



## **5 Star's Five Point Car Buying Guide**

**What are some questions I need to ask when I'm looking to buy a car?**

**1) Why is a high mileage car that is newer better than one with the same miles that is older?**

If the mileage is higher than, say, 20,000 per year or lower than 5,000, ask why. If a car has high mileage because the owner had a long highway commute, that's better than if the car was used for a lot of short trips, stop-and-go driving, or a delivery route. Still, take any claim that "these were all highway miles" with a grain of salt. Low mileage is preferable, but a low odometer reading is no guarantee of gentle care.

**2) "How is it equipped?"**

Whether they're listed in the ad or not, ask about key features: number of doors; transmission type; A/C; antilock brakes; air bags; sound system; power windows, locks, seats, or mirrors; cruise control; sunroof; upholstery material; and so forth. Double-checking on those could produce some telling comments.

**3) "What is the car's condition?"**

Start with this broad question and see where the seller takes it. He or she could bring up something you wouldn't have thought to ask about.

- **"How about the body and interior?"**

If these areas weren't covered in the discussion above, ask about them specifically.

- **"Has it been in an accident?" How would you know?**

If yes, ask about the extent of the damage, the cost of repairs, and the shop that did the work. Don't worry too much about minor scrapes, but think twice about a car that has been in a serious crash.

**4) Is there a warranty? Warranty is free, Service Contract you pay for.**

**5) "Does this car make me happy?" What is your advice if your wife likes the color of the car but all signs point to the fact that it wouldn't be a wise decision?**

Buying a new car is an emotional decision, and under the cold light of strict reason, your purchase is going to look like a waste of money. While perhaps you should be buying the simplest, cheapest, most fuel efficient and reliable car available, you're often buying on looks and the seats and how the car makes you feel.

So you have to ask yourself if the car really does make you happy, because if you're making undue compromises, your car just won't make sense.