

THE LINEAGE OF STUTTGARTDNA

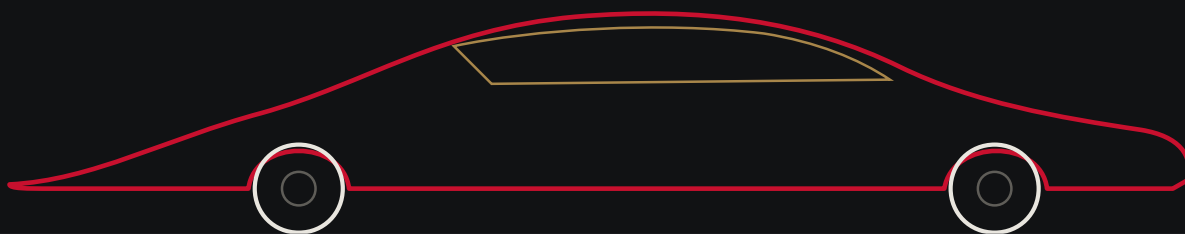
The Porsche Pre-Purchase Inspection Guide

How to find the right car, spot the expensive problems before they become yours, and buy with total confidence.

AIR-COOLED TO 992

BOXSTER · CAYMAN · 718

CAYENNE · MACAN · PANAMERA · TAYCAN



START HERE

A Porsche you love, not a project you didn't plan for.

The difference between a great used Porsche and a money pit is rarely visible in photos. It hides in a scan tool's memory, behind a cold start, inside a cylinder, or in a stack of receipts that isn't there. This guide walks you through every step, in the order you'll actually do them.

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The five rules

1**Never skip the PPI.**

Not for a low-mileage car, a dealer car, a friend's car or a "great deal." The PPI is the cheapest insurance you will ever buy.

2**Use a Porsche specialist.**

An independent Porsche shop with the factory diagnostic system (PIWIS) and no tie to the seller. A generic chain-shop inspection misses what matters.

3**Insist on a cold start.**

Ask the seller not to start or warm the car before you arrive. Many expensive engine problems are only audible in the first minute.

4**Buy the records, not the shine.**

A documented car with honest wear beats a detailed car with no history. Missing records are a price adjustment or a reason to walk.

5**Decide your walk-away line before you go.**

Write down your maximum price and your deal-breakers (page 15). Emotion is the most expensive option on any Porsche — and every one of these cars has a twin for sale somewhere else.

PHASE 1 · AT HOME

SECTION 01

Before you go: research the car

An hour of homework at your desk will eliminate most bad cars before you spend a dime on travel or inspection.

Decode the car

- ☐ Get the **full 17-digit VIN** (on the windshield base, door jamb and title — all three must match).
- ☐ Run a VIN decode to confirm model, model year, engine and plant.
- ☐ Request the **option list**: Porsche build sheet / sticker, or for classics the **Certificate of Authenticity** (CoA) from Porsche.
- ☐ Compare the claimed options against what you see in photos. Desirable options (Sport Chrono, PCCB, manual gearbox, Paint-to-Sample) add real value — and are sometimes claimed when absent.
- ☐ For collectible cars: confirm engine and gearbox numbers match the CoA ("matching numbers").

Check its history

- ☐ **Carfax** and **AutoCheck** — they catch different things; run both.
- ☐ Title status: clean, not salvage, rebuilt, flood or lemon-law buyback.
- ☐ Mileage trail: odometer readings that only ever climb, at plausible intervals.
- ☐ Number of owners and states — rust-belt or coastal history matters on older cars.
- ☐ **Open recalls** at [nhtsa.gov/recalls](https://www.nhtsa.gov/recalls) (free, by VIN), then confirm completion with any Porsche Center.
- ☐ Search the VIN and the car's color/spec on forums and auction sites — prior listings, photos and comments are gold.

