

Auto Shopping Tips Online

Shopping For Cars Online Puts You In The Driver's Seat

(NAPSA)—Whether you're celebrating an anniversary, planning a graduation gift or need to upgrade to a larger vehicle for your growing family, buying a car can be a stressful experience. Making sure that the cup holders are adequate is the least of your worries!

As with most things in life, the key to successful car buying is in the preparation.

Thankfully, the Internet provides a great way to research, compare, and even purchase your new or used vehicle of choice through easy access to thousands of makes and models available in your area.

By doing your homework, even a first-time buyer can become an expert and approach negotiations with confidence.

According to study findings by Jupiter Research, one-third of consumers who buy cars in 2006 will make their purchase decision online, and 10 percent of those transactions will occur via the Internet.

With all of these resources just a click away, you can now make sure that you aren't taken for a ride on the price of a new car, or that you don't end up with a lemon.

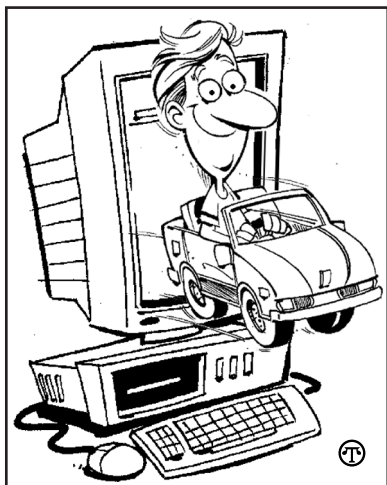
A great place to start gathering car buying information is online at automotive Web sites like Yahoo! Autos (<http://autos.yahoo.com>), a comprehensive site that provides trusted research, tools and resources, as well as photos and information on thousands of new and used cars.

Before making an offer or purchase, you can check out the latest car models, compare prices for used cars in *Kelley Blue Book*, read vehicle reviews from *Consumer Guide*, and even get a free price quote from a dealer in your area.

Keep the following tips in mind as you use the Internet to locate the car of your dreams.

- **Research, Research, Research:** The first step to buying a new or used car is careful, thorough research.

Car buyers can research models and pricing, check safety con-



Doing some research on the Internet can help ensure you are not taken for a ride on the price of a new car.

cerns, read consumer and expert reviews and compare car features online.

- **How Much Can You Afford?:** Some sources recommend that your monthly payment for a car should be no more than 20 percent of your monthly net income. Other things to consider when estimating the cost of a new vehicle are the costs of fuel, license, registration and insurance. And if you prefer leasing, be sure to learn the pros and cons by logging on the Leasing Guide on Yahoo! Autos.

- **Free Lemon Checks:** Thanks to Carfax, you can now check the history of a used car to help ensure that there are no hidden problems such as repaired damage from a previous accident or listed as stolen.

If you are buying a used car, by simply providing the vehicle identification number (VIN), you can search a national database for free for a record of major problems or manufacturer state recalls. A full used car history report can be ordered to provide you with an added peace of mind.

So, don't get taken for a ride with your next car purchase. With so much information available online, you'll be in pole position to strike a winning deal.