

How to Write an Effective Used Car Ad

Be honest, describe the car accurately, and keep it short.

Steps:

1. Give the car's year, make and model.
2. Note the car's current mileage.
3. Describe the car's condition in a word or two. "Reliable" indicates exactly that; "clean" means no dents and good interior. "Running project" or "mechanic's special" means it needs restoration but has potential, "beater" means a jalopy reliable for neighborhood driving. "Beautiful" means exceptionally clean and appealing. Be creative but clear.
4. State if the car has always been garaged.
5. Identify recent repairs or overhauls: new clutch, 6,000 miles on rebuilt engine, new tires, tune-up every 3,000 miles.
6. Identify any cosmetic details, negative or positive: no dents, dent in left front fender, new paint, upholstery worn, new red paint.
7. If you are the first or second owner, state that.
8. State color.
9. State any interesting details that might drive up the price: convertible, roomy, rare.
10. Name a price. If the price is negotiable, add "b/o," meaning "or best offer."
11. If you do not want to bargain, add "firm," as in "\$1,800 firm."
12. Give a phone number where you can be reached and a time when you will be there.

Tips:

- Don't understate damage or overstate positives. Heightened expectations mean a lower final sale price.

Warnings:

- If you have anything major to declare about the car, such as the need for a new

transmission, say that in the ad. It's going to come out, so it might as well screen out those for whom it's a deal breaker up front.