

Vehicle Viewing Comparison Sheet

Compare the cars you have seen on what you wrote at the kerb rather than on what you can still remember a week later.

Three vehicles side by side on one page — asking price, mileage, year, test left, faults seen and what each one drove like — so the choice is made on notes rather than on the last one you saw.

WRITE IT AT THE KERB

Fill a column in while you are still standing at the vehicle, not that evening. The middle car always sounds better than it was by the time you get home, and the first one is usually the one you forget.

Your name

Dates viewed

Budget you have set

Preferred in the end

THE THREE AT A GLANCE one row per vehicle

Vehicle	Seller and where	Price asked	Odometer	Year	Test left	Advertised as
make, model, trim					expiry date	

WHAT EACH ONE WAS ACTUALLY LIKE

Vehicle	Faults seen	How it drove	Paperwork seen

Used Car Pre-Purchase Inspection Sheet

Carry out the same inspection on every car you view, so a decision made in somebody's driveway is based on what you saw rather than what you remember.

One sheet per car, filled in on the driveway while you are standing in front of it. Print one per viewing and lay them side by side afterwards, when nobody is watching you decide.

WHAT THIS SHEET IS, AND IS NOT

This is a buyer's own walk-round, not a professional inspection. It exists because people forget checks when a stranger is standing beside them — anything expensive is still worth paying an independent inspector to look at before money changes hands.

Make and model	Registration	Year	Date viewed
VIN / chassis number	Engine and gearbox	Colour	Advert reference

PRICE, MILEAGE AND HISTORY the numbers to settle before you look at the car

Asking price	Mileage on the clock	Mileage at the last stamp	Former keepers
Seller — name and town	Private or trade	Phone	Do the mileages agree?

DOCUMENTS SEEN tick only what you have actually held in your hand

☐ Registration document — seller's name and address	☐ Roadworthiness certificate, and when it expires
☐ Service book stamps, dates and mileages in order	☐ Both keys, locking nut key and handbook
☐ Invoices for the work the advert claims	☐ Finance, write-off and identity checks done

COLD START ask for the engine to be stone cold when you arrive

☐ Bonnet cold to the hand before the key is turned	
☐ Smoke on start-up — colour, and whether it clears	
☐ Noises from cold: rattle, tap, whine, chain	
☐ Idle steady, or hunting and dropping	
Warning lights with the ignition on, before starting	Still lit once it has started

PANELS, GAPS AND PAINT walk round in one direction and write what you see

☐ Bonnet — gaps and paint	_____	☐ Roof, pillars and screen	_____
☐ Wings and headlamps	_____	☐ Rear quarters and arches	_____
☐ Doors, gaps and sills	_____	☐ Boot floor and bumpers	_____

TYRES AND WHEELS front and rear, plus the spare — the date code is on the sidewall

Wheel	Make and model	Size	Tread depth	Date code	Condition and damage

Engine oil — colour and level	Coolant	Brake fluid	Gearbox and other
_____	_____	_____	_____

Test drive — clutch, gears, brakes, steering, temperature, noises

FAULTS FOUND, AND WHAT THEY COST TO PUT RIGHT

Fault	How bad	Who quoted	Cost to fix	Off the price?

Decision	Offer made	Outcome
_____	_____	_____

Test Drive Checklist

Come back from a test drive with notes on what you heard and where, instead of a general feeling that it seemed fine.

Things to try and things to listen for on a test drive — cold start, steering, brakes, gears, noises and electrics — written as observations you record, not as marks a vehicle passes.

OBSERVATIONS, NOT MARKS

Nothing here is a pass or fail. Write what you noticed and where you noticed it; a noise at low speed on full lock and a noise under braking are different problems, and only you were there. Anything that worries you is a question for a mechanic, not for this sheet.

