports Magazine*'s annual auto issue (usually April) to find a list of the most reliable used cars;
- ▶ Learn how to inspect a used car;
- ▶ Try to arrange your own financing;
- ▶ Negotiate interest and walk away if you can't;
- ▶ Read online reviews about car dealers;
- ▶ Call me for a private referral to a dealer in whom we have confidence will not cheat or gouge you;
- ▶ Insist on copies of all prior repairs;
- ▶ Insist on a **complete** Carfax™ Report, but don't rely on it;
- ▶ Take the car on an extensive test ride on the highway, over bumps, around curves, testing the horn, wipers, brakes, alignment, steering;
- ▶ Require all adjustments and repairs to be made **before** you put a single dollar down on any used car;
- ▶ Get written instructions how to get warranty service;
- ▶ Call the police and file a report if a dealer refuses to give you a legible

written repair order every time you take your car for service;

- ▶ Read at least a portion of the *Used Car Lemon Law*;