

6 STEPS

to Buying a New Ford



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In today's economy, everyone is looking to save a few bucks wherever they can, especially when it comes to major expenses. If you want to buy a car, it pays to know how to get the right car and still save. With new and improved car models on the market, buyers have a large variety to choose from.

However, choosing the right car can be quite a challenge. As more vehicles come with high-performance engines, powerful transmissions, and a range of entertainment options, buyers have to be thorough and do their research to determine the best vehicle for them. Being prepared takes a little bit of time, but in the end, you will have a vehicle that is not only affordable, you will have one that also caters to your specific needs.

In this guide, you will learn the steps and some helpful tips you need to know before buying your next car. More importantly, you will learn how to get the right car at the best price.

Let's get started with what you need to do when beginning a new car search.

Step 1: Consider Your Needs

Before you even start your search, you should first ask the question, why do I need a new car? You may need a car for reasons such as:

- Commuting to work
- Going on long trips with your family
- Transporting business supplies

It seems like an obvious step, but by sufficiently answering this question, you will not only significantly narrow your search, you will also ensure that the car you find fulfills your most critical requirements.

For example, if you want to use the vehicle for transporting business supplies, a spacious van can be a good option. If you need the vehicle for family commuting, the number of people you will be carrying should guide you to the type of car or family sedan to buy. If you live alone, a smaller compact vehicle would most likely be ideal.

TIP: *If you want to own the vehicle for a long time, keep your future family size in mind when deciding the type and size of the automobile.*

Step 2: Do Your Research

After determining the type of car you want, you now have to research the available options. Remember, there is the car that you want and the car that is ideal for your needs. What you want may not be ideal for you, so be sure to carefully weigh your requirements and preferences.

When researching potential vehicles to buy, the first thing to consider is your budget. It may be necessary to strike a number of options from your list because the prices are simply too high.

TIP: *Typically, you want to buy a vehicle with cash, since it is much cheaper than purchasing through a loan.*

Use the Internet to search for automobiles priced within your budget. When comparing vehicle prices, consider other costs that you will incur, such as documentation and destination fees.



What is Important in a Vehicle?

People consider different features when buying cars. Ultimately, how you will use the vehicle should determine the features to look for. Some of the important and necessary features may include:

- **Engine size** – Typically, the larger the engine size, the greater the horsepower. Vehicles with larger engines are more powerful than those with more compact engines.
- **Miles per gallon** – You may also want to consider the miles that the vehicle can cover per gallon of gas. If you will be going on long trips, miles per gallon may be an essential feature on your checklist.
- **Entertainment** – This feature may or may not be important to you. At the minimum, get a car that has a basic radio or entertainment unit. Optional items such as satellite radio may be important for some buyers.
- **Size** – If you typically carry six or more

passengers, you will need a large vehicle. Many times, even if a car says it can hold a certain number of passengers, it is always helpful to read reviews from other drivers about the interior space and its level of comfort.

- **Trunk space** – Depending on what you want to use the vehicle for, ample trunk or cargo space may be an important feature.

TIP: *Keep in mind when conducting a car search, you may have to compromise on some features to find your ideal vehicle.*

Step 3: Take a Test Drive



Now that you have an idea about the car you want and can afford, it is time to test drive the cars on your list. Test driving is the ultimate way of knowing whether a car is right for you. Remember, just because a car is rated higher than another model does not mean it is right for you.

Test driving is a very personal experience. You are the one who will be behind the wheel of the vehicle, so you should be sure the car you buy offers a nice driving experience. If you have identified dealers with the cars you want, set appointments with them for test drives.

On the day of the test drive, arrive early at the

dealership before they remove the vehicles from the showrooms. This way, you can be sure the vehicle you will test drive is the exact one you want to buy.

Test Driving the Vehicle

- Before starting the car, get into the driver's seat and gauge your comfort level behind the steering wheel. Is the seat too low or too far from or close to the steering wheel? Do you feel comfortable in the seat or does the driver's compartment seem crowded?
- Start the engine and check how long the vehicle takes to warm up. If a vehicle takes too long to warm up, it may have a problem.
- Drive the vehicle on different types of roads, preferably ones similar to where you will be frequently driving. Test to see how the vehicle performs on residential streets and freeways.
- Test the brakes to see how well they perform. Drive the vehicle at a high speed then hold the brakes at sharp bends or when nearing bumps. Do the brakes respond quickly? How about the steering wheel – can it maneuver around sharp turns?
- For the first few minutes of your test drive, make sure the radio and air conditioner are off. Listen closely for any unusual sounds and the general cabin noise on the type of roads you'll be driving on the most. Although this is a commonly overlooked element, especially during a test drive, it's important if you expect to have long commutes or small children with you.
- Try the interior features such as the entertainment system, air conditioner, and automatic windows. Do they work as expected?

Test driving a car is the only sure way of knowing its

performance on the road and how comfortable you feel behind the wheel. If possible, make sure you test drive three to four cars on your list in succession. You will make a better comparison when the memories of the test drives are still fresh in your mind.

