

Consumer Corner

Finding The Right Used Car For Your Teenager

(NAPSA)—Okay, you're thinking of buying a car for your driving-age teenager, and with the price of new cars climbing you've decided on getting one that's pre-owned.

These tips will help steer you towards a used car that fits the bill without breaking your budget.

- The first step is to determine how the car will be used by the teen. If it's for commuting or trips to college and back, then gas mileage and comfort may be your biggest considerations. With gas prices high, fuel economy is an important consideration.

- Make a list of some vehicle safety features you're looking for. For example, are you interested in anti-lock brake systems and integrated seat belt systems?

- Before you start shopping, set a budget for how much you want to spend. Research a few models that meet your criteria and price range. The Web sites kbb.com and Edmunds.com offer pricing information and comprehensive advice on buying a used car.

- Obviously, finding a safe and reliable vehicle for your teen is top priority. The Carfax Safety and Reliability Report allows you to view the auto industry's leading used-car safety ratings, reliability scores and reviews in one step. The information compiled in these reports can also give some good general advice.

- Now you're ready to start visiting dealers. For any vehicle you consider, ask detailed questions about the vehicle's performance and history, and request maintenance and inspection records. Also, get a Carfax Vehicle History



NEW DRIVER, NEW CAR—The key to finding the right used car for your teen is doing your homework.

Report (most dealers will provide reports for free; you just have to ask) or get one yourself at www.carfax.com.

- Always test-drive prospective cars on city streets and highways. This will give you a chance to thoroughly examine the car. Have your teenager drive it if you can. Make sure everything on the car works properly—brakes, gauges, lights, windows and locks. Also have a mechanic you trust check it out.

- In addition to that, you should take a look to make sure the body parts line up, the paint matches, doors open and close easily and the tires show even wear.

- Get a copy of "Finding The Best Used Car," available from the Federal Consumer Information Center in Pueblo, Colorado (www.pueblo.gsa.gov).

By doing your homework, you will be able to negotiate a good price for a reliable car. For more tips and information, visit www.carfax.com.