Vehicle

Date of drive

Route and conditions

BEFORE YOU MOVE

- ☐ Note whether the engine is already warm when you arrive
- ☐ Watch the warning lights come on and go out at ignition
- ☐ Start it from cold if you can, and listen to the first few seconds
- ☐ Look behind the vehicle at start-up for smoke or steam
- ☐ Check the mirrors, seat and steering column all adjust
- ☐ Check the seat belts pull out and retract cleanly

STEERING AND SUSPENSION

- ☐ Note any play or vibration through the wheel at low speed
- ☐ Listen on full lock in both directions
- ☐ Note whether it pulls to one side on a flat, straight stretch
- ☐ Listen over a rough surface and over a speed bump
- ☐ Note how it settles after a dip rather than bouncing on
- ☐ Note whether the wheel self-centres coming out of a bend

BRAKES

- ☐ Try a gentle stop, then a firmer one where it is safe
- ☐ Note any pulling, judder through the pedal or grinding
- ☐ Note how far the pedal travels and whether it feels consistent
- ☐ Try the parking brake on a slope

GEARBOX AND DRIVE

- ☐ Take it through every gear, up and down
- ☐ Note any crunch, whine or hesitation changing gear
- ☐ On an automatic, note how it shifts under light and heavy throttle
- ☐ Note any vibration that changes with road speed
- ☐ Note any clutch slip when accelerating in a high gear

NOISES AND SMELLS

- ☐ Drive part of the route with the radio and fan off
- ☐ Note where each noise comes from and what you were doing
- ☐ Note any smell of burning, fuel, coolant or damp
- ☐ Open a window and listen alongside a wall or hedge

ELECTRICS AND CABIN

- ☐ Try every window, mirror, lock and light
- ☐ Try the heater and the air conditioning on both settings
- ☐ Try the wipers, washers, horn and screen heaters
- ☐ Check the infotainment, reversing camera and sensors work
- ☐ Check the warning lights again once the drive is finished

Vehicle History and Paperwork Check Record

Keep a dated account of which documents you actually saw and what each one said, rather than a memory of being shown a folder.

A record of which documents you were actually shown and what each one said — registration, service book, invoices, keys and the checks you ran yourself.

WHAT YOU SAW, NOT A GUARANTEE

This sheet records what you saw, nothing more. It makes no claim that a vehicle is clear of finance, accurately described or legally transferable — which checks exist and what they prove differs from place to place, so check the rules where you are and use the official sources for your country.

Vehicle

Registration / plate

VIN / chassis

Seller name

Date checked

Checked by

DOCUMENTS SEEN one row per document put in front of you

Document	Seen?	Original or copy	Name and address on it	What it said
registration, test certificate, invoices...				

SERVICE HISTORY

Date on record	Odometer shown	Who did the work	What was done	Stamp or invoice

CHECKS YOU RAN record the reference, not a conclusion

Check	Where it was run	Date	Reference number	What it returned

Motorcycle Pre-Purchase Inspection Sheet

Walk round a used bike in an order that catches crash damage, chain and sprocket wear and weeping fork seals before the money moves.

A bike-specific walk-round before you buy — frame and numbers, chain and sprockets, forks, tyres, chassis, electrics and paperwork — with room for what each fault might cost.

THE HANDBOOK SETS THE FIGURES

No wear limits, tread depths, chain slack figures or service intervals are printed here, because they are set per model by the manufacturer's own handbook and workshop manual. Write down what you find, then check it against the figures for that bike.

Make and model

Registration / plate

Year

Frame / VIN number

Engine number

Odometer

Asking price

FRAME, NUMBERS AND CRASH DAMAGE

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Frame and engine numbers legible | ☐ Welds checked for fresh paint |
| ☐ Numbers matched against the paperwork | ☐ Headstock checked for play, wheel raised |
| ☐ Frame checked for cracks or ripples | ☐ Bar ends, levers and footpegs checked |

CHAIN, SPROCKETS AND FINAL DRIVE

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Chain checked along its whole length | ☐ Sprocket teeth checked for hooking |
| ☐ Tight and loose spots noted | ☐ Adjusters checked for even marks |
| ☐ Chain checked for rust and kinked links | ☐ Shaft or belt drive checked for leaks |

SUSPENSION AND STEERING

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Stanchions checked for pitting and rust | ☐ Rear shock checked for sag under you |
| ☐ Fork seals checked for weeping oil | ☐ Steering turned lock to lock |
| ☐ Rear shock checked for leaks | ☐ Swingarm and linkages checked for play |