Know the market

- ☐ Pull 5–10 **sold** comparables (not asking prices) for the same generation, transmission and mileage band.
- ☐ Adjust for the options, color, records and condition that buyers in this segment actually pay for.
- ☐ Write down three numbers: **fair value**, **your walk-away price**, and the **repair reserve** you'll hold back after purchase.

The repair reserve

Budget a post-purchase fund of roughly 10% of the price for a modern car and more for an older one. Even a perfect car will need fluids, tires, a battery or a few deferred items in the first year. Buyers who plan for it enjoy the car; buyers who don't, resent it.

Paperwork to ask for up front

- ☐ All service invoices (scans or photos are fine before you visit).
- ☐ Maintenance booklet with dealer stamps.
- ☐ Previous PPI reports, if any.
- ☐ Title (front and back) and registration.
- ☐ Records of major work: IMS, clutch, engine or gearbox, paint/body.
- ☐ Original window sticker, CoA, manuals, both keys, tool kit, tire inflator.

PHASE 1 · AT HOME

SECTION 02

The seller call: 15 questions

Ask these by phone, not text. Listen to how the answers come, not just what they are.

A good seller is relaxed, specific and happy to send paperwork. A seller who is vague, rushed or irritated by question 3 has told you what you need to know.

1. **Why are you selling it?**
2. **How long have you owned it, and how did you use it?** (Daily, weekends, track, stored?)
3. **Where has it been serviced?** Dealer, independent Porsche specialist, or "my guy"?
4. **When was the last oil change — and what oil?**
5. **Has it ever been in an accident or had paintwork?** Which panels, and who did it?
6. **Any warning lights or fault messages, ever?**
7. **Has the engine, transmission or clutch ever been opened, rebuilt or replaced?**
8. **Model-specific:** "Has the IMS bearing been addressed?" (M96/M97 cars) · "Any bore-scoring diagnosis?" · "Coolant pipes pinned?" (Mezger Turbo/GT) · "Distributor belt?" (964)
1. **Has it been tracked or autocrossed?** How often? (Not a deal-breaker — but it changes what the inspector looks at.)
2. **Is anything not working right now?** Even small things.
3. **How old are the tires and battery?**
4. **Are there two keys, the manuals and the original wheels/parts?**
5. **Is the title in your name and in hand?** Any lien?
6. **Will you allow a PPI at a shop of my choosing, including a lift inspection and a full diagnostic scan?**
7. **Will you leave it cold for my visit?** "Please don't start it before I arrive."

The one question that ends the call

If a seller refuses an independent PPI — "my mechanic already checked it," "it's been inspected," "other buyers didn't need one" — thank them and move on. There is no exception to this rule. A seller of a good car has nothing to lose by letting an expert look.

Fill in during the call

SELLER _____ PHONE _____

VIN _____ ASKING _____

PHASE 1 · AT HOME

SECTION 03

Know your generation

Every Porsche generation has its own short list of expensive, well-documented weak spots. Know yours before the inspection, so you and your inspector are looking for the right things. Years are approximate U.S. model years.

