

Pre-Purchase Inspection Checklist

Tick each box as you verify the item. Use the notes space on each line if you print and write on the sheet.

Vehicle (Year/Make/Model): _____

VIN: _____

Odometer: _____

Inspection Date: _____

Inspector: _____

1. Engine & Fluids

- ☐ Oil leaks around the engine, oil pan, valve cover and seals
- ☐ Coolant leaks at hoses, radiator, water pump and heater core
- ☐ Condition and level of all fluids: engine oil, coolant, transmission, brake, power steering
- ☐ Unusual noises on start-up or under load (knocking, ticking, rattling)
- ☐ Exhaust smoke (blue, white or heavy black) which can indicate internal problems

2. Transmission & Drivetrain

- ☐ Automatic transmission shifting (smooth, no slipping, flaring or hard clunks)
- ☐ Manual transmission and clutch operation (no grinding, smooth engagement)
- ☐ Differentials and AWD/4x4 system (no whining, clunks, or warning lights)
- ☐ CV axles and driveshafts (no torn boots, excess play or vibration under acceleration)

3. Brakes, Suspension & Steering

- ☐ Brake pad and rotor wear, thickness and condition
- ☐ Brake lines and hoses for rust, damage or leaks
- ☐ Struts and shocks for leaks, excessive bouncing or poor control over bumps
- ☐ Ball joints, tie rods, control arms and bushings for play or torn rubber
- ☐ Steering feel and response (no excessive play, pulling, or clunking when turning)

4. Tires & Wheels

- ☐ Tread depth and overall condition (no cracking, bulges or obvious damage)
- ☐ Even versus uneven wear (can point to alignment or suspension issues)
- ☐ Matching set of tires (brand, size and type)
- ☐ Wheels/rims for bends, cracks or heavy curb damage

5. Body, Frame & Rust

- ☐ Rust on rocker panels, wheel arches, underbody and key mounting points
- ☐ Signs of previous collision repairs (mismatched paint, uneven panel gaps, overspray)
- ☐ Frame or unibody damage (kinks, bends, fresh undercoating hiding repairs)
- ☐ Condition of glass and lights (chips, cracks, cloudy or broken lenses)

6. Electrical System & Electronics

- ☐ Exterior and interior lights (headlights, signals, brake and reverse lights)
- ☐ Power windows, locks, mirrors, wipers and washer functions
- ☐ Heating and air conditioning performance across all settings
- ☐ Infotainment systems, backup cameras, sensors and other convenience features
- ☐ Battery condition and charging system performance

7. Computer Scan & Warning Lights

- ☐ Scan for stored and pending diagnostic trouble codes in all major modules
- ☐ Check that warning lights come on with the key and go off after starting
- ☐ Look at readiness monitors to see if codes were recently cleared

8. Test Drive

- ☐ Cold start behaviour, idle quality and warm-up
- ☐ Acceleration and braking (smoothness, stability, vibrations or pulling)
- ☐ Steering feel at different speeds and on different road surfaces
- ☐ Noises over bumps or at highway speed (clunks, humming, whining, rattles)

9. History & Paperwork

- ☐ Service records showing regular maintenance
- ☐ Evidence of major past repairs and how they were handled
- ☐ Any rebuilt, salvage or out-of-province status
- ☐ Open recalls, if information is available