WHEELS, TYRES AND BRAKES

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Tread depth noted on both tyres | ☐ Wheels checked for buckles and dents |
| ☐ Wear pattern and tyre make noted | ☐ Wheel bearings checked for play |
| ☐ Sidewalls checked for cracking | ☐ Discs and pads checked front and rear |

ENGINE, FLUIDS AND EXHAUST

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Started from cold where possible | ☐ Coolant level and colour checked |
| ☐ First few seconds listened to | ☐ Cases and hoses checked for weeping |
| ☐ Oil level and condition checked | ☐ Exhaust checked for blowing joints |

ELECTRICS AND PAPERWORK

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ All lights and indicators tried | ☐ Wiring checked for added connectors |
| ☐ Horn and switchgear tried | ☐ Battery terminals and mounting checked |
| ☐ Warning lights watched at ignition | ☐ Registration, records and keys seen |

FAULTS FOUND AND WHAT THEY MIGHT COST your own quotes, not ours

Fault found	Part or labour	Who quoted	Estimated cost

Caravan and Motorhome Pre-Purchase Check

Look at the habitation side of a caravan or motorhome in the same order every time, and leave with the damp readings written down rather than a feeling that it seemed dry.

The habitation side of a caravan or motorhome viewing — damp, seals, gas, water, electrics and the chassis — with a table for your own damp meter readings, corner by corner.

YOUR METER, YOUR FIGURES

No damp percentages, tyre age limits or service intervals are printed here. What counts as a wet wall depends on your meter, the wall construction and who is reading it, so write the number your meter gave and compare it with the maker's guidance or a habitation engineer's opinion. A motorhome's engine and cab are a car: use the Used Car Pre-Purchase Inspection Sheet for that half.

Make, model and layout

Year

Berths

Asking price

Chassis / VIN number

Registration / plate

Seller and where seen

DAMP READINGS

your meter, one row per point tested

Where tested	Reading	Feel / look	Seller's explanation	Concern?
front corners, rear corners, under windows, shower...				

OUTSIDE — BODY AND SEALS

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Panels sighted along for ripples or bulging | ☐ Panels tapped low down and at the corners |
| ☐ Roof joints and awning rail sealant checked | ☐ Locker and door seals and alignment checked |
| ☐ Every window and rooflight seal pressed | ☐ Underside checked for hanging insulation |

CHASSIS AND RUNNING GEAR

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Hitch head, breakaway cable and handbrake tried | ☐ Chassis checked for rust or fresh underseal |
| ☐ Jockey wheel and corner steadies wound | ☐ Road lights and indicators all tried |
| ☐ Tyre date codes read; sidewalls checked | ☐ Chassis number matched to the paperwork |

INSIDE — DAMP AND STRUCTURE

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Every corner and window surround metered | ☐ Smell noted on first opening the door |
| ☐ Locker floors and wardrobe floor metered | ☐ Behind the shower and under seats checked |
| ☐ Floor walked for soft spots and creaks | ☐ Previous damp reports read, with readings |
| ☐ Walls and ceiling checked for staining | ☐ Habitation service records read |

GAS, WATER AND HEATING

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Gas locker drop-out vent and regulator seen | ☐ Underside watched for drips while running |
| ☐ Hob, oven, grill and fridge lit on gas | ☐ Toilet cassette and seals checked |
| ☐ Pump run and every tap tried | ☐ Heater and water heater run on each fuel |

ELECTRICS, SAFETY AND EXTRAS

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Mains hook-up connected and sockets tested | ☐ CO and smoke alarms present and tested |
| ☐ Leisure battery date and terminals checked | ☐ Fire extinguisher present and in date |
| ☐ Fridge tried on each supply | ☐ Handbook and appliance manuals present |
| ☐ Solar, inverter or mover demonstrated | ☐ A key for every lock, and the spares |

Classic and Project Car Buying Checklist

Compare a car in boxes with one that runs on the same footing, by writing down what is there, what is not, and what each gap will cost you to close.

Viewing a classic, a restoration or an unfinished project — what is original, what is missing, what has been done and what still needs doing — as a list you can price up at home.

