

sites on auto buying, leasing, care and financing. We also like a

few sites that don't get a lot of attention, but should. The web

navigational ease. We have compared information and advice from website to website. We try to steer you toward those we

believe offer complete and unbiased information—information

Please understand, some websites are chock full of ads and

that's okay. But some websites will only offer information and

advice that is paid for by advertisers or so-called "featured

providers" or "partners." We are not saying that it's bad

resources we suggest on these pages have been carefully

reviewed for editorial content and integrity, objectivity and

that is not solely connected to advertising dollars.

d dozens of the more popular Internet

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October 11, 2001 Buyer's Ed: Around The Web

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Buying/Selling Tools



information and advice. We are saying it is not complete and impartial. Take a gander at the Understand E-commerce link for another take on this issue.

Money Talks

Understand E-commerce
We're sure glad someone else is telling it like it is, because the others won't! Consumers' CHECKBOOK/The Center for the Study of Services, a non-profit group backed by the U.S.
Consumer Affairs Office, explains the "promise and the pitfalls" of Internet shopping. So, we are adding this link to every one of our pages. PLEASE READ IT before you shop for anything on the



Edmund's Trade-In Value

We'll send you directly to the Edmund's Trade-In Value search. But if your trade-in car is older than 1990, you won't find it here.

Kelley Blue Book

It's really not blue, at least not this year. The Kelley Blue Book is an auto industry bible on used-car values. You can use their search tool to determine the value of your used car. The only WARNING we have about this site is this: like most websites offering free advice, they gotta make some dough somehow. So, they end up guiding you to those advertisers that sell insurance and auto loans. It's painfully possible that these advertisers do not offer the best rates and terms.

Car Buying Service

There are a handful of good car-buying services that hunt down the best price and best terms on the car you want. They basically do the shopping and negotiating for you and save you the leg work for a fee. CarBargains happens to be our favorite because we've compared their \$165 flat-fee service to the others. They can and have saved folks thousands on auto purchases. Again, there are other good ones out there, but you'll notice that CarBargains is the only one that tells you immediately how much they charge. It's on their home page. And we think that kind of upfront honesty is worthy of a first look.

Car Buying Service: Fighting Chance

This guy is a Rottweiler with the auto industry. Money Talks has frequently used James Bragg's sage advice to educate the public about buying and leasing automobiles. This is what he does for a living--he is not supported by the auto industry in any way--so, the Fighting Chance website will try to sell you Bragg's \$25 Fighting Chance packet for specific cars and with complete pricing data, bi-weekly updates, monthly sales of cars, and a lot of personal experience and insider information. Do we think it's worth it? Yes. Bragg's also got a sense of humor. While you're at his site, check out the "Name Game."

Car Buying Service: Car Point

You have to dig for it, but the disclaimer for MSN CarPoint's New Car Buying Service acknowledges they offer the car-buying service free of charge because they are supported by a "network" of supposedly upstanding dealers. Thus, you are probably not going to get a complete and objective list of new car prices, nor will Car Point do a lot of haggling for you. Who do you think is going to get the better service: you, who will pay nothing, or the dealer? Doesn't mean you won't Service acknowledges they offer the car-buying service free of charge because they are supported by a "network" of supposedly upstanding dealers. Thus, you are probably not going to get a complete and objective list of new car prices, nor will Car Point do a lot of haggling for you. Who do you think is going to get the better service: you, who will pay nothing, or the dealer? Doesn't mean you won't

Consumer Reports New Car Price Service

You have to pay \$12 for a list of prices on a specific automobile, from manufacturer to showroom. There are plenty of other resources on the Internet--and some of them are mentioned on this page--where you can find the same information without paying. But, hey! It's Consumer Reports.

Auto Nation Trade-In Values

WARNING: This is a one-stop auto buying outfit. They sell cars, loans, insurance, warranties, etc. WE DO NOT RECOMMEND you use this site as a gauge of the best prices available. The only reasons we suggest AutoNation is for its trade-in value search and the reviews. We offer it



Auto.Com

The Detroit Free Press publishes this website. The vehicle reviews are a little lacking, but this is an A-1 site for the most recent auto news--and there's a lot of it daily--and for an extensive listing of auto shows around the world.

NHTSA crash tests

This is the government's version of road-testing, crash-testing, safety inspections, and all the techie talk about torque. Find your car, find the results of its tests.