GENERATION	KNOWN WEAK SPOTS	MUST-DO CHECK
Early 911 / 912 1965–73	Rust in floor pans, battery boxes ("kidney bowls"), longitudinals, jacking points and Targa bars; non-original or mismatched engines; older-style timing-chain tensioners; past accident repair hidden under fresh paint.	Lift inspection for rust; CoA vs. engine/gearbox numbers; compression + leak-down.
911 2.7 1974–77	Magnesium-case engine prone to pulled cylinder-head studs; heat-related wear; chain tensioners; rust (bodies galvanized from 1976).	Leak-down; look for oil at the heads; rebuild records.
911 SC & 3.2 Carrera 1978–89	Broken head studs on some SCs; chain tensioners (look for the later pressure-fed upgrade); 915 gearbox synchro wear (2nd/3rd) — G50 from 1987; oil leaks; heat exchangers.	Leak-down; listen for timing-chain rattle; shift through every gear hot.
964 1989–94	Oil leaks (cylinder base, valve covers); twin-plug distributor belt; early dual-mass flywheel; ABS and C4 hydraulic system; chain-tensioner and head-gasket wear.	Distributor-belt records; leak-down; check C4 ABS/hydraulics for faults.
993 1995–98	Secondary air injection (SAI) ports clog → check-engine light and costly heads-on fix; valve-guide wear (blue smoke after idle); oil leaks; worn shifter bushings.	Scan for SAI faults; watch exhaust on cold start and after idling.
996 Carrera 1999–2005	M96 engine: IMS bearing (single-row 2001/02–05 cars carry the higher risk), bore scoring , rear main seal leak, cracked heads/liners (3.4L), air-oil separator (AOS) failure, front radiators/condensers rotting, coil packs.	IMS records; borescope ; oil-filter inspection for metal; cold-start smoke check.
996 Turbo / GT2 / GT3 2000–05	Mezger engine: no IMS weakness. Watch coolant pipes glued (not pinned) into the case that can let go; clutch and dual-mass flywheel; track use on GT3s.	Ask for "pinned coolant pipes"; over-rev report; clutch life.
997.1 Carrera 2005–08	M97 engine: bore scoring (3.8L S most often cited), revised IMS (larger, lower failure rate, not serviceable without teardown), AOS, broken coil springs, convertible-top cylinders.	Borescope all cylinders; listen for cold-start ticking; compare tailpipe soot left vs. right.
997.2 2009–12	9A1 direct-injection engine — no IMS. Generally robust; first-generation PDK (service history); coolant leaks; Mezger in Turbo/GT through 2012–13.	PIWIS scan incl. PDK data; over-rev report on manuals.
991.1 & 991.2 2012–19	Generally strong. 991.1 GT3 : 2014 engine-replacement campaign and extended coverage for valvetrain (finger-follower) issues on early cars — confirm the car's status. Rear-axle steering faults on some; PDK service.	Dealer recall/campaign printout; warranty status; scan.
992 2020–	Young platform — open recalls, software updates, remaining factory or CPO warranty matter most.	Recall + campaign printout from a Porsche Center.

GENERATION	KNOWN WEAK SPOTS	MUST-DO CHECK
986 / 987.1 Boxster & Cayman 1997–2008	Same M96/M97 family as the 996/997.1: IMS, bore scoring, RMS, AOS; convertible top cables/motors; rear-window and drain issues.	IMS records; borescope; top cycle ×3.
987.2 / 981 2009–16	9A1 DFI engines — no IMS. Fewer known issues; PDK service; top mechanism; A/C condensers.	Scan; top cycle; A/C performance.
718 2017–	Four-cylinder turbo (and 4.0L six in GTS 4.0/GT4/Spyder). Young platform: recalls, warranty, track use on GT cars.	Recall printout; over-rev report on manuals.
Cayenne 955 / 957 2003–10	V8 plastic coolant pipes in the engine valley (early cars), driveshaft center bearing, transfer case, air suspension, ignition coils.	Coolant-pipe replacement records; driveshaft play; air-suspension self-test.
Later Cayenne · Macan · Panamera 2011–	Air-suspension leaks and compressors, transmission/PDK service history, infotainment and electronics faults, open recalls.	Full scan; ride-height check after sitting overnight.
Taycan 2020–	High-voltage battery health, open recalls (several have involved the HV system), charging hardware, 12-volt battery.	HV battery health report and recall printout from a Porsche Center.

This is a field summary, not a complete list. Read the StuttgartDNA buyer's guide for your model before you inspect, and ask your PPI shop what they see most often on that generation.

