



Highway Horse Sense

How To Read A Vehicle History Report

(NAPSA)—Old cars don't die, they just get resold. If you're buying a used car, whether from a dealer or someone who put an ad in the paper, you'll want to know as much about it as you can. Even without anyone trying to deceive you, the vehicle may have problems you can't see from a simple visual inspection or even a short test drive.

A vehicle history report prepared by a third party is one way to know what you're getting. Combining information from state DMVs and RMVs as well as police reports and other sources, a vehicle history report can give you a comprehensive overview of where the car's been.

Here are some things to look for—or look out for—when you get a report on a vehicle. None of these things is necessarily a reason not to buy a car, but you shouldn't make a decision without asking about anything you see on a vehicle history:

- Many owners. The more garages a car's been in, the less likely it's been lovingly cared for all its life. Not everyone is as assiduous about car care as you are. Rental cars and former taxis, for example, will often have undergone a lot of abuse, although they tend to be quite inexpensive.

- Location, location, location. Some parts of the country are more car-friendly than others. Winter storms (with their accompanying salted roads) can be rough on cars, as obviously can floods, excessive heat or even sea air. Cars that have been where these are common may have hidden damage.

- Name and description. Be sure the car in the report is the same as the car you're looking at.



A comprehensive vehicle history report can help you get the most for your used car dollar.

Carefully reviewing the vehicle description is one way to avoid various types of vehicle fraud, like VIN cloning. A cloned vehicle involves using a vehicle identification number (VIN) from a legally owned, non-stolen vehicle to mask the identity of a similar make/model stolen vehicle. CARFAX reports include detailed descriptions of the vehicle, so you can make sure the car you're reading about is the same as the one you're looking at.

- Suspicious markings. Keep an eye out for records of body work that might indicate a prior unreported incident.

Vehicle history reports from CARFAX are the most comprehensive available. The company's database contains more than four billion records from thousands of public and private sources, including all Departments of Motor Vehicles (DMVs) in the United States and Canada and thousands of vehicle inspection stations, auto auctions, fleet management and rental agencies, automobile manufacturers, and fire and police departments.

Learn more at www.carfax.com.