



# Auto Advice

## Tips On Buying A Used Car

(NAPSA)—On average, the cost of a pre-owned car is about half that of a new one—but used cars are only bargains if you don't overextend yourself paying for them. Try this formula for deciding just how much you can pay for a pre-owned car:

1. Calculate your total monthly expenses and determine the remaining amount available from your monthly income.

2. Estimate and include fuel costs in your expense calculation, especially if the vehicle will be driven to work or school every day.

3. Check insurance rates. They're normally lower for used cars versus new ones, but will vary based on the individual and specific vehicle.

4. Take into consideration other associated costs such as personal property taxes and license and registration fees.

A good rule to follow is that your monthly loan payment should be no more than 20 percent of your remaining monthly income. Lenders will typically expect a minimum down payment of 10 percent, but if you can afford to put down more, do so. Increasing the down payment will cut down on the principal of your loan and lower your monthly payments.

According to the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA), franchised new-car dealers sell over 19 million used cars per year. So how do you find the car that's right for you? Consumers can use numerous Internet sites such as AutoTrader.com and cars.com to help them find



**The Internet can help used-car shoppers find the vehicle that's right for them—and drive off with a bargain.**

used cars in their price range and location. Both sites contain thousands of vehicles for sale from reputable dealers. Many cars now have a free Carfax Vehicle History Report accessible directly from the vehicle listing.

The history reports can help you find out if the car you are considering has ever been in an accident or flood, or help you determine if the odometer reading is accurate. In addition to obtaining a vehicle history report, it's a good idea to have the car checked over by a trusted mechanic before you buy. Any problems that the report or mechanic may uncover can either be used as bargaining tools to help lower the cost of the vehicle or as a reason to avoid the deal altogether.

To learn more about obtaining a vehicle history report, visit [www.carfax.com](http://www.carfax.com).