The IMS question, in plain English

The intermediate shaft (IMS) bearing in M96 and early M97 flat-sixes (996, 986, early 997 and 987) can fail without warning and take the engine with it. Failure rates vary by bearing design and year, and many cars never have a problem. What matters at purchase: **has the bearing been addressed with a documented upgrade** (and by whom), does the oil filter show metal, and is the price right if it hasn't been done? A documented upgrade — usually done alongside a clutch, since the gearbox must come out — is a genuine plus. 997.2, 987.2 and later 9A1-engined cars, plus Mezger-engined Turbo and GT models, don't share this weakness.

PHASE 2 · YOUR EYES

SECTION 04

Your own inspection

Do this before the professional PPI. It costs nothing, takes 45 minutes, and kills most bad cars on the spot. Bring the kit below and look in daylight — never at night or in the rain, which hide paint flaws and leaks.

Your inspection kit

Bright LED flashlight · paint-depth gauge (inexpensive, invaluable) · small magnet wrapped in cloth · tire tread-depth gauge · knee pad or mat · clean white rag · phone for photos and video · a printed copy of this guide · a friend who isn't in love with the car.

Body & paint

- ☐ Crouch at each corner and sight down the sides: ripples, waves or mismatched reflections mean bodywork.
- ☐ **Panel gaps** even and symmetrical: hood, doors, decklid, bumpers.
- ☐ **Paint-depth readings** on every panel. Note the car's typical reading; a panel at roughly double that has been refinished or filled.
- ☐ Color match between bumpers and adjoining panels, in sunlight.
- ☐ Overspray on rubber seals, trim, badges and in door jambs.
- ☐ Bolt heads on fenders, hood and doors: tool marks mean panels have been removed.
- ☐ Front bumper and hood: stone-chip density should match the claimed miles.
- ☐ Glass: all date-coded and same brand; a newer windshield is fine, a newer door glass asks a question.
- ☐ Lights clear and matching; no condensation inside.

Wheels, tires & brakes

- ☐ **Tire DOT date:** last four digits = week/year. Over ~6 years old? Budget for tires regardless of tread.
- ☐ **N-spec** marking (N0, N1...) on Porsche-approved tires; matched brand and spec on each axle.
- ☐ Tread wear even across the width — inner-edge wear points to alignment or worn suspension.
- ☐ Wheels: curb rash, cracks, bends (look at the inner barrel).
- ☐ Brake rotors: lip at the outer edge, deep grooves, cracks. **PCCB** ceramic discs: any chips or cracks are expensive — have them assessed at the PPI.

PHASE 2 · YOUR EYES

SECTION 04 · CONTINUED

Underneath & under the lids

Leaks, rust and crash damage live where sellers don't detail. Get down on the mat with the flashlight before you ever hear the engine run.

Underneath (on your back, with the flashlight)

- ☐ **Fresh oil** or wet residue at the engine/gearbox joint (rear main seal / IMS area on M96/M97 cars).
- ☐ Oil or coolant on the undertray or the ground under the car.
- ☐ Coolant crust (white or pink) around hoses, water pump and expansion tank.
- ☐ Rust: jacking points, floor, suspension mounts — and on classics the battery boxes, longitudinals and door bottoms.
- ☐ Scrapes on the front lip and undertray: some is normal; crushed or cracked trays suggest hard use.
- ☐ Torn CV boots (grease spatter), leaking shocks (oily bodies), broken coil springs.
- ☐ Front radiators and A/C condensers (water-cooled cars): packed with leaves or corroded fins.

Engine bay & trunks

- ☐ Oil level and condition (dipstick or dash readout). Milky residue under the filler cap = investigate.
- ☐ Coolant level and color; oily film in the expansion tank is a red flag.
- ☐ Belts and hoses: cracks, glazing, swelling.
- ☐ Front trunk: lift the carpet — water, rust, or wrinkled metal from a front hit.
- ☐ Rear trunk / engine lid: VIN sticker and option labels present and unpainted.
- ☐ Battery: date, terminals, and a maintainer tag if stored.

Wet isn't always a deal-breaker

A light film on an old air-cooled engine is normal. Fresh, dripping oil on a water-cooled car — especially at the engine-to-gearbox joint — needs a diagnosis from your PPI shop before you talk price.

