

## AUTOMOTIVE TRENDS

# Back to School:

# Prepare Your Teen for the Road

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For NewsUSA

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(NU) - As the summer comes to an end, teens prepare to get back to the classroom – and the road. If your young driver is ready to buy their first used vehicle, you'll need to do your research. Firestone Complete Auto Care offers some tips that will not only help you in the process of buying a good used vehicle, but will also help keep that vehicle running newer, longer:

### When shopping for a used car:

- **Make the investment.** Many problems with vehicles aren't obvious. Have your teen take the vehicle to a trusted automotive technician for a thorough inspection. A small investment upfront could mean big savings down the road if it prevents you from buying a vehicle with serious mechanical problems.
- **Check the Internet.** Your teen can use a vehicle's Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) to search for its history online. It's a good way to check for odometer fraud and to find out if the car has ever been damaged in an accident.
- **Trust your senses.** Check for evidence of flood damage, which might include a musty smell, water stains, dried mud, mildew or mold inside the car. Check for stains on the carpet under the dashboard, which can indicate heater core or air conditioner leakage.

**Guest  
Commentary**



**An inspection can help you avoid purchasing a car with mechanical problems.**

### After purchasing your used vehicle:

- **Change the engine oil.** Early on, your teen should get in the habit of changing the oil according to the vehicle owner's manual, usually every three months or 3,000 miles. Prolonged driving without an oil change may cause severe engine damage, which can be very costly to repair.
- **Maintain your tires.** Teach your teen to check the tire inflation pressure every month. Tires should be properly balanced and rotated according to the maintenance schedule. The alignment should be checked at least once a year. Properly maintained tires are safer and longer lasting, and can increase gas mileage up to 3 percent.
- **Check the vehicle's fluid levels.** Have your automotive technician show you and your teen how to check the transmission, power steering, windshield washer and coolant to make sure they're properly filled. Also have your automotive technician check your vehicle's brake fluid level and condition regularly.