

6 Things to Think About When Getting a Car for Your Teen

Description

Getting a car for your teen can be a stressful experience. You care about your child's autonomy and want them to be happy, but at the same time feel incredibly concerned for their safety on the road. Every parent faces this struggle. Still, you recognize your teen isn't a [kid](#) anymore, and is finally responsible enough to make safe decisions behind the wheel.

Even if you won't frequently be in the car with your teen when they hit the road, there are some things you can consider when mulling over vehicle options that will increase both the capabilities and safety of their car.

The difference between choosing the right car and choosing the wrong car comes down to research. I knew that if I was willing to put in a little extra time on the Internet before entering negotiations with a private seller, or before visiting the dealership, I would be comfortable knowing that I performed my due diligence and made the best choice for my teen.

How Safe is The Car?

This is obviously the number one priority on any parent's list. It's unthinkable to imagine your teen in a collision, but the road is unpredictable, and in the off chance they get in an accident it's important that their car can withstand whatever impact might occur.

For over a decade, the government IIHS (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety) has evaluated consumer cars for their ability to withstand and avoid crashes. Every year they publish a list of Top Safety Picks, vehicles that have been scrupulously tested and ranked. It would be wise to choose your teen's car from [this list](#). This is also an important consideration for [your teen's passengers](#), be they kids, adults, or friends.



What Advanced Safety Features Does it Come With?

Checking the IIHS rankings are critical, and when it comes to choosing between vehicles that are ranked on that list, you should make sure that the model at the dealership is equipped with the features that earned it that ranking.

If, for example, I go to an [Audi dealership near me](#), I know that cars will come with avoidance features like blind spot monitoring that alerts the driver to surrounding cars which might be out of his or her line of sight. Features like side curtain airbags provide additional cushion in case airbags deploy, and electronic stability control adjusts the way the vehicle balances itself on slippery or otherwise unstable roads.

How Big is The Car?

Remember those [family vacations](#) you use to take? Large vehicles not only make transportation easier, but they are, on average, significantly safer than compact cars. In the event of a crash, they protect drivers and generally sustain less damage. The best IIHS ranked cars are almost always big vehicles.

Is the Car in Good Shape?

As with any car, maintenance is a virtual inevitability. However, it's important to make sure that you get your teen a car that is in the best possible shape so unexpected problems don't arise during his or her ownership.

Consumer Reports posts [car reliability ratings](#) that are based on surveys from thousands of car owners. The findings are trustworthy and should be considered when looking for a car for your teen, especially if you don't want to spend a bunch of money down the line on repairs. If you're buying from a private seller, it's vital that you get a car history report to know what repairs have already been done.



Is the Car within Your Budget?

In all likelihood, your teen doesn't need a top of the line car. If you're able and willing to finance such a purchase, by all means do it. However, if you're concerned about spending too much money, make sure you consider all of the ways you can potentially save while buying your teen's car.

Calculate your budget by using a service like [Mint](#). Once you've determined how much you can reasonably spend, find the best car that fits in that range. If your teen is working, perhaps they can pay for a portion of the vehicle. It's also important to consider car ownership costs, which include things like gas and maintenance, which will inevitably come up during your teen's ownership.

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