

# New Car Buying Tips

## Part I. Before Contacting a Dealer

### **1. Research Which Vehicle and Price are Right for you**

- a. **Clarify your priorities:** List your “must-have” features (e.g., all-wheel drive, advanced safety tech)
- b. **Narrow the field:** Filter by vehicle class (e.g., compact, SUV, midsize sedan)
- c. **Check reviews from a trusted source like [Consumer Reports](#), [Cars.com](#), or [KBB](#)**
- d. **Decide on a make, model, and year** (e.g., a 2025 Ford F-150)
- e. **Drill down on trims and options:** Identify which trim level offers your required features at the best value.
- f. **Get a ballpark of what you should be paying.** Check a trusted source like [[TrueCar](#), [Cars.com](#), [Edmunds](#)] for what people in your area are paying for your target vehicle.



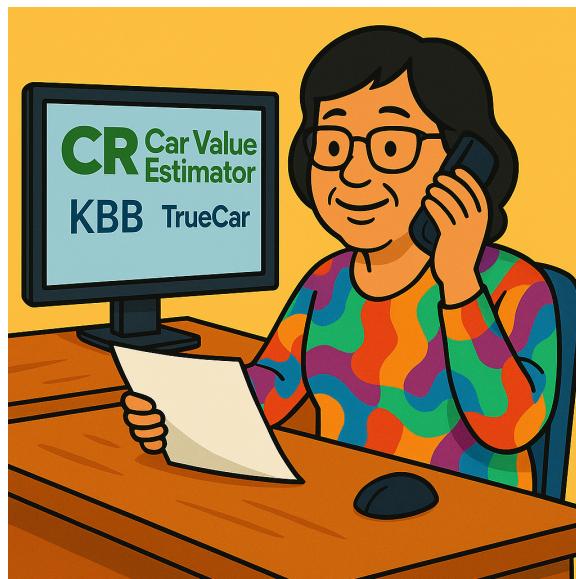
### **2. Get A Bank or Credit-Union Pre-Approval**

- a. **Financing rates & terms are negotiable!** Dealers profit when you pay more.
- b. **Shop other lenders for pre-approval:** A bank or credit-union pre-approval can give you a lower rate, forcing dealers to beat it.



### 3. Research Your Trade-In Separately

- a. **Get a ballpark of what you should be getting:** Get at least two independent value estimates from trusted sources like [Consumer Reports](#) or [Kelley Blue Book \(KBB\)](#)



## Part II. Dealing with Dealers

### 4. Shop Around for Your Exact Vehicle

- a. **Don't just take the first offer!** Not shopping around can cost you thousands.
- b. **Insist on getting the Out-the-Door (OTD) price:** Make sure the quote shows the car's base cost plus every fee.
  - i. *Example of what to say: "Could you give me the bottom-line out-the-door price with no surprises on fees or addons?"*
- c. **Get several OTD prices:** Email, call, or visit at least three dealers.
- d. **While you're at it, get separate quotes for financing (you'll need your credit score handy for this) and your trade-in**, if you have one.
  - i. *Example of what to say: "What's the APR you're offering for my credit score? Can you quote me the total cost with and without financing through you?"*
  - ii. *Example of what to say: "If I trade this in today, how much will I get back after all fees?"*



### 5. Negotiate Like a Pro

- a. **Negotiate each part of the deal separately!** Dealers try to bundle together the car, financing, trade-in, and add-ons to keep you from negotiating effectively.
  - i. *Example of what to say: "We can talk about what you have to offer on financing after we finalize the price of the car."*
  - ii. *Another example: "We can talk about my potential trade-in later, after we finalize the price of the car."*
- b. **Focus on prices and rates, not monthly payments.** Getting you focused on the monthly almost always lines the dealer's pocket at your expense.

- i. *Example of what to say: “I’m not focused on the monthly payment—that’s the oldest sales trick in the book! I’m focused on the out-the-door price.”*
- c. **Leverage your outside offers (see Steps 2-4, and 6).** Be ready to walk away if the dealer doesn’t meet or beat them.
  - i. *Example of what to say on car or trade-in price: “I have an offer for \$\_\_\_\_ from another dealer. Can you beat that?”*
  - ii. *Example of what to say on financing: “I have an offer for \_\_\_\_% for \_\_\_\_ months with no fees and no money down. Can you beat that?”*
- d. **Firm up as much as you can before you even set foot in the dealership.** Once you’re at the dealer, they will try to wear you down and create time pressure.

## 6. Deny Add-Ons and Junk Fees, Defend Your Dollars

- a. **Decline unnecessary add-ons:** Dealers add overpriced “must-have” add-ons (e.g., extended warranties, service contracts, coating, GAP insurance, etc.). Just say no to anything you haven’t researched and decided you need!
  - i. *Example of what to say: “No thanks, I don’t need that”*
  - ii. *Example of what to say: “No thanks, I’m going aftermarket on that”*
- b. **Arm yourself with aftermarket offers:** If you’re interested in a particular add-on, shop for it first, just like you did for the car itself!
  - i. *Example of what to say: “No thanks, I found a much better deal with \_\_\_\_\_”*
  - ii. *Example of what to say: “Here’s my quote from an aftermarket dealer. Can you beat it?”*
- c. **Junk the junk fees:** Dealers add both required fees (e.g., sales tax, title, registration, and licensing, doc fee) and optional charges not tied to any legal or real expense (e.g., dealer prep, advertising, VIN etching, market adjustment).
  - i. *Example of what to say: “I see there’s a \$X VIN etching. I don’t need it, please strike it from the out-the-door price.”*
  - ii. *Another example of what to say: “Can you remove the \$X market adjustment? Similar models are selling at \$Y.”*

