Buying a used hybrid checklist

Take this to the inspection. Service history and the hybrid battery matter most.

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Car, year and variant | Seller | Asking price

1. Before you see it

- [ ] **Run a PPSR check** (ppsr.gov.au) for finance owing, write-offs and theft.
- [ ] **Check for recalls** at vehiclerecalls.gov.au and ask if they've been done.
- [ ] **Look up the hybrid battery warranty**: years from first registration, kilometres, and any servicing conditions to keep it.
- [ ] **Compare the price** with others of the same year and kilometres.

2. The hybrid system the most important check

- [ ] **Check for warning lights**: walk away if the hybrid system warning is on.
- [ ] **Ask whether the hybrid battery has been replaced or reconditioned**, with paperwork.
- [ ] **Check the battery cooling vent isn't blocked**: on many hybrids it sits near the rear seat, and dust or pet hair makes the battery run hot.
- [ ] **Drive it from cold**: the engine should start and stop smoothly, with no shudder or clunk.
- [ ] **Plug-in hybrid? Charge it and drive on electric**, and compare the range with the car's range when new.
- [ ] **Ask for a hybrid health check** from a dealer or a hybrid specialist.

3. Inspect the car

- [ ] **Service history**: regular oil changes on time matter, because the engine stops and starts often.
- [ ] **Check the 12-volt battery age**: a weak one can stop the car starting.
- [ ] **Tyres and brakes**
- [ ] **Test the heating and air conditioning**
- [ ] **Plug-in hybrid? Test the charge port**: plug in and check the flap and latch.
- [ ] **Get a pre-purchase inspection** from a mechanic who works on hybrids.

4. What should come with it

- [ ] **Both keys**
- [ ] **Service book** and any battery or recall paperwork.

☐ **Plug-in hybrid? The portable charging cable**

> **Tip:** hybrid batteries often last the life of the car, but a replacement can cost thousands. Get a quote for that model before paying a premium for a high-kilometre car.

Notes