



Texas Department of Transportation

You're En-titled

Protect yourself when selling and buying a car or truck

Here are some consumer tips to help keep you safe:

In a private sale, BOTH the seller and buyer should go to the county tax office to transfer the vehicle title. Why?

- ✚ **Seller:** Accompany the buyer to the county tax office to protect your good name and vehicle record. The vehicle remains in your name until a new title is applied for and processed by the county tax office. If the buyer fails to transfer the title, you may still be charged for parking fines and toll violations issued against the vehicle.
- ✚ **Buyer:** Avoid unwanted surprises about your purchase by having the seller accompany you to the county tax office. The county tax office representative can tell you whether the title being signed over to you is correct or if it has legal or salvage issues.

Whenever you trade in a vehicle or do not accompany the buyer to the tax office, ALWAYS fill out a Vehicle Transfer Notification (Form VTR-346).

- ✚ **Seller:** By sending the transfer notification form to the Vehicle Titles and Registration Division, you are making sure the title record shows the date you sold the vehicle. When you do this, the buyer becomes the presumed owner of the vehicle.

Double-check the REQUIRED paperwork, especially the Application for Texas Certificate of Title, and make copies of all documents.

- ✚ **Buyer/Seller:** *Carefully* fill out and complete the Application for Texas Certificate of Title (VTR Form 130-U). Buyer will fill out most of the form but Seller **MUST** fill in the vehicle sales price and sign the form.
- ✚ **Seller:** You must provide the buyer with a properly signed title, which includes filling in the date of the sale and odometer reading. Keep a written record that includes the name and address of the buyer, date of sale, and full vehicle information (including VIN).
- ✚ **Buyer:** Besides the title, ask the seller to provide you with the vehicle's Texas registration receipt, and any other supporting documents related to the vehicle, such as a release of lien or power of attorney. Keep a written record that includes the name and address of the seller, date of sale, and full vehicle information (including VIN).

FORMS AVAILABLE AT www.txdot.gov

*****Texas law requires buyers to title the vehicle within 20 working days of purchase (date of sale)*****

TxDOT's Vehicle Titles and Registration Division oversees the titling and registration of vehicles in Texas and wants to help you protect yourself when buying and selling a car or truck.

Many sellers simply sign the back of the title and hand it over to a buyer. It's convenient, but we want you to be aware this convenience comes with certain risks. Unfortunately, too many buyers fail to re-title the vehicle, leaving the seller as the recorded owner. Should the buyer engage in criminal activity or run up parking fines, the seller is still the official owner of record and responsible for paying the fines (even if the vehicle was sold years earlier).

Remember:

✚ The only way the state, including law enforcement, can know who owns a vehicle is if you tell us. Simply signing the back of the title in a driveway does not change the record of ownership for the vehicle.

✚ Sellers need to submit a Vehicle Transfer Notification (Form VTR-346) to make sure the state record shows the car or truck was sold. You must have the name and address of the buyer to complete the form. **Submitting this form is important even if you sold or traded your vehicle to a dealer.**

Buyers also need to be careful. Unless you buy a new car or truck, you may not know whether the title that was signed over to you has any legal or salvage issues.

The best advice we can give both buyers and sellers is to go into the local county tax office together to transfer ownership of the vehicle. Otherwise, make sure you, the seller, file the Vehicle Transfer Notification. The little extra time it takes can provide you with a whole lot of protection.

Texas law requires buyers to title the vehicle within 20 working days of the date of sale.