CAR PRO Inspections

Electric Car Buying Checklist

For a used EV. Print it, bring it, tick each box as you look at the car. Write down what you find.

Section 1: Paperwork and History

Start with the paper trail before you look at the car.

- ☐ **First, get a pre-purchase inspection** by a certified technician before you pay
- ☐ **Title:** clean, no salvage, rebuilt or flood brand
- ☐ **VIN** on the title matches the dashboard and the driver's door jamb
- ☐ **Recalls:** check the NHTSA database by VIN; EV recalls often involve the battery or charging, so confirm open ones are fixed
- ☐ **Service records:** software updates, tire rotations, brake fluid, cabin filter
- ☐ **Battery warranty:** ask the maker what battery coverage is left by VIN and mileage, and whether it transfers to you
- ☐ **Charging history:** ask how it was charged (home or mostly fast charging), if the seller knows

Section 2: Charge and Range

Look at the numbers on the screen before the drive.

- ☐ **Charge level:** write down the percentage when you arrive
- ☐ **Range shown:** write down the miles of range at that charge
- ☐ **Know the limits:** the range on screen is the car's own estimate; cold weather, speed and the last driver's habits all move it, so it is not a battery health measurement
- ☐ **After the drive:** note the charge again; a big drop on a short, easy loop is worth asking about

Section 3: Charging Port and Cable

- ☐ **Port door** opens, closes and latches
- ☐ **Port pins:** clean, straight, no scorch marks, melting or corrosion
- ☐ **Cable:** ask whether a mobile charging cable comes with the car; if it does, no cuts, kinks or burnt plug ends
- ☐ **Plug in** if a charger is on site: it locks in and the car shows it is charging

Section 4: Tires and Brakes

EVs are heavy and quick, and that is hard on tires.

- ☐ **Tread depth** on all four; EV tires wear faster than most buyers expect
- ☐ **Wear pattern:** inside edge, cupping or feathering point to alignment or suspension issues
- ☐ **Matching tires:** same brand and size on each axle
- ☐ **Brake rotors:** regenerative braking means the brakes often see less use, so look for heavy rust or grooves

Section 5: Underneath

The battery pack sits under the floor. This is the section most buyers skip.

- ☐ **Battery shield:** look along the underbody for scrapes, dents, cracks or missing covers and fasteners
- ☐ **Grounding marks:** scuffs from curbs, speed bumps or steep driveways
- ☐ **Leaks:** drips or wet spots under the car (coolant)
- ☐ **Suspension:** no leaking struts, torn boots or worn bushings

Section 6: Warning Lights and Screens

- ☐ **Power on:** the warning lights should come on with the key and go out once it starts; one that never lights up may have been disabled. Watch for battery, powertrain or reduced-power messages
- ☐ **12-volt battery:** most EVs still have one; a low 12-volt warning can stop the car starting
- ☐ **Software:** ask whether updates are current and if the car is still linked to the seller's app or account
- ☐ **Keys:** count the fobs or key cards that come with it

Section 7: Test Drive

At least 15 to 20 minutes, city and highway.

- ☐ **Listen:** EVs are quiet, so a whine, hum, clunk or grind stands out
- ☐ **Acceleration:** smooth and strong, no hesitation or cutting out
- ☐ **Regen braking:** slowing when you lift off is smooth and steady
- ☐ **Braking:** firmly from 40 mph on a safe, empty stretch, with the seller's OK; straight, no pulsing or grinding
- ☐ **Climate:** A/C on coldest and heat on hottest; both work and blow at every fan speed
- ☐ **Driver assist:** lane keeping, cruise and cameras, where fitted

Section 8: Before You Buy

Step back and look at the full picture.

- ☐ **Get a certified battery health certificate,** especially if the battery is out of warranty. The screen's figure is not certified. We are an authorized AVILOO testing partner in metro Atlanta: carproinspections.com/ev-battery-test
- ☐ **Get repair estimates** for anything you found
- ☐ **Negotiate** with your written notes and estimates
- ☐ **Think twice:** battery shield damage, battery warning lights, a flood brand or signs of a fire are serious; get a professional opinion before you decide

Notes: year, make, model, VIN, charge % and range on arrival and after the drive, and what the seller told you

Want one of our certified technicians to check it for you? Book at carproinspections.com

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