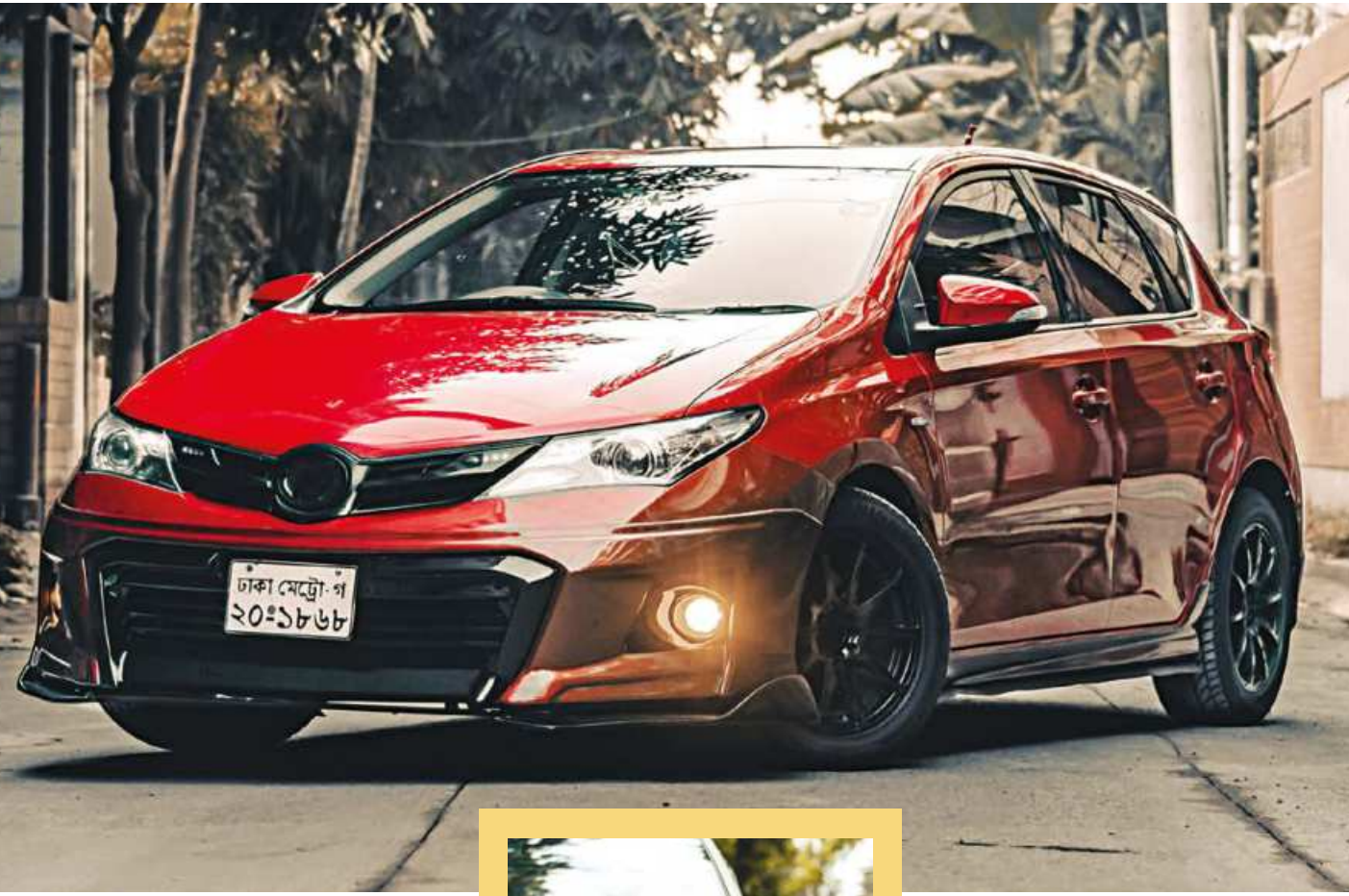


A guide to buying THE RIGHT CAR

ARFIN KAZI



Buying a car can be a hard task to get through, even for an auto journalist like me. When I get asked around by friends or that one uncle from my family on what car should they buy, often I find myself overwhelmed by the number of choices and car types present on the market on a given budget and by the "car aficionado" people think I am, they think it's easy for me to conclude the spot; which is not exactly the case. Thus, without further ado, here I present to you a foolproof car buying guide which hopefully will help you to make your choice depending on the situation you are in.

