



Checking if money is owed

When bought from a trader

A previous owner may still owe money to a finance company for the vehicle. You can check whether money is owed on the vehicle by checking the Personal Property Securities Register (PPSR). If you buy a vehicle knowing that money is owed on it, then the finance company could take the vehicle from you.

[Visit the Personal Property Securities Register.](#)

If the vehicle carries a Consumer Information Notice, check to see if the following statement is on the front of this notice...

“There is a security interest registered over this motor vehicle”

...the person or company who has registered the security interest may repossess the vehicle from you.

Read the Consumer Information Notice carefully to make sure this statement is not included. The notice provides more information about what a security interest is.

If you do buy the vehicle with this statement, you take it knowing there is money owing on it and you risk losing it to the person or company that registered the security.

If the statement does not appear on the notice, this means you take the vehicle free of any earlier security interest. The vehicle cannot be repossessed from you.

Buying from a private seller or at a car market or car fair

To check if a vehicle has money owing on it, search the PPSR. Just because the seller can show you the vehicle registration or “ownership” papers, it doesn’t prove that any money owing on the vehicle has been paid off.

[Visit the Personal Property Securities Register.](#)

Using the Personal Property Securities Register (PPSR)

To check the PPSR you must first register as a user at the PPSR website at www.ppsr.govt.nz - there is no charge to register but there is a small fee for searches, which is payable by credit card.

You can use your mobile phone to access the PPSR by sending a text message to FIND (3463), with the motor vehicle registration number and/or Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) or vehicle chassis number (if the vehicle does not have a VIN).

You will receive a result telling you whether there seems to be a registered security over the motor vehicle or not. This service will cost you \$1 [\$1.02 from 1 October 2010]. You can check your results by completing a motor vehicle search online at the PPSR website.

[Visit the Personal Property Securities Register.](#)