

Beyond the purchase price.

A car finance checklist for people who want the real cost before they sign.

For car buyers: new, used, first car or fifth

The price on the windscreen is the part everyone talks about. It's also only the start. Rego, insurance, fuel, servicing, tyres and, if you're borrowing, the finance itself all turn up after you've driven off, and they turn up every year.

That last one matters more than most people think. The loan can change what a car really costs as much as the price tag does. Two people can buy the same car and end up with quite different repayments, depending on the rate, the fees, the term and who they borrow from. It's worth getting your head around before you fall for a car, not after.

None of that is a reason not to buy one. It's a reason to know what you're signing up for. Here's the checklist we reckon every buyer should have in the glovebox.

1 How finance changes the price

Your finance repayment is the line in the budget with the most moving parts. A few things decide it: the interest rate, the fees, the length of the loan and whether there's a balloon (a lump sum due at the end). Lenders differ on all of them. They also differ on how they treat self-employed income, how old a car can be and how quickly they move.

That's where a broker earns their keep. We ask about the car and your budget, look at lenders that suit your situation, explain the differences in plain English and do the homework, so you're not comparing fine print on your own. And the sooner you talk finance, the sooner you know your real budget and can shop with confidence.

2 Work out the real weekly cost

Take each yearly cost and divide by 52. Include the finance repayment from section 1, then add the lot up and put it next to what's left in your budget each week. If it's tight now, it'll be tighter in the month the tyres go.

Cost	Worth knowing	Per week
Registration (rego)	Varies by state and territory.	
CTP insurance	Part of rego in some states, bought separately in others.	
Car insurance	Comprehensive costs more than third party. Get a quote for the exact car before you buy.	
Fuel or charging	Think about your actual weekly kilometres.	
Servicing and repairs	Older cars usually need more of both.	
Tyres	A set is a bigger bill than most people expect.	
Parking, tolls and fines	Easy to forget, hard to avoid.	
Finance repayment	Plus any fees that come with it.	
Total per week		

Not sure what goes where? We're happy to go through this with you on the phone, so it all makes sense before you commit to anything. Call us on [\(03\) 7045 5388](tel:0370455388), choose "Phone call" when you [send an enquiry](#), or email broker@fastestfinance.com.au.

3 Costs that land on purchase day

- ☐ Transfer or stamp duty on the purchase. Most states charge it, so ask what applies.
- ☐ Transfer and registration fees.
- ☐ Insurance in place before you drive away.
- ☐ An inspection by a mechanic you trust, if it's used.
- ☐ A PPSR search (a small fee) to check for money owing on the car and its theft and write-off history.
- ☐ Any roadworthy or safety certificate your state requires. The rules differ, so check yours.
- ☐ Dealer delivery or admin charges. Ask for the full "drive-away" price in writing.
- ☐ Tyres, battery or a service you'll need soon.

4 If it's used, check it properly

- ☐ The VIN on the car matches the paperwork.
- ☐ There's a service history, and it looks real.
- ☐ You've done the PPSR search.
- ☐ You've test-driven it on the roads you actually drive: the freeway, the hills, the school run.
- ☐ A mechanic you trust has had a look. It's the safest option.
- ☐ You haven't let "someone else is coming this arvo" make the decision for you.

5 Questions to ask about the finance

- ☐ What are the interest rate and the comparison rate?
- ☐ What fees apply: establishment, monthly or early payout?
- ☐ What's the term, and what's the total I'll repay?
- ☐ Is there a balloon (final payment)? How would I pay it?
- ☐ Is the car the security for the loan, and what insurance do I need to keep?
- ☐ What happens if I want to sell or pay it out early?
- ☐ If I'm comparing quotes, are they for the same amount and the same term?

6 Dealer finance, bank or broker?

Dealer finance is convenient, and the convenience is real. But it's one offer, and a bank is one lender. A broker can talk through options from the lenders we work with, ask these questions on your behalf and explain the differences before you sign. Whoever you go with, ask for the same loan amount and term so you can compare like with like. A cheaper repayment can simply mean a longer loan or a bigger balloon, and that's not always cheaper overall.

The "what if" test

Would you still be fine if your hours dropped for two months? If the tyres and the rego fell in the same month? If the car was off the road for a week? If any of those makes you wince, that's worth knowing now, not later.

Found a car that fits the budget?

Good. Fit the car to the budget, not the other way round. When you're ready, or even before you've found one, we're happy to talk through the finance side. Bring the car (make, model, year, price), any deposit or trade-in, and your "real weekly cost" number. If it's for business use, tell us. It changes how we handle it. We'll explain applicable fees, charges and how we are paid before you decide to proceed.

Speak to a broker: call [\(03\) 7045 5388](tel:0370455388)
fastestfinance.com.au | broker@fastestfinance.com.au

Safe travels,

The Fastest Finance team

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