THE CLUB KNOWS THE MODEL; YOU KNOW YOUR BUDGET

This sheet does not say what a given model is worth, which parts are correct or how much rust is too much. Those come from the owners' club, the marque specialist and your own budget. It records what you saw so that a car in pieces can be compared honestly with one that runs.

Make, model and year	Chassis / VIN	Engine no.
Described as	Runs and drives?	Asking price

IDENTITY AND HISTORY

- ☐ Chassis, body and engine numbers found, read and compared with the paperwork
- ☐ Numbers compared with what the club or specialist says is right for the year
- ☐ Ownership chain and any gap in the history noted
- ☐ Photographs of the restoration seen, and the dates on them
- ☐ Receipts for parts and work seen, and who did the work
- ☐ Registration document read for the colour, engine size and body type recorded

STRUCTURE AND CORROSION

- ☐ Sills, floors, chassis rails and jacking points probed, not just looked at
- ☐ Inner wings, boot floor, spare wheel well and bulkhead checked
- ☐ Door bottoms, wheel arches and valances checked for filler with a magnet
- ☐ Previous repairs looked at for plating over rust rather than cutting it out
- ☐ Fresh underseal or paint in odd places noted as a question, not an answer
- ☐ Panel gaps, door shuts and boot and bonnet fit checked for a twisted shell

MECHANICAL

- ☐ Engine started from cold if it runs; smoke, noises and leaks noted
- ☐ Gearbox, clutch and back axle tried or turned over by hand
- ☐ Brakes, steering and suspension checked for seizure and play
- ☐ Fuel tank, lines and carburettor or injection checked for condition
- ☐ Electrics: wiring condition, loom repairs, earths and the charging system

COMPLETENESS

- ☐ Boxes of parts opened and roughly inventoried, not taken on trust
- ☐ Trim, brightwork, glass, badges and lights checked for presence and condition
- ☐ Hard-to-find items for this model identified and looked for specifically
- ☐ Non-original parts noted, with whether originals are obtainable

WHAT IS MISSING OR STILL TO DO one row per item — price it at home

Item or job	Present?	Condition	Where to source	Your estimate

Van and Commercial Pre-Purchase Inspection

Inspect a working vehicle for the wear a working life leaves, in the places a car checklist never looks, and leave with the plated weights written down.

A working vehicle looked at as one — load area, doors, racking, bulkhead, tow gear and plated weights alongside the mechanical walk-round — with a faults-and-costs table at the end.

READ THE PLATE, NOT THIS SHEET

A van has usually earned its living, and the wear is in different places from a car: the floor, the door runners, the clutch and the rear suspension. No load limits, tyre ratings or mileage expectations are printed here — read the plated figures off the vehicle and check them against what you need to carry, and check the rules where you are for anything to do with weights and licences.

Make, model and body	Year	Odometer	Asking price
VIN / chassis	Registration / plate	Plated weights (from plate)	Previous use

LOAD AREA AND BODY

- ☐ Floor lifted or probed at the edges for rot, rust or a soft patch under lining
- ☐ Ply lining, racking and shelving checked for how it is fixed, and what is behind it
- ☐ Tie-down points, load rails and any tail-lift or crane tried
- ☐ Rear and side doors run on their tracks, latched and locked, seals checked
- ☐ Roof, roof rack and any roof-mounted gear checked for leaks and fixings
- ☐ Bulkhead present, secure and undamaged; signwriting removal marks noted
- ☐ Body: dents, rubbed corners, previous accident repair and door alignment

WEIGHTS, TOWING AND EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Plate found and every weight written down in the box above
- ☐ Tow bar, electrics and any trailer socket tried; wear on the ball noted
- ☐ Tachograph, telematics box, speed limiter or camera fitted: noted and status
- ☐ Beacons, reversing sensors, alarm and any extras demonstrated
- ☐ Overall height and length noted against where it will be parked or garaged

RUNNING GEAR AND MECHANICALS

- ☐ Cold start, smoke and noises noted; engine bay looked at for leaks
- ☐ Clutch bite point, gear change and any drivetrain vibration on the drive
- ☐ Rear springs and dampers checked for sag, cracks and uneven ride height
- ☐ Tyres: wear pattern, sidewall marks and matching across each axle
- ☐ Brakes and steering tried loaded if possible, and the handbrake on a slope
- ☐ Underside: chassis, cross-members, exhaust and fuel tank for corrosion

