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## How to Avoid Odometer Fraud

Odometer fraud is when the mileage on a used vehicle's title and odometer has been altered. Odometer tampering is not only illegal, but can end up being expensive too. The buyer thinks the car or truck has fewer miles on it, then it actually does they end up paying much more for the vehicle than it is worth and also paying more in the end on insurance and repairs. The American National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that odometer fraud costs buyers billions of dollars every year.

1. Compare the current mileage with the odometer statement the seller received when they purchased the vehicle.
2. Check the tires. The car's original tires should last for about 60,000 miles, so new tires on a car with low mileage should alert you to take a closer look.
3. Look for things that indicate the mileage of the car. Oil change reminder stickers, warranty cards and service receipts will usually have the mileage noted.
4. Have a reputable mechanic inspect the car thoroughly. The mechanic should look for wear on the engine, suspension and steering, as well as problems with the emissions system. These areas will show signs of high mileage. Also ask the mechanic to see if the odometer cover has been removed.
5. Be especially alert when buying certain models: Popular models for rolling back miles include sport utility vehicles, Chevy Lumina, Fords and Chrysler minivans.
6. Ask the Department of Motor Vehicles for the car's title history and previous owner's name. You need to provide the DMV with the vehicle identification number (VIN). Reconsider buying this particular vehicle if the title shows it was sold several times in a short period.
7. Be wary of retired, low-mileage fleet vehicles. Unscrupulous buyers will clean the car up, put on a new brake pedal cover, roll back the odometer and resell it for a tidy profit. These cars are typically driven more than 30,000 miles a year.

### Tips:

Use [Carfax.com](http://Carfax.com) to check your car's history. There is a charge for this service, but it's much quicker than the DMV.

See the [TheAutobusiness.com](http://TheAutobusiness.com) for more information related to buying & selling used cars.