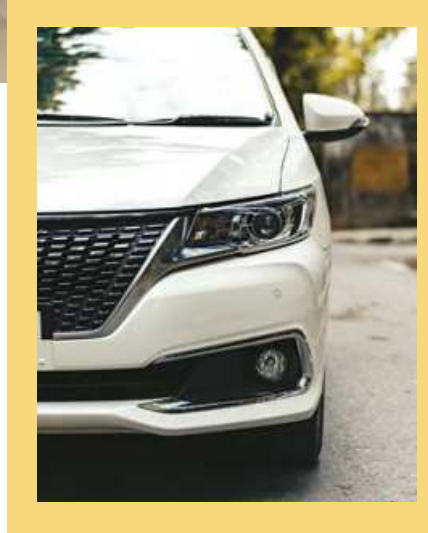


BUDGET

This is the most important factor taken into consideration when making a purchase and usually the first question asked when seeking a car in the market. There is a plethora of options to choose from and can be overwhelming when trying to see it as a whole. Another fact to take into account is the number of options and the spec of the car. A fully spec loaded compact SUV can cost as much as a base model midsize SUV thus, depending on your budget and what purposes your car will serve, a choice needs to be made.

FEATURES AND GRADE

As highlighted in the previous paragraph, the price of your car changes depending on the spec and grade you choose. A base model of a car usually skims a lot on additional features to save as much money humanly possible thus when buying a car, features need to be chosen carefully, depending on what will provide aid when you drive like HID headlights or a reverse camera and, what will add to your car as a cosmetic piece like an additional front bumper lip or black rims. If you are upgrading your car from an older model, always make sure what extra



you are getting and adjust your features according to your needs.

SAFETY

Often an ignored aspect from people when buying a car sadly, the safety measures provided from the vehicle you are buying will make sure to keep you alive when things go south. As technology advances, safety concerns are also getting tighter but also increasing the number of beeps when a random car gets even a tad bit closer to a curb or a human being than the car wants. Accidents never come with

a warning thus, making sure of everyone's safety should be the number one priority when making a purchase.

RESALE VALUE

The biggest priority of any Bengali when buying a car, to the point people do not even care what features are missing and what is not missing. Resale value is an important aspect to take into consideration but buying a car seemingly based on the resale value is completely pointless as, except for an emergency, not many people buy a car only to sell it after a few months. A fairly common car with enough aftermarket support in a country should get a lot of your pennies back when trying to sell your car.

VERDICT

After considering everything, revise what the competing brands are offering compared to your choice. Being a Bengali, almost 90 percent of the time it's going to be a Toyota no questions asked but, try to seek out what the competitors like Honda, Nissan, or any other brands the market is offering. Chances are you might find something even better for a cheaper price thus, keep exploring until you find the closest gap of a car to money.



BANGLADESHI WOMEN FREELANCERS ARE THRIVING

REHENUMA RAYSA

Bangladeshi women have been achieving new heights in advancing the economy of this country. They are working successfully in every significant field, including the freelancing sector. According to a governmental report, the female freelancers, 9% of around 6 lacs registered freelancers in Bangladesh, are triumphantly leaving their distinctive mark in the fast-growing freelancing sector of the country.

The reasons behind the skilled cohort of women joining this expanding sector lie in its numerous advantages, major ones being the flexibility of location, freedom to choose clients or projects, utilisation of skills, and a chance to reach financial solvency by becoming self-independent while eradicating the country's unemployment crisis.

"Since many well-qualified, talented, and competent women are forced to stop working after marriage in our country, freelancing is coming across as a more feasible option than any other, especially for women who belong to conservative families," said Emrazina Islam, Co-founder of Emrazina Technologies and a BASIS Freelancing Award Winner working as Brand Ambassador at Payoneer.

"In my office, 90 per cent of the employees are women. Our company is now fully operating from home due to the lockdown. All our employees are getting to spend more time with their families. I also get to take care of my daughter at home. That is a huge advantage for me in fulfilling my purpose. My team members work from home, and they are doing computer-based work while maintaining professionalism thoroughly. So, I am happy about that decision. Many found it inconvenient to transition from the workplace to the remote working scenario, but not us; we have been doing it successfully since 2015", she added.

Joyeta Banerjee, the CEO of TalkStory, Freelancing Instructor at Robi 10 Minute School, a renowned Author and a Content Creator, also shared her perspectives. "We all know how road safety is an issue for women, and freelancing saves commuting time too. The spatial boundaries do not exist anymore due to the widespread internet connection nationwide. Women, residing in villages or living even in the remotest places, are successfully working as freelancers. They are earning their livelihood in foreign currencies and supporting their families," she said. "Freelancing has certainly improved our employment opportunities. Women

are doing technology-based works like web designing, content writing, software and application development, web research, graphic designing, data entry etc. irrespective of their educational background, age or location, and they are doing it with similar credibility as their male counterparts, ensuring a victorious reputation for Bangladesh on global platforms."

