

Buying safely checklist

Brought to you in partnership with VSTAG
(The Vehicle Safe Trading Advisory Group)



Check the documents

- Ensure the VIN (vehicle identification number), engine number and colour match the V5C
- Check the vehicle has the correct mileage and a current MOT (if the car's more than three year's old) - here's a helpful link www.gov.uk/check-mot-history.

Paying a deposit?

If a deposit is requested or agreed then don't pay more than you are willing to lose and confirm with the seller that they will refund the deposit if you don't purchase the vehicle.

View the car before paying the full amount

We recommend researching the seller as well as their vehicle. Most fraudulent sellers will try to persuade you to transfer money before you've even laid eyes on the car. Often they will insist on communicating only via email rather than on the phone.

Always check that the price of the car is in line with the market value

If the price looks "too good to be true", it probably is. If the vehicle seems "too good to be true" then it can be a sign of fraud. Research other similar vehicles on Auto Trader or perform a free valuation on Auto Trader - www.autotrader.co.uk/car-valuation. If the car is significantly below market value, beware.

Ask the seller questions about its valuation, there may be underlining reasons why the vehicle is under-priced.

Take the car for a test drive

Be sure to thoroughly inspect any car you are looking to purchase, and take it for a test drive. This should always be done from the seller's premises or their home; never let the person meet you halfway.

Always carry out a vehicle history check

This will tell you if the vehicle is recorded as stolen, written-off, scrapped, or is subject to outstanding finance. You can perform a vehicle check on Auto Trader - www.autotrader.co.uk/vehiclecheck.

Payment advice

- Never send money for a vehicle you haven't seen
- Don't carry large amounts of cash