



Buying a motor vehicle

Before buying a car privately you should check to ensure there is no money owing on it. If you are buying a car from a [registered Motor Vehicle Trader](#), you should not need to search the PPSR, however it may still make good sense to do such a search.

Buying a car from a registered motor vehicle trader

You must be told if there is any money owing on the car. If the security interest entry field on the Consumer Information Notice (CIN or Window Card) is filled in, then the vehicle could be repossessed. If there is no statement about any security interest, the vehicle cannot be repossessed from you.

Note | Prior to July 2008 the CIN was called the Supplier Information Notice or SIN.

Check there is no money owing on the car

You do this by conducting a search of the Personal Property Securities Register preferably on the day you are going to pay for the car, to establish whether a 'security interest' is registered. It is possible for a finance company to register their loan against a car the same day it is bought.

If there is a security interest registered, another person or company may seize your car to pay off the debt. This debt may have been incurred by the previous owner but you may still lose your car if the previous owner has not repaid the debt in full.

If there is money owing on the car to be repaid from the sale proceeds, you should pay this money directly to whoever is owed the money, not to the seller. That way you can be sure the debt against your car is cleared instead of the money being spent on other things.

How do you check?

You will need the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), chassis and registration (plate) number. You should also note the make, model and year of the car to help you to positively identify the car should your search of the PPSR return any results.

You can search by mobile phone using our [TXTB4UBUY](#) service or by [searching online](#).

Before buying a car, you should also carry out a number of other checks

The [Ministry of Consumer Affairs](#) has a range of consumer information on buying a vehicle and information for consumers who have problems with a motor vehicle purchase (including when money is owing on a vehicle).