

VIN PLATE - DOES IT LOOK LIKE ITS BEEN TAMPERED WITH? If so, take care. Your car could have had its identity changed. Cross check all numbers with the logbook too.

**ODOMETER** usually electronic these days but easy to tamper with so history check essential

**FUNCTIONS** Make sure everything works as it should. Especially electronic components. Climate Control systems, especially, are prone to glitches and cost a fortune to replace.

**TRANSMISSION** In manuals are all the changes easy? In autos check for excessive slurring or banging on changes.

**BODY PANELS** Watch for parking dings and scrapes - they are expensive to fix. Take care with shabby crash repairs too.

**ENGINE** Are there any unusual noises? Listen when the car is started from cold and when warmed through.

**LEAKS** look under the car when it is stationary for any signs of leaking. Oil or power steering and brake fluid are the usual culprit.

**BELT** Listen out for squeaking on cold starts. It could mean that the fan or auxiliary belts need replacing or tightening.

**EXHAUST** Look at the smoke coming out, especially when cold. Excessive fumes or blue smoke spells trouble.