TIP: *Sometimes, you may find it difficult to choose between two vehicles after taking them for a test drive. Do not be afraid to ask the dealer for a second or third round of test drives if necessary.*



Step 4: Start Shopping

When you know the type of vehicle you want, it is time to locate it at the best dealership. Here is where you need to do the legwork to get a car at an affordable price. To begin, you should check the Internet to learn the average market price of the vehicle.

Getting the Best Price

Getting a good car does not mean you have to pay the highest cost. If you take time to research the market and available incentives, you can own your dream car at a lower cost than the amount average buyers pay.

There are a number of things you can do to ensure

you get the best price. These include:

- **Buy from local dealers** – For example, you can purchase a vehicle from a dealer whose shipping doc is nearby (hence lower doc fees). Most of the time, dealers can reduce their MRSP (manufacturer recommended selling price) but not the doc fees.
- **Shop around** – Visit a number of showrooms and compare the prices of the potential vehicles you want to buy. Comparing prices will help you know the average dealership prices and hence know when to reject or accept a deal.
- **Special manufacturer offers** – Some manufacturers offer dealers special pricing to move various vehicle units. Take advantage of such offers if the vehicle that comes with an incentive is right for you.
- **Buy just before new models are released** – Check when new models of the vehicle you want to buy will be released and buy during that time. You can find this information on the automaker's website. Dealers tend to sell old models at bargain prices to make space for new models.
- **New car incentives** – Check for manufacturers' incentives for new car owners or rebates for particular models. Find out from the dealer which vehicles come with rebates.

When you get quotes from any dealer, be sure to carefully review them to ensure they are fair. Some of the things you'll want to look at include:

- **Total cost of vehicle** – If the dealer has quoted the total cost you will pay for the car, confirm there are no hidden charges that will increase the quoted fees.

- **Forced contracts** – Make sure the quote does not tie you to other contracts or conditions, such as mandatory insurance policies.
- **Hidden fees** – Check that the dealer has disclosed all of the fees you will pay for the vehicle. The sum of all fees will determine the total amount you will pay.

You can also visit different dealers to ask the price of the vehicle. If multiple dealers offer the vehicle at the same price and none is willing to go lower, choose the dealer that you feel most comfortable with. Go for the dealer who will offer you support even after you have bought the vehicle.

Step 5: Establish Trust Before You Buy

At this stage, trust is one of the most important factors. While negotiation is typical at this stage, it will be useless if you do not trust the representative you are working with. Even if the price does not come down, if the dealer is completely closed off to the slightest mention of negotiating, you are better off checking out another dealership.

Remember, you are the customer who is about to make a big purchase on a new car. And while the dealer's job is to sell cars, this does not diminish the fact that they should provide you with all of the information you need to make the best, most informed decision that meets your needs and your budget.



TIP: *While the prospect of owning a car can make you feel excited, do not let that excitement cloud your judgment. If a dealer is making you uneasy or is pressuring too hard for you to accept a deal, all you have to do is walk away.*

Step 6: Know Your Financing Options

After agreeing on a price with the salesperson, you are now at the financing stage.

How to Finance Your Car Purchase

There are several routes you can take to own a new vehicle. The best way is to buy in cash. Buying in cash is cheaper, although it can be tough on your finances if you have not set aside specific savings for the vehicle.

Another option for buying is to use a car loan. You can apply for a secured or unsecured car loan. With a secured car loan, the credit lender will give you the money to buy the vehicle, but they hold onto its title until you have finished paying off the loan. With an unsecured car loan, the lender will finance your car purchase without you having to provide any form of security for the loan. Unsecured car loans are usually given to borrowers who have high credit ratings and have an established relationship with the lending institution.

You can also get financing from private lenders. The good thing about private loans is the lenders can be more lenient with their terms, unlike banks and traditional credit institutions. Private lenders can include close friends, family, and other private investors.

Finally, you can also acquire a vehicle through leasing. When you lease a vehicle, you will have the right to use and maintain it as your own, but the title will still remain with the leasing company. Vehicles are usually offered on lease from three months to several years. With this option, you will pay the

leasing company a fixed amount every month for using the vehicle. At the end of the lease period, the leasing company will take back its vehicle.

Buying a car does not have to be a complicated process. Following these six steps will help you get the right car at the right price. Good luck!



Dealership Financing

If the dealer offers you financing, read the financing agreement carefully. The dealership may offer you a number of additional items, including alarms, LoJack security devices, and an extended warranty.

You have to know what is important and what will add unnecessary costs. For example, warranties have a lot of value but may also significantly increase the price. Make sure the contract captures exactly what was agreed upon with the salesperson.

If you are not comfortable with the deal offered at the dealership, do not be afraid to take more time to consider the deal and weigh your options. On the other hand, if you are happy with the final agreement, pay attention to the options specified in the contract. The contract may be long and written in legal jargon. However, it is important to read it in its entirety to know what is provided. In particular, pay attention to the numbers indicated, as they may affect the total cost of the vehicle. It is also advisable to inspect the vehicle before you sign the contract.

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