



Azura's *Ultimate Guide* to Buying a Car!

Are you stressed over the thought of buying a car? We're here to help you be prepared and ready to make your next (or first!) big purchase.



This car buying guide consists of five important steps:

-  Deciding if it's the right time to buy
-  Determining your budget
-  Deciding which car is right for you
-  Getting preapproved before you shop
-  Go shopping!

Follow our 5 step guide to make a confident car-buying decision!



STEP ONE:

Is it the right time to buy a car?

Buying a new car can be exciting, but how do you know when it's the right time to make that purchase?

When considering a new car, **ask yourself these questions:**

- Do I already have a car loan that I'm making payments on?
- Is my current car reliable?
- Are repairs and maintenance more than what my current car is worth?
- Is my current car safe to drive?
- Is my current car big enough/powerful enough/gas efficient enough?
- Am I happy with my current car?

If you answered **"NO"** to the majority of these questions, it might be time for you to find a new vehicle.

Something to Consider

Kelley Blue Book and NADA provide great guides to determine the value of your vehicle. **If repairs are costing you 50% of what your car is worth, it's time to buy something new.**



STEP TWO:

What's my budget?

If you have decided it is time to buy a new vehicle, we recommend you figure out your monthly auto expenses. **A general rule of thumb is that your total car expenses shouldn't be more than about 20% of your take-home monthly pay.** *This is just a guideline that can change based on your needs and how much you are willing to put towards a vehicle.*

Another important tip to keep in mind, when calculating the cost of the car, is to **include all of the other vehicle ownership costs:** property taxes, insurance, repairs, gas, oil changes, parking meters, tolls, registration and other miscellaneous expenses.

Monthly Pay:
\$3000



Finally, follow this equation

First, figure your max car expense.>

Max Car Expenses:
\$600



Then, include these expenses:

GAS **\$75/month**
INSURANCE **\$100/month**
TOLLS & PARKING **\$25/month**
TOTAL **\$200/month**

Max Car Expense - Monthly Expenses = Max Car Payment

$$\mathbf{\$600 - \$200 = \$400}$$

It's a smart move to look at car payments below your Max Car Payment figure. For example, if you choose a vehicle with a \$300 car payment, you'll leave \$100 for misc. items like oil changes, unexpected car repair, yearly registration, etc.

Now that you have an idea of what you want to spend each month, use an auto loan calculator to figure out the purchase price range.

PAYMENT CALCULATOR



Once you have numbers that fit your budget, you're ready for the fun part:

choosing which vehicle is right for you!



STEP THREE:

Which car is right for me?

Now that you have the hard part of figuring your price range done, it's time to decide on the fun items – like four wheel drive or a sun roof! Narrowing down the type of vehicle you want is important before stepping onto a dealership's lot. By going prepared, you cut down on the chances of making an impulse purchase based on flashy features.

Create a Car Wish list

We've listed many of the important features to consider when researching a vehicle. Consider these options as "Must Have," "Nice to Have," and "Not Important."

Feature	Must Have	Nice to Have	Not Important
Fuel Efficient			
4 Doors			
4-Wheel Drive			
Towing Power			
Storage Space			
Third Row Seating			
Sunroof			
Safety Features			
Technology Features			

Once you have figured out what is important to you, do your research on sites like [NADA](#) to see which types of vehicles have your "Must Haves" in your price range.



STEP FOUR:

Why should I get preapproved?



Before you hit the pavement and buy a vehicle, we highly recommend getting preapproved.

Preapproval helps with:

- Savings on your interest rate
- Setting a realistic budget
- Simplifying your dealership experience

Savings On Your Interest Rate

By shopping around instead of waiting until you are at a dealership, you give yourself the best opportunity to get the best rate. By getting a few different quotes from various lenders, you can ensure you're getting the rate you want at the terms you need.

Setting a realistic budget

While you took the time to figure out your monthly budget, getting preapproved reaffirms the price range you want to stay in. **It's less stressful to take the time to determine what is right for you, without a salesperson sitting in front of you.** By knowing this information before you shop, you can focus your energy on cars in your price range and ignore the rest.

Simplifying Your Dealership Experience

With preapproval in hand, your dealership experience will be more enjoyable. **Since you've taken care of the financing part, you can focus your energy on negotiating the price of your car versus the car loan itself.** Plus, if you get preapproved, it will allow you to have a "bottom line" figure that you can use to negotiate lower costs, while still feeling confident you can afford the monthly payments.



STEP FIVE:

Let's Go Shopping!



You've decided on a monthly budget, you've picked out a few of your favorite cars, you've gotten preapproved and now you're ready.

While making your final purchase, **keep these tips in mind:**

- Always take a test-drive
- Don't be afraid to ask questions
- Visit more than one dealership to compare prices
- You don't have to buy a car on your first visit, make sure it's what you want

Use this handy chart when you're shopping for vehicles.

Info	Car #1	Car #2	Car #3
Dealership			
Salesperson			
Year			
Make			
Model			
Asking Price			
MPG			
Warranty Info			
Test Drive Notes			



Ready to get started?
We can help.

LEARN MORE NOW



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