

Check at least these things on a car you are looking at BUT always have a mechanic you know and trust look at the car too.

Outside the car

- Body parts match
- No excessive rust on body of car
- Open all doors, test that key opens locks
- Check tires
 - Are they wearing even?
 - Turn front tires left to right to check wear
 - Tires same size
- Look for leaks under car
- Make sure nothing is hanging loose under car
- Grill not bent or wavy

Inside of Car

- Turn on car and make sure all dash lights come on especially the following:
 - Check engine
 - ABS (the braking system)
 - SRS (airbags)
- All dash lights should turn off within a few seconds
- Check A/C
 - Test all buttons and knobs
 - Test all temperature settings
 - Test fan speeds
 - Test air vents
- Test all door handles and locks
- Roll all windows down and back up
- Make sure VIN number on title and on car is the same

Under the Hood

- Hood has latch
- Look for corrosion on the following:
 - Hoses
 - Belts
 - Battery
- Look for replaced parts- or parts that don't match
- Fluids full
- Oil should be clear and clean

Car Mechanics

- Let car idle- it shouldn't stall or misfire
- No rattling, knocking or weird noises
- No squeaking belts and fans work
- No smoke coming from car
- No clunking in the engine when driving
- Get professional diagnosis of car's computer if they can. Most car parts stores will do this for free.

Road Test the Car

- Drive in the city
- Drive on the highway
- Car accelerates smoothly
- Car brakes well

Miscellaneous

- Check consumer reports about the type of car
- Check Carfax to look up the history of that specific car
- Ask if they have maintenance reports on the car

NOTES: