GRAEVES AUTO & APPLIANCE
Family owned and operated serving Montgomery County since 1952...

the Shop Rag

A monthly publication filled with industry news, maintenance and safety tips, upcoming events, special coupons, and more!

Buying a Used Car…

When you look for a used car, you want it cheap, you want it to look sharp, and you want it in tip top mechanical condition… The problem is you can't always find all three in a single car. That is why it is up to you to set your priorities, and research for the best value you can find for your money. Do not underestimate the value of a car in good mechanical condition. After all, a sharp paint job and 20 inch spinners don't look so hot stalled on the side of the road with smoke pouring out from under the hood…

If you don't know much about cars, have a knowledgeable friend or your auto mechanic check the following:

Fluids: Most cars have over ten fluids. The important ones to check are the engine coolant, oil, transmission, power-steering, and brake fluids. Contaminants or low fluids can be your clue that the car has been poorly maintained.
Accident Alert: Problems in the following areas may indicate a previous accident: bent or welded frame; doors, hood and trunk that have gaps or do not close properly; paint color is not uniform; ripples in the metal. You'll have to get it on a lift for a full inspection, but it's worth the trouble.
Steering and Suspension: Too much play in the steering may mean worn parts; that's bad and usually expensive news. A car's suspension system refers to its shocks and/or struts. If this system (aptly named because it literally "suspends" your car over its four tires) is in bad shape, you could lose the ability to steer over rough terrain, making your ride dangerous and bumpy. Your car expert friend will use the "bounce test" to check it out.
Exhaust: That hot-rod noise may sound cool, but it could mean a leak in one of several places. If this leak is in the catalytic converter, you could possibly fail a motor-vehicle inspection.
Belts and Hoses: Worn belts and hoses can be good indicators of how the previous owner(s) maintained the car. If these items are in bad shape, beware.
Engine and Transmission: Because the engine powers the car and the transmission "transmits" this power to the wheels, these two systems are important players. Check them both visually and with a test drive. The car should run quietly and smoothly. If it is a manual, the gears should shift easily.
Brakes: While your dream car is up on the lift, make sure the brake system is examined. This involves removing a couple of wheels. Look at the pads, shoes, rotors, drums and hydraulic parts.
Tires: Check the tread on all five (the spare makes five) tires. Worn treads mean you'll soon be investing in new tires. Treads that have worn unevenly indicate poor alignment.

Resist impulse buys and high pressure buys. If a seller is in a hurry, pass on that car and move on to the next car on your list. The time you spend up front will pay off big time in the end.

Graeves Auto & Appliance is a Certified American Car Care Center
For more information please visit:
www.graevesauto.com

Auto Safety Tips...

Selecting Quality Jumper Cables

A precautionary message in your car owner's manual or on top of your battery tells how to connect jumper cables safely to prevent sparks and a possible explosion. An additional statement might warn about the dangers of using substandard quality jumper cables. These can produce a situation similar to connecting a thin, poorly insulated extension cord to an electric heater. The wire could heat up, eventually melting the insulation and causing a short circuit.

Shortcomings of inferior booster cables include:

- High resistance in inferior cables can damage the starter motor when subjected to long periods of cranking.
- Flimsy, poorly insulated clamps with weak springs can provide poor electrical connections.
- Poor quality cable jackets (insulation) become excessively stiff in freezing weather.

Features to look for:

- Built in warning lights to signal incorrect connection.
- Pure copper wire in the cables for best conductivity.
- Adequate length and gauge of cable (12 - 16 ft; 4 gauge).
- Tangle-free design with a heavy duty insulated jacket.
- Clamps covered with bonded vinyl insulation.
- Insulated clamp jaw with no exposed metal parts which could arc when contacting vehicle frame or other parts.

How to Use Jumper Cables

- Review jump starting procedures in Vehicles Owner manual. If manual is missing or no procedure is specified, follow these instructions. *Note: instructions are for negative grounded system.
- Examine the batteries and systems in both vehicles. If they are not the same voltage, (6 volt or 12 volt) Do Not attempt to jump start.
- Don't jump start a damaged battery. Be sure vent caps are tight and level. Place damp cloth over vent caps on both batteries. Be sure vehicles do not touch and ignitions are off.
- Connect positive (+) cable to positive post of discharged battery.
- Connect other end of same cable to same marked post (positive) of starting vehicle battery.
- Connect second cable (negative(-)) to other post of booster battery.
- Make final connection on engine block of stalled vehicle AWAY FROM battery and stand back.
- Start vehicle. If the vehicle does not start after cranking for thirty seconds, stop the procedure. More than thirty seconds seldom starts an engine unless some mechanical adjustment is made.

FunFacts...

Sneezes can travel almost 100mph.
Cover up when you sneeze!

"Triskaidekaphobia"
is a fear of the number 13.

Indy race tires are 14" wide, weigh 22 lbs and last approximately 100 miles.

The 1st Atari game was "Pong" in 1972.

COUPON

GRAEVES AUTO & APPLIANCE

Print and bring this coupon with you to Graeves Auto & Appliance and receive a free tire plug for a damaged tire. Screw or nail hole must be located in the tread and small enough to ensure a safe plug installation.

(This coupon may not be used in conjunction with any other promotions or coupons.)
Coupon expires: April 30, 2009

COUPON