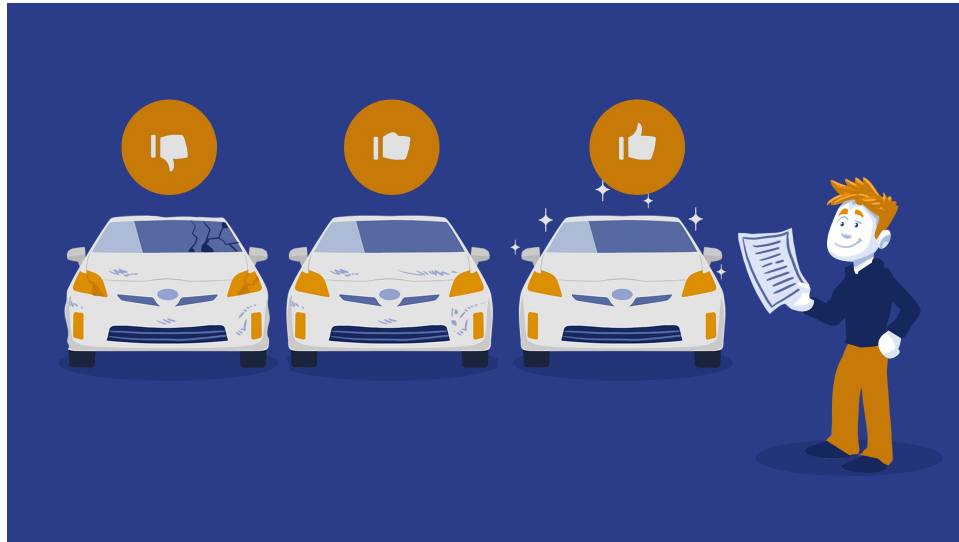


## Used Car Evaluation Checklist



When you're out shopping for your next used car purchase, it helps to know what to look for when you find one that interests you. To do a good evaluation of the car, there are so many things to consider and inspect that it's easy to lose track of important points. At Auto City, we're on a mission to help everyone be more successful at used car shopping, which is why we've put together this handy checklist to help you do a thorough assessment of any used car you might be looking at. We've grouped a total of 70 items together into four different categories that will help you decide what to do depending on what you find. Here's to your success!

### The Deal-Breakers



If you check YES on any of these, walk away from the car and don't look back!

Deal-Breaker	YES/NO
1. Title includes the word "salvage"	

2. There is rust all over the vehicle	
3. It smells stale, like mildew or spoiled milk	
4. Evidence of water damage in glove box, under rear seats, or trunk	
5. Oil from the dipstick is gooey or black and/or has shiny metallic particles	
6. Automatic transmission fluid smells burnt or is dark or has particles	
7. Engine makes knocking noises that get faster with engine speed	
8. When you drive the car, it just feels very tired and worn out	

### Serious Issues



If you check off YES for 1-4 of these items, you could make a low-ball offer with the understanding the car likely has some serious issues. If you check off 5 or more of these items, go find a different car to buy.

Issues	YES/NO
9. You suspect the odometer reading isn't right	
10. Tires are mismatched in brand or size	
11. Evidence of accident damage poorly repaired	
12. There are missing lug nuts	

13. On the bumper near there exhaust pipe, you see black spots or oily film	
14. There are some rust spots here and there	
15. Brake pedal is shows too much wear for the number of miles	
16. Spare tire well is rusted or shows signs of water damage	
17. Sunroof/moonroof struggles to operate or is very slow to open	
18. Underbody shows a good deal of rust	
19. Bottom of engine shows signs of fluid leakage	
20. Signs of fluid leaks on the ground under the car	
21. Underbody has bent or dented metal	
22. Underbody pinch welds have shiny marks	
23. Bottom of radiator is wet from coolant	
24. If more than 4 years old, the timing or serpentine belt been replaced	
25. When turn key to “on” position, warning lights do not come on	
26. When the car is started, warning lights stay on	
27. After starting the car, airbag lights stay on or blink	
28. Engine does not settle into a consistent idle within a couple minutes	
29. Automatic transmission clunks into gear when shifted into drive	
30. Manual transmission clutch feels stiff or jerky when pressed	
31. When accelerating, gear shifts feel jerky or acceleration is not smooth	

32. Smoke comes out of the exhaust as the car accelerates	
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### Causes for Concern



A few of these are to be expected with a used car, but not too many. Fewer than 5 is fine. Even 6-9 might be okay if you have some DIY car repair skills. But if you check YES to 10 or more of these items, it's time to move on.

Concerns	YES/NO
33. No service/repair records, or there are large gaps	
34. Paint shows signs of fading and cracking	
35. Panel gaps are inconsistent in similar areas	
36. Some trim pieces are loose or missing	
37. A magnet doesn't stick to some areas of sheet metal	
38. Some windows go up and slower than others, or make noise	
39. Climate control fan squeaks or rattles or doesn't work on all settings	
40. Some of the power accessories don't work properly	
41. There is uneven wear on some or all of the tires	

42. Engine has evidence of mice or other vermin	
43. The oil change sticker date is long past	
44. Seats have some tears or excessive wear	
45. When car is started, there are strange noises or belt squeaking	
46. When driving a tight circle, there is rubbing or clunking	
47. When braking firmly, pedal feels soft or mushy	
48. The feel of the brake pedal changes from one time to the next	
49. When braking, the car veers to one side	
50. When going over bumps, the car bounces a lot	
51. At highway speeds there vibrations	
52. Steering wheel is off-center when driving straight	
53. There is excessive wind noise at reasonable speeds	
54. When you go over bumps, you hear internal rattling	
55. The car feels like it pulls to one side	
56. When first started, there is sustained visible smoke from exhaust pipe	
57. After driving, the engine makes a hissing noise	

**Not Serious, but Noted**



This group of items are not a cause for any real concern. If anything, they're just normal wear and tear on a used car, depending on how old it is. Checking YES to fewer than 5 of these is no big deal. 6-9 of them can probably be addressed for not a lot of money. 10 or more of these means the car needs some work, which may or may not be worth it to you.

Other Issues	YES/NO
58. There is no owner's manual	
59. Some of the interior trim is broken, cracked or has blemishes	
60. There is some curb damage on the wheels	
61. Windshield wiper blades are in bad shape	
62. One or more hubcaps is missing or loose or damaged	
63. Tire pressure is not set properly on one or more tires	
64. Spare tire, jack or other tools are missing or damaged	
65. One or more inner fender shields is missing or damaged	
66. Some of the engine hoses feel stiff or brittle (careful, may be hot)	
67. Battery terminals show corrosion	
68. Battery is more than 4 years old	
69. One or more headlights or other lights fail to come on	

70. In the engine there are loose clamps or belts with cracks	