

How to Show Your Used Car to a Prospective Buyer

A soft sell helps everyone. Be honest about problems, but show the highlights, too.

Steps:

1. Let the buyer offer a first impression of the car.
2. Honor the buyer's requests, within reason: open the hood, turn on the lights, honk the horn.
3. Explain problems as they come up. For example, if there is rust, point it out as the buyer looks at the body.
4. Explain highlights as they come up. If there are new tires, point them out when the buyer looks at the wheels. Say how many miles are on them.
5. Give the buyer documentation, if any, of recent repairs and service.
6. Let the buyer start the car and listen to the engine. Explain any engine repairs, performance details and opinions about the car's reliability.
7. Take the passenger seat and go for a test drive. The buyer should be behind the wheel.
8. Allow the buyer to drive on the freeway if desired.
9. Return home, take back the keys, and begin bargaining, if necessary.