Top Tips when Buying a Used Car Privately by Hiteshbhoi

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Every year in the UK over 7 million used cars are purchased, with many of these cars being purchased privately direct from the owner. Whilst this can often be the route to achieving the best bargains it can also become very expensive in cases when it emerges that the car has a number of problems or a previously unknown history. In order to reduce the likelihood of being caught out weâ€™ve put together the top tips when buying a car privately:

â€¢ The first step is to do some research about your desired car. Check classified ads and trade guides to get a good idea of prices. Parkers.co.uk is an excellent site and contains a free used car valuation tool and thousands of reviews and ratings.

â€¢ Once youâ€™ve decided on which car youâ€™d like to buy and have found a possible seller always g and take a look at the car in daylight.

â€¢ Take a friend along with you. If problems occur in the future itâ€™s very useful to have a witness available to validate what was said.

â€¢ Check that the car has not been clocked. The average mileage is 12,000 miles a year. Have a look at the tyres to see whether this looks right or if the car has new tyres ask the owner for details of its servicing history.

â€¢ Always go for a test drive. However, make sure that you are insured to do so and if the seller says that he has cover ask to see his policy.

â€¢ Carefully check the log book, officially known as the V5 or registration document. In particular look for the chassis number, known as the vehicle identification number (VIN). This will usually be located on a small plate on the driverâ€™s door or in the engine bay. The absence of a VIN number strongly suggests that the car has assumed the identity of someone else, probably because it has been stolen at some point in its past.

â€¢ You could also consider purchasing an AA Car Data Check. Importantly this will include a full description of the car, including engine size and date of first registration, so you can be sure of what you are buying. It will also tell you whether the car has a finance agreement recorded against it, if the car has been written off, and whether the car has had any number plate or colour changes.

â€¢ The chances are that at some point youâ€™ll enter into negotiations over the price. Have a highest price and target price in mind before entering into negotiations. If your two offers are some way apart you try not to say anything. Car salesmen use this tactic all the time as people find silence uncomfortable. Try this and the seller will often suggest meeting half way, at which point you can propose meeting half way between your offer and the new offer, getting yourself a better deal.

â€¢ Finally, if interested in the car consider having it independently checked by a reputable garage. Reputable sellers will understand this so be wary if the owner of the car is against having it checked.

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