CAB AND PAPERWORK

- ☐ Seats, seat belts, mirrors, heater and every switch tried
- ☐ Warning lights watched at ignition; any that stay on noted
- ☐ Service history, test certificate and plating certificate seen
- ☐ Keys, locking wheel nut, spare, jack and any fitted equipment listed

FAULTS FOUND AND WHAT THEY MIGHT COST your estimate, or a quote

Fault	Where	Serious?	Who quoted / source	Your estimate

Keep track of a stack of paperwork moving between customs, test stations and the registration office, so a missing original is found before the appointment rather than at it.

THE OFFICIAL LIST, TRACKED HERE

Vehicle		VIN / chassis number	Country of origin
Importing into	Arrived on	Agent or shipper	Your reference

DOCUMENTS one row per item on the official list where you are

STEPS AND OFFICES each stage, who handles it and the reference they gave

Stage	Office or body	Submitted	Reference no.	Outcome / next step
customs, tax, test, approval, plates...		date		

Notes — who you spoke to, what they asked for, and when

Part Exchange and Valuation Comparison

Tell the highest offer and the best offer apart by writing down what each one actually includes, not just the number quoted.

Offers for the same vehicle from several buyers, written down side by side with what each one actually includes, so the highest number and the best deal can be told apart.

THE NUMBER IS NOT THE WHOLE OFFER

Offers are rarely like for like. One may be a firm price, another subject to an inspection; one may collect, another may want the vehicle driven to them; a part-exchange figure only means something next to the price of the car you are buying. Record the conditions, not just the number.

Vehicle offered

Registration / plate

Odometer at time of offers

OFFERS RECEIVED

Date	Who made it	Type	Offer	Firm or subject to	Valid until	Collection
	dealer, buyer, trade site...	part-ex, outright, auction		inspection, paperwork...		who moves it

WHAT EACH OFFER INCLUDES the conditions that change what it is worth

Who made it	Admin or fees	Settles finance?	Paid when	Notes on the offer

Give every part-exchange the same walk-round and leave a record on file that shows how the offer was arrived at, whoever did the appraisal.

No guide prices, condition grades or reconditioning rates are printed here. Write in the figure from whichever valuation source your business uses, your own workshop's cost for each repair, and the offer you made. The sheet is the record that supports the number, for the file and for the customer.

BODYWORK one row per panel; mark stone chips, dents, scratches, mismatch

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TYRES, GLASS AND INTERIOR

Item	Found	Action	Your cost
tyres front / rear, spare, windscreen, seat...			

MECHANICAL, WARNING LIGHTS AND PAPERWORK

- ☐ Started and warning lights watched
- ☐ Driven, or reason it was not
- ☐ Fluid levels and leaks looked at
- ☐ Service history checked and gaps noted
- ☐ Test certificate and expiry seen
- ☐ Finance outstanding? (customer asked)
- ☐ Locking wheel nut and spare present
- ☐ Accessories and extras listed

APPRAISAL SUMMARY

Guide figure	Valuation source	Total reconditioning	Offer made	Valid until

Notes — what the customer was told, and anything to check before the deal is done

Vehicle Advert Details Worksheet

Answer every question a buyer asks once, on paper, instead of going back out to the car each time the phone rings.

Everything a buyer will ask, gathered in one go before you write the advert — spec, history, extras, faults you are declaring and the photographs you have taken.

GATHER IT ONCE, ANSWER IT ONCE

Fill this in with the vehicle in front of you and the paperwork in your hand. An advert written from memory is where the awkward phone calls come from, and the faults you write down here are the ones you will not have to explain on the driveway.

Make and model

Registration / plate

Year

Trim or variant

Odometer reading

Fuel or power

Gearbox

SPECIFICATION AND CONDITION the answers you will be asked for

Detail	What it is	Where the answer came from
colour, doors, engine size, drive...		log book, service book, rating plate, your own measure...

