

COVER STORY

HOW TO BUY YOUR FIRST BUDGET CAR

...and not end up
with a lemon

FROM CENTRE FOLD

8. The sun is your friend

If the car owner is only available at night, avoid. If the car owner asks you to come see the ride in a dark, narrow alleyway, avoid. If the owner is either Kim Jong-un or in politics, avoid. This is not just for your own safety. All cars look great in the dark. Night time is nature's Photoshop. It wipes away blemishes. For the same reason, avoid rainy days. You want to see the car and all its dents, scrapes and dead goats still stuck to the under carriage.

9. Read the owner

Sometimes the owner will be able to involuntarily give you clues as to how they have treated the car. You want a babied car, not one used as a rental. If the owner refuses to answer too many questions, then leave. You shouldn't NOT ask questions. Many people will tell you they will fix an issue that you have pointed out AFTER you buy it. That's the kind of person who has left many other things unattended.

I once went to look at a car that was beautiful. But the owner told me it irritated him when people pointed out flaws in his car because his car was perfect. He didn't want to hear from me that his power steering rack was faulty causing the car to dangerously veer across the road.

10. The paperwork

So you've found a car you like and it doesn't have mould people growing out of the fungus under the carpet. Time to deal with the paperwork. First step is to verify that the papers are accurate. BRTA does a check but it is much more advisable to do a police check against the chassis and registration number. And finally read and re-read the contract.

By Ehsanur Raza Ronny**Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed****Model: Zamsad**

If you have queries, mail our car guys at shift@thedailystar.net

Car sale jargon

WHEN you are out looking for a car, here are a few popular lines you will come across. We have deciphered the real meanings.

Dealer says: "I'm trying to get you the best deal because I care for you."

What it means: Their job is to sell you a car at the highest profit possible. They do not care for you. That does not mean they are necessarily crooks, just that preserving your bank balance is not their concern.

Seller says: "AC is okay, just needs a gas charge."

fixed by replacement.

Seller says: Super low mileage.

What it means: Not exactly a false claim but mileage fraud is a common thing even for newer cars with digital odometers. An old, old car with really low numbers may just be too good to be true.

Seller says:

"Someone else is interested in it."

What it means: "I see you like my car. I want to scare you into buying it before someone else does."

Seller says: "Fresh engine. Only used for school duty"

What it means: Perhaps it was used only for school duty. That means incessant stop-and-go traffic where the car sits idling for long periods. This is the most stressful situation a car engine can be in. That is not a good thing. Engines need to stretch out, breathe and scream. Sitting and shuddering in traffic is a slow death.

Seller says: 90 percent fresh.

What it means: "Car has been thoroughly beat up but if you wear very dark sunglasses and look at the car at night, it will be exactly 90 percent fresh. Or more."

By Ehsanur Raza Ronny**Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed****Showroom: Car Selection**

What it means: The AC is kaput. If it was in great shape, it would be working and not require a gas top-up/charge. An AC system that needs a gas refill is a leaking AC. And AC repairs are pricey. They usually range between Tk. 15-50K.

Seller says: "The scratches on the windows will be polished out before delivery"

What it means: Window scratches are mostly there to stay. Certain polishes cover the scratches for a certain time but go away after a couple of washes. Badly scratched windows can only be