Amidst all the praises and accomplishments, however, there are various challenges women face regularly. These have found their way into the freelancing sector as well. Emrazina emphasised how every work is tenfold harder for women; be it freelancing or any other conventional job. Women are often expected to deal with all the familial responsibilities while maintaining professionalism at work equally well.

"It is challenging for freelancers to convince their family members that the commitment of night shift is needed for international time zones or how stable

said. "Unfortunately, people interested in this sector can be lethargic at times. They are reluctant to do their research before joining this sector, which becomes a hassle in the early stage for them. Another thing that came to my attention is that families are often sceptical and against freelancing, as women's safety is vulnerable in this world, where cybercrime is on the rise. They find it risky to let women do online jobs. Although many think that freelancing is a comfortable job, for those managing their obstacles - it is not all sunshine and rainbows."

In addition, while exploring the future potential of freelancing for Bangladeshi women, we asked mentor Joyeta and enterprising freelancer Emrazina about their opinions regarding what this lucrative sector has to offer to Bangladeshi women in future. Both of them have assured us with words of hope and some valuable advice for the newcomers.

Joyeta confided in saying, "Something



income can be hard in the beginning. Freelancing, by no means, is an easy job. It requires an equal amount of dedication as a conventional job. It is tough for women to handle the workload while working from home, making it more difficult for them to navigate their way through a perfect work-life balance", she said.

Moreover, Joyeta pointed out how she noticed some problems her students face are recurring and the same among all. "The problems women face along with inadequate resources are lack of authentic information as to how different payment methods work, how to approach their potential clientele or how the working hours require immense adaptability on their part, especially from students or women who manage work and household chores simultaneously," she

I wish I knew before embarking on my freelance journey I should have learnt more than one skill before entering this workplace. Since it is not guaranteed that you will always be hired in this dynamic workplace, having multiple skills under your sleeves helps tremendously. The marketplace demands keeping up with the change of clients' preferences. The acquisition of knowledge regarding freelancing is the first step. Freelancing requires impeccable organising skills so, for better output, proper planning and preparing oneself accordingly are of paramount importance."

"My strategy was that I did extensive online research and resorted to free materials as the institutional fees were not affordable for me. I kept on practising on my own; the rest comes with experience. Research and video tutorials can be

helpful, as well as having all the necessary documents like NID or bank account sorted. Another prerequisite of freelancing is to embrace change. If you want to survive here, you need to continue learning as it will help you turn your skill into monetary value," she added.

On the other hand, Emrazina said, "I have been working in this sector since 2011, and the change that I notice the most is how competitive the outsourcing marketplaces have become. Women inherently have certain attributes that are essential for freelancing. However, while it is true that many want to work as freelancers, they lack the core skills. They should work on their communication and IT skills for better outcomes. People looking for shortcuts to success end up creating multiple accounts under fake names, attending exams on behalf of someone else, or even claiming others' works as theirs by including them in their portfolios. These unethical activities defame the name of the country, which as a result, affects client communities' trust making everyone else suffer professionally."

"However, there is light at the end of the tunnel as our society's mindset is changing with time in terms of gender parity. The future is bright if we can collectively, with the intervention and effort of governmental or non-governmental initiatives along with other concerned figures, foresee that the sector is protected from getting tainted with frauds, who take the wrong road, as it is a promising sector opening many windows of opportunity for women. I am optimistic that if we can get the concept of healthy partnerships right, more women will participate in this workforce. Many men have contacted us for guidance for their mothers, sisters, and wives. Hence, we can expect more involvement in the coming years. Our grandmothers and mothers have done so much for the world already, so why can we not be supportive of that notion?" concluded Emrazina.

Meanwhile, Jamila Jhuma, who started working as a freelancer in 2019 and within this short time has secured her place as a level two seller in Fiverr, shared her experience with us. She is married and a mother of two. She has everything nice to say about this career option, although she too feels that the path of becoming freelancers is not easy for women as they have to seek permission or approval from others. She is immensely content with her choice of being a freelancer, which allows her to take care of her children while excelling in her career. The flexibility of working hours is a blessing to her.

"Despite contemporaneous constraints and barriers, since I was determined on my sole mission of creating an identity, I got to discover myself through my journey of becoming a freelancer. It is the most suitable occupation for me. I would tell the aspiring freelancers to know their work and enhance their skill set to establish themselves as freelancers. Freelancing jobs offer women tons of great opportunities", she asserted.