Purchasing a Pre-Owned Car

Questions to Ask Yourself Before Purchasing

- Do I need a car?
- Where will I be driving the car? (In Durham, around NC, across the US)
- For what purpose will I drive the car? (Transport to work, to classes, traveling)
- Is it better to use public transportation? Buses, taxis, vans, etc.
- Would it be better to rent/lease a car? See handouts on Renting/Leasing
- Why is it a good idea to have a car?
- Why is it a bad idea?
- Where should I buy a car?
  - Dealership (more expensive yet quicker process. Sometimes with service agreements and payment options)
  - Private seller (less expensive, however, much more time consuming. No services included)

Some Local Dealerships…Most reliable cars cost over $8,000 at a Dealership

### CarMax: Raleigh
8520 Glenwood Ave, Raleigh 27612
919.783.9494; www.carmax.com
Cars for $10,000 and up

### Triangle Auto Brokers
3301 N Roxboro St, Durham 27704
919.220.9476 (no website)
Cars from $3000 - $10,000

### Mark Jacobson
4516 Durham Chapel Hill Blvd, Durham 27707
919.490.1000
http://www.markjacobsontoyota.com/used-inventory/index.htm
Cars from $8000 & up

### Atlantic Auto Exchange
2511 Guess Rd, Durham 27705
919.416.9400; www.atlanticautoexchange.com
Cars for $7000 and up

### A Lot of Cars
(owned by former Duke grad)
3119 North Roxboro Street, Durham 27704
919.220.7155 www.alotofcarsnc.com
Cars from $3000 - $9000

### Performance Acura
(ask for Sylvester Harrison)
1814 Durham-Chapel Hill Boulevard
Chapel Hill 27514 Tel. 888.742.6227
sylvester.harrison@hendrickauto.com
www.performanceacurachapelhill.com
Cars from $5000 & up (takes time to locate)

Other Places to Look for Cars… In Durham there are a lot of car dealers on Durham-Chapel Hill Boulevard, also known as “15-501 Business”. Many of the new car dealers also sell used cars. No need for an appointment. Hours are usually 9am until 9pm Monday – Friday; 9am until 6pm on Saturdays and afternoons on Sundays. If you tell a dealer the amount you have, let’s say, $5,000 for a car, he/she may try to find you one. It will take time.

Recommended Places to Find Private Sellers

- intlhouse@duke.edu Register at http://studentaffairs.duke.edu/ihouse/join-email-listserv
- Duke Lists for all Duke affiliated people- must have a net ID to respond to ads http://dukelist.duke.edu/

Before purchasing from a private seller, remember to;

- Look up the Kelly Blue Book value of the car before going to see it (www.kbb.com) or Edmunds (www.edmunds.com)
- Look at the Consumer Reports rating of the car (Bostock Library has Consumer Reports in the Reference area) or you can subscribe online.
- Ask the seller for the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) and run a report on www.carfax.com (This may cost a small fee unless you know someone who already has a subscription)
- Take the car to a mechanic for an evaluation (the car owner may wish to come with you) I-House has a list of Auto Mechanics and the fee charged to evaluate a used car. See Auto Mechanic handout.

What questions should I ask a seller?

- How long have you owned this car? Are you the original owner? Why are you selling this car?
- How many miles have you put on the car? What is the total mileage?
- What repairs have you made? Have you been in any accidents? Could I see the maintenance records?
- If a mechanic finds a problem with this car, will you repair it before I purchase it?

WARNING: Do not buy a car that does not have a current inspection sticker or license tags. Do not buy a car if the owner cannot give you the car title. Do not buy a car without getting it evaluated by a mechanic.
How much will buying a car cost all together?

- NC Driving license $32.00 for five years or $4 per year
- Insurance Varies ($1200 for six months for most international drivers)
- Title $40.00
- Hwy Use Tax and License Plates 3% of vehicle purchase price + $28 (Tags and additional tax)
- Inspection $30-$40
- Duke parking permit Varies

What must I have to register my car in North Carolina?

- Driving license (or other ID from NC DMV)
- Title of Car (Keep in a safe place at home)
- Minimum Liability Auto Insurance Requirements (keep an auto insurance card in your glove compartment)
  - Property Damage $25,000
  - Bodily Liability $30,000 for one person; $60,000 for 2 or more

What should I know about car maintenance?

- Learn the basic parts of your car (for example visit a mechanic, read the car manual, search websites)
- Have the oil and oil filter changed every 3,000 miles
- Monitor the condition of tires and brakes and have them adjusted/replaced when needed
- Get a written estimate before doing any repairs at a mechanic shop and don’t pay for any new charges

Triple-A (AAA) or the American Automobile Association is a popular motor club in the US that provides many services for members. www.aaa.com

- Emergency roadside assistance for car wrecks, flat tires, keys locked in car, and other problems
- Free maps
- Hotel and car rental discounts
- Traveler’s checks without extra fees
- Trip planning advice

Locations: 3505 Westgate Dr. Durham 27707, Tel. 919.489.3306 OR 5137 NC Highway 55, Durham 27713. Tel. 919.313.0195

Helpful Websites
http://www.carbuyingtips.com/used.htm

What are the steps for purchasing a car?

1. Go to Driver’s License Office (DMV) to get NC State ID (or any other ID from the DMV (refer to handout on How to Register your Car and Obtain Auto Tags) as it will take at least 10 days to get this card. Also do not apply for this card until you have been to Duke Visa Services and in US for at least 3 days.

2. Start looking at different cars. You can ask the seller to bring the car to you. When you find one you feel good about, do a VIN check. Also look at KBB or Edmunds website; with exact make and mileage of auto you can get an idea of the value of the car. If you still feel good about the car, arrange for the owner to meet you at the mechanic of your choice for an evaluation. Ask the Mechanic for a written or typed evaluation. You may use this when negotiating a price.

3. If you still like the car, negotiate a purchase price with owner. Decide on method of payment with owner (usually cashier's check from your bank).

4. Go with the seller to a Notary Public (can find Notary at your bank, seller’s bank or at DMV). You must BOTH sign the Car Title. You give seller the Cashiers Check. He/she gives you the Car Title. **Don’t give any money without getting the title!**

5. Purchase an Auto Insurance Policy (refer to handout on Automobile Insurance for more information). You can also research insurance while you are looking at cars; and you can purchase the insurance over the phone even before you register it.

6. Take the Car Title, Mileage (from car’s odometer), Photo Identification (NC State ID, NCDL or NC Learner’s Permit), Proof of Insurance (policy statement), and Cash or Check to pay fees and taxes to the Department of Motor Vehicles. There is a DMV located in Northgate Mall, Durham and one in the University Mall, Chapel Hill. Refer to the handout on How to Register your Car and Obtain Auto Tags.
7. Take the license plate off of the owner’s car and hand it into the DMV. Put your new license plate on your car. You will need a screwdriver to do this. You are now ready to drive! Safe Travels.