

Tips for selling your car

Hooray! It's time to buy a new car! But what's to be done with the old one? Should you sell it privately online, social sell it, or trade it in at the dealer where you're buying your new vehicle? There are pros and cons to all of these routes, and Imperial Auto has got some great advice.



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Selling privately online

Paying a small amount to post pics of your car on a general vehicle sales website may seem like a quick, cheap way to move your current vehicle out of the garage to make way for the new one, but bear a few things in mind before you take this route:

- Arrange a roadworthy assessment and certificate for your vehicle, and take care of any repairs necessary to achieve the certificate.
- Make sure that you're asking a fair price for your vehicle - do extensive research online to compare prices of vehicles similar to yours to make sure that you're giving - and getting - a good deal.
- You're publishing your private contact details out there in the World Wide Web. Doing so may make you vulnerable.
- Make sure that you've got the time to chat to each potential buyer, fielding their calls whenever they want to get through to you.
- Use these conversations to gauge how serious the buyers are before you agree to meet them for a test drive. Ask questions about how they intend to finance the purchase, and what their needs in a vehicle are.
- Consider your plan of action if an out-of-town buyer contacts you - will you pay for their travel costs to get to you, or will you entertain discounting your price if they come to collect the vehicle?
- When setting up a test drive with a private buyer, make sure that your insurance covers them while they are driving.
- Ask to see their driver's license before you let them take the wheel.
- Meet in a public place, and plan a test drive that's short and through busy areas.
- Always go on the test drive with them, no matter what they offer as collateral to go on a test drive alone.
- Once you've agreed on a price, meet the seller at their financial institution to complete the transaction.
- Don't hand over any ownership documents until the agreed purchase price is cleared in your bank account.
- Keep a paper trail of all discussions and negotiations surrounding the deal.

Social selling

There's a new use for social media such as Facebook: posting photos of your car, along with details of the sale, and promising a commission to the person whose referral by sharing on the social network leads to the sale of the car.

- If you want the details of your car to go far and wide, you'll need to reduce the privacy settings on your Facebook profile. If you're not worried who will see your photos of your children, and your regular status updates, this shouldn't be a problem.
- If a buyer contacts you, make sure to follow all the same steps that you would follow with any other private online sale,

including meeting in public areas for test driving etc.

- Make sure you've got a strategy in place to deal with multiple claims on the referral commission - the nature of viral communications online is that posts may be seen by overlapping circles of friends, and you may have more than one person claiming the money you've promised.

Trading in at a dealer

Negotiating a trade in with the dealer where you're buying your new car means that you're working with an expert in the industry, who has the experience and knowledge to research and offer you the best possible price for your vehicle.

- Trading your car in at a dealer means that you deal with one person in the sale of your car. You won't have to arrange road-worthy certificates, manage test drives, or get involved in any of the admin needed by the eventual buyer of your car.
- You're also dealing with one place to complete both transactions - the sale of the old car and the purchase of the new car - which offers a whole lot of time-saving in your busy life.
- It's worth phoning a couple of dealers yourself to find out what they would offer for your vehicle, so that you can enter into informed negotiations with the dealer where you're trading in your old car. Remember to include all relevant information about your car in these discussions, including model, odometer reading, service record, and any dings and scratches that may impact its value. It's not worth being economical with the truth - any omissions will come to light, breaching trust.
- Make your car presentable when you take it in for visual inspection. A wash and a vacuum won't hide any major problems with the car, but they will make it more visually appealing.
- Imperial Auto dealers will offer you the best possible market-related price for your trade-in vehicle, taking any required repairs, paintwork touch-ups and the roadworthy certification into account.

Regardless of the method you choose to sell your car, make sure that you're getting a good deal for it. If you're not happy with the deal put on the table, discuss it with whoever is making you the offer - there are multiple ways that dealers can structure a deal. Sometimes, a good deal may not always be for the highest price, if you consider the time, effort and resources that go into facilitating a private sale.

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