



Decoding Your VIN

(NAPS)—When cars are sold, recalled, stolen or involved in accidents, you may hear references to the VIN; that is, the Vehicle Identification Number. Many data registries use the VIN to record details of the vehicle's history. Before you buy a used car, do a VIN lookup to get the vehicle history report and find records of its previous owners, accidents and repairs. You can also find out if the manufacturer has ever issued a recall of the vehicle and whether those repairs were made.



Knowing a car's VIN could help you save time, money and trouble.

What the VIN Is

It's a unique code that's assigned to every motor vehicle when it's manufactured and is a 17-character string of letters and numbers without intervening spaces or the letters Q (q), I (i) and O (o); these are omitted to avoid confusion with the numerals 0 and 1. Each section of the VIN provides a specific piece of information about the vehicle, including the year, country and factory of manufacture; the make and model; and the serial number. VINs are usually printed in a single line.

How to Find the VIN Number

On most passenger cars, you can find the VIN number on the front of the dashboard on the driver's side. The best way to see it is to look through the windshield from outside the car. You can also find the VIN number on the driver's side door pillar. Open the door and look around the area where the door latches to the car. A motorcycle's VIN is usually on the steering neck below the handlebars, although sometimes it's on the motor or on the frame near the motor. A semitrailer's VIN is located on the front part of the semitrailer on the left side.

If you can't find the VIN number on the vehicle, you should be able to find it on your vehicle's title or liability insurance documents.

Learn More

To decode your vehicle's VIN number or see if there are any active recalls on your car, visit the free VIN Decoder at <https://driving-tests.org/vin-decoder/>.