PHASE 2 · YOUR EARS

SECTION 05

The cold start

The first sixty seconds after a cold start are the most honest the car will ever be with you. Touch the engine cover or exhaust before you begin: if it's warm, ask why — and consider coming back.

Step by step

1. **Film it.** Have your friend video the tailpipes and engine area with sound.
2. **Key on, engine off.** Every warning light should illuminate, then go out after start. A light that never comes on may have been disabled.
3. **Start it.** A healthy Porsche fires promptly with a brief high idle that settles within a minute or two.
4. **Stand at the back.** Listen to the engine and watch the exhaust for 60 seconds.
5. **Walk around once.** Listen at each side and underneath.
6. **Check the dash** once settled: oil pressure, temperature, no messages.
7. **Let it idle 10 minutes**, then blip the throttle and watch for a puff of smoke.

What you're listening for

SIGN	COULD MEAN
Big blue-white smoke cloud on start, then clears	AOS failure on water-cooled flat-sixes, or valve guides/seals on air-cooled — diagnose before buying.
Ticking or tapping from one side, fading as it warms	Possible bore scoring (M96/M97) or lifter noise. Borescope required.
Rattle for a few seconds after start	Chain tensioners or guides; on air-cooled 911s, tensioners.
Persistent rough idle or misfire	Coils, plugs, vacuum leak, or worse — scan it.
Sooty tailpipe on one side only	A cylinder bank burning oil (a classic bore-scoring clue on M96/M97).
Sweet smell or steam	Coolant leak.
Grinding or whine on start	Starter or accessory issue — usually cheaper, still worth noting.

Remote purchase? Ask for the video.

If you can't be there, ask the seller (or the PPI shop) for an uncut cold-start video with the exhaust in frame and the sound on, recorded after the car sat overnight. A good seller won't mind. If the video starts after the engine is already running, ask again.

PHASE 2 · YOUR HANDS

SECTION 06

Interior, electrics & convenience

Interior wear should tell the same story as the odometer. Then press every button — Porsche electrics are reliable until they aren't, and some fixes are surprisingly costly.

Does the wear match the miles?

- ☐ Driver's seat bolster: creasing and wear consistent with the mileage.
- ☐ Steering wheel rim, shift knob and pedal rubbers: shiny or worn through on a "low-mile" car = question the odometer.
- ☐ Carpets, door sills, headliner: stains, water marks, sagging.
- ☐ Smell: mildew (water leak), smoke, heavy air freshener hiding either.
- ☐ Lift the floor mats and trunk carpets: dampness or rust.

Controls

- ☐ Every window, both directions, including one-touch and auto-drop on frameless doors.
- ☐ Mirrors, seat adjustments and memory, seat heat/ventilation.
- ☐ Climate: **A/C blows cold** within a minute; heat works; all vents and modes.
- ☐ Infotainment, navigation, Bluetooth, phone mirroring, speakers (fade/balance).
- ☐ Instrument cluster: no dead pixels; all gauges sweep.
- ☐ Sport / Sport+ / PASM / PSE (exhaust) / spoiler buttons all respond.
- ☐ Rear spoiler raises and lowers (button and at speed).
- ☐ Both keys lock, unlock and start the car.

Convertibles & Targas

- ☐ Cycle the top **three times**: smooth, even, no pauses or grinding.
- ☐ Look for hydraulic fluid on the rear deck or interior (leaking top cylinders on some generations).
- ☐ Fabric: tears, shrinkage, clouded or cracked rear window.
- ☐ Seals and drains: water stains in footwells or behind the seats.
- ☐ Targa: glass roof slides fully; no rattles; seals intact.

Small things that add up

- ☐ Sticky "soft-touch" coating peeling on buttons and trim (common on some 996/997/Cayenne cabins).
- ☐ Door handles and latches; glovebox and cupholders (fragile on some cars).
- ☐ Seat belts retract fully; airbag light goes out.
- ☐ Horn, wipers, washers, headlight washers, all exterior lights.
- ☐ Cruise control (test on the drive).