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consider to be unsafe vehicles. It's worth a look BEFORE you buy that SUV.

Consumer Reports Car Reviews

A free, quick-loading, quick search service on new and used vehicles.

Auto Nation Vehicle Reviews

Good site for reviews and trade-ins. But we don't recommend stopping and shopping unless you've compared their products and services to others.

Popular Mechanics Buyer's Guide

Loads slowly, but worth the minute wait. Just about everything you want to know on the new car of your dreams and then some.

Road Tests by Motor Trend

Can't help but hear that booming voice that says: MOTOR TREND CAP OF THE TEAR! Need we say more? Plug in your information where they tell you to and you can find out how you car choice tested.

Autopedia

If we had 100 thumbs among us, we'd give Autopedia 100 thumbs up. It's not a pretty site -- get it? -- but it's the best all-around auto information and advice we've found. Objective, comprehensive, brutally honest. If you can't find an answer here, then we'd have a tough time telling you where you could.

Edmunds Buyers Guide

Edmunds is one of those highly respected auto know-box institutions. They offer general advice on buying, leasing, trade-ins, etc. They also have a relatively easy search program for prices on new and used cars.

Auto Site

This is a good tool after you've decided what car it is you want to buy and before you hit the pavement to go shopping and haggling. They give you monthly sales volumes on specific cars. That's a good thing to know if you want to gauge how easy it's going to be to negotiate the final price. You can also find prices and rebates on the car you want.

Rebate vs. Interest Rate Calculator

Will a good interest rate be better than a cash-back rebate? Or vice versa? Figure it out for yourself with this Bank Rate Monitor calculator.

Extended Warranty Warnings and Quotes

If you absolutely must get yourself an extended warranty on a car, then at least visit Auto Buying Tips. They tell you what the different warranties are and exactly how to shop for one and exactly why you should or shouldn't buy.

Used Car Classifieds: TraderOnline

Used car classified ads you can search by zip code and make/model of the car you're looking for. We offer it as a used-car pricing gauge.

Best Auto Loan Rates

Bank Rate Monitor offers a complete list of local and national interest rates on auto loans.

Insurance Quotes

Insure.com is our favorite insurance website for quotes, fair and complete information on all insurance news and views. Get an auto insurance quote here.

CarFax Lemon Report

About the only lemon check around. And even when they tease you with a free lemon "check," what you're ultimately after is CarFax's \$15 report, which may list a long history of problems with the car you're interested in, or it may just tell you the car has a clean history. CarFax serves an important role in the auto-buying process, but it's a really dirty advertising trick to call something "free" and deliver nothing more than a cryptic message.

Leasing Tips from the Federal Reserve Board Not quite sure why the Federal Reserve Board is into schooling

us on leasing autos, but they do a pretty darn good job of it. It's a clean, comprehensive tutorial on leasing, and as impartial as it's going to get.

Leasing Tips from Fighting Chance

See the note above on this car buying service. Fighting Chance offers information for sale at prices we think are worth the dough if you're really serious about saving yourself money on auto buying and leasing.

Car Care Council

The Car Care Council has some pretty tough standards on maintenance and repair of automobiles, primarily to keep highways safer and car care costs down. So, you can't go wrong reviewing the Council's extensive library of supplemental articles. It's pretty decent reading even if you're not a car nut!

Automotive Recalls

Alldata offers a huge database of automobile recalls and Technical Service Bulletins (TSBs). It is quick and comprehensive and our first choice on recall research.

National Institute for Service Excellence (ASE) These are the folks who provide the ASE stamp of approval. Their list is small state by state, but it's a good starting point if you're trying to find a mechanic who meets ASE standards.

Finding a Certified Mechanic: AAA
Finding the names of repair shops certified by the American
Automobile Association is a lengthy process. First plug in your zip
code at the AAA website and it'll take you to your local AAA
branch and then you're on your own trying to find the list.

Repair Advice from Family Car

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Better Business Bureau

Searchable news and consumer alerts from the Better Business Bureau. The BBB offers advice and resources on preventive measures you can take before you buy or hire. They also have recourse resources if you think you've fallen victim to shoddy services and products.

Better Business Bureau: New Car Complaint Form Got a complaint about a new car? Take it to the Better Business Bureau at this link.

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