iAUTOAGENT







How to:
Buy a Car
without any nonsense



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The Steps

Step #1
Research the car you're looking for

Step #2
Vet the dealer's reputation

Step #3
Use your time efficiently on test drives

Step #4
Determine what it will cost you

Step #5
Determine the value of your trade-in

Step #6
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Step #7
Sit down with the finance manager

Step #1

Research the Car

Research the car you're looking to buy.

A car is a big purchase, so it's important to be aware of others' experiences owning that car as well as all of the details and features of the car.

Check the Reviews

Read the reviews on Google, Facebook, Edmunds, and KBB.com. There are also specific car groups on Facebook related to the vehicle you want. Note any particular patterns, positive or negative. These sites contain trusted reviews from real people. Keep in mind that some sources won't be as honest, such as magazines, consumer reports, and websites like Motor Trends and Car and Driver. From these sources, reviewers may be compensated by the manufacturers for providing a good review.

Step #2

Vet the Dealer

Vet the dealer's reputation.

Figure out whom you want to work with by checking reviews and doing some research on dealerships in your area.

Check the Reviews

Read the Google Reviews for the dealerships in your area and look for patterns in each of the reviews, positive or negative. Look for a pattern of salesperson names mentioned, positive or negative. You can also visit the dealer's website, look under their "Meet The Team" section and call them directly. DealerRater.com is another resource where people can review the dealership, offer up feedback and give a score out of five stars.

Step #3

Test Drives

Use your time efficiently on test drive day.

Pick a day solely for test driving and have a list of cars, features, and reviews that fit your needs.

Book an Appointment

Find a salesperson you want to work with and contact them to schedule an appointment to test drive the vehicle. You can do this multiple times. Showing up on a busy Saturday without an appointment will take up too much of your time, so don't skip this step!

Bring Photocopies of your Documents

Bring photocopies of your driver's license and proof of insurance. They may ask to hold on to your driver's license and insurance card. While the information is important for them to have before they hand you the keys, they do not need to be in possession of the actual license. Oftentimes, they will "misplace" it or take a while to retrieve it when you return. This forces you to stay in the showroom for an extended period of time during which the salesperson will continue to do a hard sell. By giving them a photocopy, you have the freedom to leave immediately after your test drive.

Step #3

Test Drives

Pay Attention to Everything

While you are on your test drive, pay attention to several things and take notes. Notice how the ride feels, including the steering and the brakes. Visibility, maneuverability, cabin noise, and what electronic amenities it has. Note excessive wear and tear if buying used.

Take Your Time

Once you are armed with information about a variety of cars you have test-driven, take the time to think about each vehicle before deciding which one you want to purchase. You never want to settle for a vehicle because you feel rushed or pressured into a purchase, so look over your notes and be sure this is the car for you.

Step #4

Determine the Cost

How to determine the *real* cost.

Realize when you see a price online, 99% of the time you WILL NOT receive that price and we'll tell you why.

Watch Out For Incentives

Dealers will include every incentive on their prices as well as administration or documentation fees. Prevent falling for these common "incentive" tricks:

- College Graduate Rebate (if you graduated within the last 2 years or will graduate in the next 6 months)
- Military Rebate (currently active or veterans within 3 years of discharge date)
- Costco or Sam's Club Rebate (you only qualify if you are a member)
- Conquest Rebate (if you own a specific competitor's vehicle)
- Financing Rebate (if you finance directly through the automakers' finance company at standard rates)
    - **Key Tip:** Research financing rates with a local credit union ahead of time. This is a large profit source for the dealer. Be prepared. You also can use your own financing if you wish. Also, when it comes to 0% financing, you will usually have to forgo the rebate in order to obtain the financing.

Visit TrueCar.com to see which incentives you do or do not qualify for.

Step #4

Determine the Cost

Put the Price in Writing

When you contact the dealer, have them put a price in writing via email with the incentives you do and don't qualify for BEFORE you mention if you have a trade vehicle.

Understand Supply & Demand

Is the vehicle you are looking for in short supply? If so, don’t expect big discounts or any discounts at all. Put simply, if there is a large supply of the vehicle, then there are bigger rebates and incentives. If there is a small supply of the vehicle, then there will be minimal discounts. If you aren't sure, a good rule of thumb is if you feel there isn't enough inventory to choose from, you're shopping for a high demand/low supply vehicle. Waiting several months will be your best option if you really want the car, but also don't want to overpay for it.

Don't Fall for Extra Warranties

Lastly, be careful of the extra warranties they are offering. These are HUGE profit centers for the dealer.

Step #5

Determine the Value

How to determine the value of your trade-in.

It isn't rocket science to know the value of your trade-in vehicle.

Calculate the Value

When you have a trade-in, you can determine the value of your car by taking the selling price of the dealer and subtracting $4,000-$5,000 from an average car. For example, if a dealer is selling a similar car to yours for $15,000, be prepared to receive $10,000 for your car on trade. Make sure to get the price of the new vehicle before offering the information on your trade. When the dealer emails you back, be sure you have something in writing.

Step #6

Pre-Purchase Inspection

Get a pre-purchase inspection by an independent mechanic.

Choosing someone you trust to examine your vehicle and knowing what flaws and problems to look for prior to purchase is key.

Problem Areas to Inspect

- Inspect the engine oil. Note that not all cars have an oil dipstick.
- Open and close the hood. Inspect body lines and gaps between the hood and fender. Make sure they are the same, about 1/8 inch.
- While the hood is open, inspect for underhood stickers. There is always a sticker for the type of refrigerant used and capacity (new refrigerant 1234yf is now being serviced in independent repair shops). Another sticker is the emissions sticker known as Catalyst.
- Inspect weather stripping under the hood
- Open & close all the doors, rear hatch, trunk, and tailgate. Inspect for smoothness & inspect gaps just like on the hood.
- Look for VIN stickers under the hood, on all doors, and trunk. If it's missing a VIN sticker, the car may have been in an accident and had the panel replaced.
- Look for signs of water damage on headliners as well as carpets. If found, it could be a sign of flood damage.

Step #7

Sit Down with Finance

Sit down with the finance manager.

The second biggest profit center at the dealer comes from the finance department.

How To Own the Conversation

Before you sit down with the finance manager, have all the documentation ready by preparing as much as you can online. When you sit down, do not let them upsell you products. If you decide to purchase any products, don't finance them and find out what the separate cost is. If financing, know what finance rate you qualify for. Ask the finance manager if they can beat the rate. Remember, all the products they will try to sell to you have a large marked-up percentage. Have them break down the true cost of each of the products outside of your monthly payment.

Summary

Do the work for a better way to buy a car.

When you have done the research, test drive, and follow these steps before you make your decision, it should only take 30 minutes to finalize the purchase of your new vehicle without any added *nonsense* from the dealer.

Need some help?

We'll do all the work so you don't have to.

Visit our website **iautoagent.com**
or call us at **636-614-3711** to get started!

BRINGING INTEGRITY AND TRANSPARENCY
INTO THE AUTOMOTIVE WORLD