Photograph everything

Odometer, dash with engine running, every flaw, every label. You'll want them during negotiation — and for your insurer if you buy.

PHASE 2 · THE DRIVE

SECTION 07

The test drive protocol

Plan for at least 30 minutes: town streets, a bumpy road, a highway on-ramp, and somewhere you can safely brake hard. Drive with the radio off. Let the car reach full operating temperature before you use the upper rev range — and stay within the seller's comfort and the law.

Engine & drivetrain

- ☐ Clean, linear pull through the rev range once warm; no flat spots, hesitation or misfires.
- ☐ Oil pressure and temperature stable and normal for the car.
- ☐ **Manual:** clutch engagement point (very high = worn); no slipping in a high gear at low rpm with firm throttle; every gear including reverse engages cleanly, hot and cold.
- ☐ **Synchos:** quick 2–3 and 3–2 shifts without grinding.
- ☐ **PDK:** smooth low-speed creep and parking maneuvers (no shudder or clunk); quick, clean shifts in Sport.
- ☐ **Tiptronic / automatic:** no flare between gears, harsh 1–2 or delayed engagement into Drive/Reverse.
- ☐ Dual-mass flywheel: rattle at idle that changes with the clutch pedal.
- ☐ AWD cars: no binding or clunk in tight, slow turns.

Chassis

- ☐ Tracks straight on a flat road; steering wheel centered.
- ☐ No pull, shimmy or vibration under braking from highway speed.
- ☐ Firm, consistent brake pedal; no grinding; ABS without warning lights.
- ☐ Bumpy road: clunks or knocks from the front (control arms, sway-bar links, top mounts).
- ☐ No wandering or tramlining beyond what the tire size suggests.
- ☐ PASM / air suspension modes change the ride noticeably.
- ☐ Wheel bearings: a hum that rises with speed and changes when you weave.

After the drive

- ☐ Park, leave it idling 5 minutes: no new smells, smoke, drips or fan behavior that seems wrong.
- ☐ Check under the car again for fresh drips.
- ☐ Note anything to show the PPI inspector.

PHASE 3 · THE EXPERT

SECTION 08

The professional PPI: what to demand

Hand the car to someone who sees dozens a year. A specialist PPI typically costs a few hundred dollars, more with leak-down or borescope work — the best money you'll spend on the car.

Choosing the shop

- ☐ An **independent Porsche specialist** with factory diagnostics (PIWIS) or a Porsche Center. Ask your local PCA region who they trust.
- ☐ **No connection to the seller.** Not their shop, not one they recommend.
- ☐ You book it and you pay for it. The report comes to you.
- ☐ Ask for a written report with photos — and a phone call to walk you through it.

Questions for the inspector afterward

- ☐ "Would you buy this car at this price?"
- ☐ "What would you fix in the first year, and roughly what will it cost?"
- ☐ "What's normal wear for this generation, and what isn't?"
- ☐ "Anything in the scan or over-rev report that concerns you?"
- ☐ "Is there anything you couldn't check today?"

The inspection menu

ITEM	WHAT IT TELLS YOU	PRIORITY
Full PIWIS diagnostic scan	Stored and historical faults in every module (engine, transmission, ABS, airbag, body). Often reveals cleared or intermittent problems.	ESSENTIAL
DME over-rev report	Whether the engine has been over-revved, how severely, and roughly when. See page 14.	ESSENTIAL
Lift inspection	Leaks, damage, rust, suspension and brake wear, prior repairs.	ESSENTIAL
Compression + leak-down test	Health of rings, valves and head gaskets, cylinder by cylinder.	AIR-COOLED & M96/M97 RECOMMENDED
Cylinder borescope	Direct look at cylinder walls for scoring — the definitive test for M96/M97 bore scoring.	M96/M97
Oil-filter inspection + oil analysis	Metal in the filter (IMS, bearings); lab analysis shows wear metals and coolant in oil.	RECOMMENDED
Transmission data	PDK clutch wear values and adaptation; Tiptronic adaptation; manual clutch condition.	RECOMMENDED
Model-specific extras	PCCB ceramic-brake assessment if fitted · Taycan high-voltage battery health report · open recall and factory-campaign printout by VIN from a Porsche Center.	AS APPLICABLE

