

Negotiate with Confidence

The best thing you can do when buying a car is to bring along a friend or family member to help you keep a level head and not buy on impulse.

Have a price in mind before you get to the dealer and don't be afraid to walk away. Take food and drink along since the process takes time and being hungry and dehydrated affects the brain power needed to negotiate. You may also want to consider negotiating on-line or via email. Using email places you in a better position since you are not in their environment.

How to Determine a Good Price

Start negotiations on a new car at invoice minus any incentives. Remember to keep the incentives out of the negotiations. You can find the dealer's cost or invoice at kbb.com, edmunds.com or come by and see us. Shoot for paying no more than 2% over invoice, but remember that each vehicle can be different.

Tips to Help you "Wheel and Deal"

Invoke Higher Authority. Anyone who has haggled with a car salesman is familiar with this tactic: You arrive at a price, and the salesperson has to get the sales manager's approval. Buyers can use this tactic, too. The wife can say she loves the car, but apologetically explain that her husband won't budge until the price is reduced, or vice versa.

Don't say yes to the first proposal. The first price the dealer tosses out in a negotiation will almost never be the best offer. So reject it out of hand. What's the worst that can happen? He won't budge and you go to another dealer.

Act Surprised. Try to appear shocked and surprised by an "outrageous" offer, even if it's not really unreasonable. You might think a stoic demeanor looks professional, but in the haggling business, it will cost you.

Silence Speaks Volumes. You say, 'I'm sorry, but you'll have to do better than that.' Then you keep quiet. Chances are that you'll get a more reasonable offer.

Save a small concession. Hold back something you're willing to give up at the end so the other side can feel the satisfaction of winning something.

Be Prepared. Bring a folder with all your notes, test drive worksheets from this kit, printouts, ads from other dealerships, and prices from the internet. This sends a clear message that you did your homework.

There's Safety in Numbers. Shop with a buddy, as the dealer must convince two people instead of one. Your buddy can be there to point out negative parts of a deal.

Don't be Afraid to Walk Away. Remember your advantage- you can just get up and leave. That is your powerful weapon. It may frustrate you to use it, but if the deal is not worth it, walk away, no matter how badly you want the car. There will be other cars, and other deals, and some other dealer will be willing to work with you.