

[AUTO LOANS](#)[Advertiser Disclosure](#)

How to get a good deal on your first auto loan

Written by **David McMillin**



Aug. 14, 2011 / 1 min read

B Why you can trust Bankrate



While we adhere to strict [editorial integrity](#), this post may contain references to products from our partners. Here's an explanation for [how we make money](#).

3 tips to get a good deal on your first auto loan

Searching for a new *auto loan* can be overwhelming. If you are embarking on your first quest for financing, here are three tips to help you lock in loan terms that can fit your ability to pay.

Credit counts

Just like any other major purchase, your credit history plays a key role in your ability to secure an **auto loan**. Know your credit score to have a realistic idea of what kind of financial picture you paint for potential lenders. If your score is subpar, you may want to begin your search at a credit union or bank.

Go shopping

You've compared models. You've compared mileage. You've researched every other detail of the vehicles you're considering, and you know the car you want to drive home. However, the shopping trip has just begun. Regardless of your credit score, search for auto loan rates to understand averages in your local area and find the most competitive rates.

Use the power of pre-approval

If you can lock in a pre-approved rate before heading to the dealer for the big buy, you may be able to negotiate for even more attractive interest rates once you get to the lot. Some dealers offer the choice between a rebate or low-interest financing. If you have already managed to secure unbeatable rates at a financial institution, your choice is clear: reward yourself with a rebate.

In addition to these three tips, using an auto loan calculator can help you sift through all those numbers with ease and get a clear picture of what prospective loan terms mean for the true cost of your new ride.

Current Auto Loan Rates for December 2021

[Advertiser Disclosure](#)

Loan Term

60 months ▾

Credit Score

Excellen... ▾

Zip Code

97213 Portland, OR 

Lending Partner APR From Term  Highlights

REFINANCE

- Part of Ally Financial - with 100+ years in the