PHASE 3 · THE EXPERT

SECTION 09

The over-rev report, decoded

Since the late 1990s, Porsche engine computers (DME) have quietly logged every time the engine exceeded its safe rev limit. It is one of the most useful — and most misunderstood — pages in any PPI.

How it works

The DME sorts over-rev events into numbered **ranges**, from mild to severe, and counts how many times each occurred. It also records the **ignition count** when the most recent event in each range happened. Exact rpm thresholds and the number of ranges vary by engine and generation, so ask your inspector to interpret the report for the specific car.

Range 1 Bouncing off the limiter	Range 2 Brief, mild	Range 3–4 Above the limiter — usually a missed shift	Range 5–6 Severe mechanical over-rev
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Illustrative scale. Range definitions differ by model — your inspector's reading of the actual report is what counts.

Reading it like a pro

- **Low ranges** mean the rev limiter did its job — fuel cut-off stopped the engine. Many counts here are common on enthusiastically driven cars and are usually not a concern on their own.
- **Higher ranges** can only happen when the engine is driven past the limiter mechanically — typically a **missed downshift** on a manual car (for example, grabbing 2nd instead of 4th). That's what can damage valves and the valvetrain.
- **When matters:** compare the ignition count at the event with the car's current ignition count. An event many thousands of starts ago, with healthy compression and leak-down since, tells a different story from one last month.
- **Engine hours** and ignition counts can also sanity-check the odometer.

What to do with the result

FINDING	ACTION
Low ranges only	Normal for most cars. Proceed.
A few higher-range events, long ago	Require good compression and leak-down; discuss with the inspector; may affect price.
Higher-range events recent or repeated	Proceed only with a clean leak-down and expert sign-off — and a price that reflects the risk. Many buyers walk.
Report unavailable or "reset"	Ask why. A replaced DME or engine should come with paperwork.

PDK and automatic cars

The transmission protects the engine from most missed-shift over-revs, so serious ranges are rare. The report is still worth pulling — it confirms the story the seller told you.

DECISION TIME

SECTION 10

Walk away, negotiate, or relax

Not every finding is a deal-breaker. Sort what you've learned into three piles before you talk money.

Walk away

NO PRICE MAKES THESE RIGHT

- Seller refuses an independent PPI or a cold start.
- Salvage, flood, rebuilt or unclear title; VINs that don't match.
- Odometer inconsistencies or a missing mileage trail you can't explain.
- Confirmed bore scoring or metal in the oil filter (unless priced as an engine project).
- Structural rust or frame damage.
- Recent, severe over-rev events without engine records.
- Coolant in oil, or oil in coolant.
- Undisclosed major accident repair.
- Your gut says the seller isn't being straight.

Negotiate

FIXABLE — GET A WRITTEN ESTIMATE

- Tires older than ~6 years or worn; brakes near limits.
- Deferred maintenance: overdue oil, brake fluid, coolant, spark plugs, major service.
- Minor oil weeps (cam covers, RMS seep) on older cars.
- Clutch nearing end of life; worn suspension bushings.
- IMS not yet addressed on a car where the upgrade is advisable.
- Cosmetic paintwork, curb rash, interior wear.
- Rotted radiators or A/C condensers.
- Missing second key, manuals or tool kit.