HISTORY AND EXTRAS

Item	Have it?	Detail to put in the advert
service history, test, keys, extras, tow bar...	yes / no / partial	

FAULTS YOU ARE DECLARING write them down before someone finds them

Fault or mark	Where on the vehicle	How you will word it

PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN

- ☐ Front three-quarter
- ☐ Rear three-quarter
- ☐ Both sides, full length
- ☐ Interior — front seats
- ☐ Interior — rear seats
- ☐ Boot or load space
- ☐ Dashboard with ignition on
- ☐ Odometer reading
- ☐ Engine bay
- ☐ Wheels and tyres
- ☐ Each declared fault, close up
- ☐ Paperwork laid out

Vehicle Sale and Handover Record

Leave both sides holding the same written account of a private sale, including the odometer reading and exactly what changed hands.

A plain record of a private sale between two people: who, which vehicle, when, for how much, what changed hands, and both signatures.

A RECORD, NOT A CONTRACT

A record of what happened, not a contract, and not legal advice. What a seller has to declare and how ownership transfers differ from place to place — check the rules where you are, and use the official transfer process too.

THE VEHICLE

Make and model	VIN / chassis number	Registration / plate
Year	Colour	Odometer at handover
		Units

SELLER AND BUYER

Seller — full name	Address	Telephone
Buyer — full name	Address	Telephone

THE SALE

Date of handover	Time	Price agreed	How it was paid	Place of handover

HANDED OVER WITH THE VEHICLE tick what actually changed hands

☐ Keys — how many	☐ Invoices and receipts	☐ Wheel tools and nut key
☐ Registration or title	☐ Test certificate	☐ Charging cables
☐ Service book and stamps	☐ Handbook and key fobs	☐ Anything else — write it in

Seller signature	Print name	Date
Buyer signature	Print name	Date

Vehicle Collection and Drive-Home Checklist

Turn the excited, slightly rushed hour of collecting a vehicle into a list, so the second key, the locking wheel nut and the cover start time are all dealt with before you drive off.

The day you collect the vehicle you have bought — what to have arranged before you leave home, what to count and check at the handover, and what to do on the first drive and once it is home.

CHECK THE RULES WHERE YOU ARE

What has to be in place before a vehicle is driven — cover, tax, registration, plates — differs from country to country and changes, so check the rules where you are and use the official process. This sheet is the list of what you need to have sorted and what to check, not a statement of what the law requires.

Vehicle	Collecting from	Date
Odometer at handover	Fuel / charge at handover	Keys received
		Agreed price paid

BEFORE YOU LEAVE HOME

- ☐ Cover arranged to start from the collection time, with confirmation in hand
- ☐ Whatever registration or road tax step applies where you are is done or ready
- ☐ Payment method agreed with the seller, and a receipt or the sale record ready
- ☐ Breakdown cover checked for whether it covers a vehicle you have just bought
- ☐ Your own ID and the seller's details to hand; a lift or return ticket arranged

AT THE HANDOVER

- ☐ VIN and registration checked against the paperwork one more time
- ☐ Every key counted, including any fob, locking wheel nut key and spare
- ☐ Documents handed over listed on the Vehicle Sale and Handover Record
- ☐ Manuals, service book, charging cable, tools, jack and spare present
- ☐ Odometer and fuel level written in above and photographed
- ☐ Walked round once more for new damage since you viewed it
- ☐ Seller shows you anything unusual: alarm, immobiliser, quirks, a stiff lock

BEFORE YOU PULL AWAY

- ☐ Seat, mirrors, wipers, lights and demister found and set before moving
- ☐ Warning lights watched at ignition and any that stay on noted
- ☐ Tyre pressures set to the handbook figure, or checked at the first stop
- ☐ Route home planned with a place to stop after a few miles

THE DRIVE HOME AND AFTER

- ☐ Stopped early: bonnet lifted, underneath glanced at for drips, temperature watched
- ☐ Noises, smells, pulling and gear changes noted while they are fresh
- ☐ Fuelled or charged before it becomes a worry; the first receipt kept
- ☐ At home: odometer recorded, photographs taken, paperwork filed
- ☐ Faults noticed on the way listed below and raised with the seller promptly
- ☐ Service, test date and any recall check booked in the diary

FAULTS NOTICED ON THE DAY raise them with the seller while they are fresh

What you noticed	When / where	Raised on	Seller's answer