Test drive checklist.

Plan **at least 30 minutes** and a route with city streets, a rough patch, a hill and a freeway on-ramp. Keep the radio off and drive the way you drive every day.

Year / make / model _____ VIN _____ Mileage _____ Date _____

Plan the route

- [ ] Cold start (hood cool to the touch)
- [ ] Quiet residential street
- [ ] Stop-and-go traffic
- [ ] Rough road or speed bumps
- [ ] A hill
- [ ] Freeway on-ramp and a few miles at speed
- [ ] Parking lot: tight turns and reverse

1 Before you start

PARKED

- [ ] Bring your driver's license; ask how insurance covers the drive
- [ ] Walk around: tires, leaks under the car, lights
- [ ] Seat, mirrors and steering wheel adjust to fit you
- [ ] Warning lights go out after the engine starts
- [ ] Engine starts easily, no long cranking, no smoke from the tailpipe

2 Around town

UNDER 40 MPH

- [ ] Pulls away smoothly; no hesitation or jerk
- [ ] Gear changes smooth and quiet, up and down
- [ ] No clunks over bumps; no rattles from the dash or doors
- [ ] Full-lock turns both ways in a lot: no clicking or grinding
- [ ] Reverse engages right away; camera and sensors work

3 On the freeway

AT SPEED

- [ ] Merges with enough power; no shudder under load
- [ ] No vibration in the wheel, seat or pedals at speed
- [ ] Car tracks straight; steering centered, no wander
- [ ] Wind and road noise are what you can live with
- [ ] Cruise control and driver-assist features work

4 Brakes

SAFE, EMPTY ROAD

- [ ] Pedal firm, not soft or sinking
- [ ] Stops straight, no pull to one side
- [ ] No grinding, squeal or pulsing in the pedal
- [ ] Parking brake holds on a slope

5 Comfort and fit

YOUR LIFE

- [ ] A/C cold within a few minutes; heat works
- [ ] Good view out; you can see the blind spots
- [ ] Your phone pairs; the seats suit you on a longer drive
- [ ] Car seats, stroller, tools or bikes fit where they need to

6 After the drive

ENGINE RUNNING

- [ ] Pop the hood: no smoke, hissing or burning smell
- [ ] Look under the car for new drips
- [ ] Restart the warm engine; it starts right away
- [ ] Write down anything odd while it's fresh

How did it feel?

1 2 3 4 5

Use this with our **Used car inspection checklist**. A test drive is not a mechanical inspection; for that, take the car to an independent mechanic. Test drives at Irvine Used Cars are by appointment in Irvine: call or text (949) 710-3693.

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