Relax

NORMAL FOR A USED PORSCHE

- Stone chips proportional to mileage.
- Low-range over-rev counts.
- A repainted bumper with documented, quality work.
- Light seat-bolster wear on a driven car.
- Engine replaced or rebuilt by a known specialist, with paperwork.
- Light dampness on old air-cooled engines ("they mark their territory").
- Honest wear on a well-documented car.

The best car isn't the one with no flaws.

It's the one whose flaws you know about, have priced in, and are happy to live with. That's what a PPI buys you: not perfection, but certainty.

PRINT THIS PAGE

SECTION 11

The StuttgartDNA scorecard

Score each area 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Use one sheet per car — it makes comparing two or three candidates honest.

CAR _____ VIN (LAST 8) _____

MILES _____ ASKING _____ DATE _____

AREA	1	2	3	4	5	NOTES
Paperwork & history — records, title, owners	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Body & paint — gaps, paint depth, chips	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Underside & rust — leaks, damage, corrosion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Engine — cold start, leaks, smoke, scan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Transmission & clutch	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Suspension, steering & brakes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Tires & wheels — age, N-spec, damage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Interior & electrics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Professional PPI findings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Price vs. market — after repair estimates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Total (out of 50)

42–50 Buy with confidence · **34–41** Buy if the price reflects the gaps · **Below 34** Keep looking

SCORE _____ REPAIR ESTIMATE \$ _____

Any walk-away flag? (page 15)

☐ No — proceed to negotiation

☐ Yes — walk away, whatever the score says

PHASE 4 · THE DEAL

SECTION 12

Negotiating, closing & your first 30 days

Negotiate with facts

- ☐ Get **written repair estimates** for every amber item from the PPI shop.
- ☐ Present them calmly: "Here's what the inspection found and what it costs to put right."
- ☐ Ask for a price adjustment or that the seller completes specific work — before you pay.
- ☐ Don't nickel-and-dime normal wear the asking price already reflects. Credibility wins negotiations.
- ☐ Stay inside your walk-away price. Another car will come.

Close safely

- ☐ Any deposit should be **refundable subject to PPI**, in writing.
- ☐ Title in the seller's name, lien released, VINs matching.
- ☐ Bill of sale with VIN, price, date, mileage and signatures.
- ☐ Pay by traceable method (bank transfer or cashier's check) — never cash for the full amount, never to a third party you haven't verified.
- ☐ Insurance in force before you drive away.
- ☐ Collect: both keys, records, manuals, CoA, tool kit, spare parts, wheel locks.
- ☐ Shipping a long-distance purchase? Use an enclosed carrier with adequate cargo insurance, and record the car's condition at pickup and delivery.

Your first 30 days

- ☐ **Baseline service:** fresh oil and filter (cut and inspect the filter), oil analysis, brake fluid if overdue or undocumented.
- ☐ Do every PPI item you negotiated for — now, not "next season."
- ☐ **Tires:** if they're old or not N-spec, replace them with the correct Porsche-approved set.
- ☐ **Insurance:** for a classic, GT or appreciating car, look at an **agreed-value** policy rather than actual cash value.
- ☐ **Extended warranty** on a modern car: compare plans carefully and read the exclusions before you buy.
- ☐ Battery maintainer if the car will sit.
- ☐ Start a binder (or folder) for every receipt from day one — it's your resale value.
- ☐ Join your local PCA region. Drive it.

Keep reading on StuttgartDNA.com

Why Tire Rack is my first stop for Porsche tires · The N-spec tire guide · Insuring your Porsche: agreed value vs. actual cash value · Model-by-model buyer's guides.

Inspection notes

LOCATION _____

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Now go find the right one.

You'll get a new issue of The Lineage of StuttgartDNA every other Wednesday — one useful read, a few quick links, and the occasional honest recommendation. Got a question about a car you're looking at? Reply to any issue. I read every one.

— Larry Domasin, StuttgartDNA.com

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TIRES

[The Porsche N-spec tire guide](#) · [Why Tire Rack](#)

OWNERSHIP

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