Car Ownership

If you are considering purchasing a car, be sure to factor the costs of car insurance, registration, and parking into your budget.

Buying a Car

If you purchase a car in Connecticut, you are required to register the car with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). You must have a CT driver’s license or a CT state ID card in order to register your car.

Financing a Car and Auto Insurance

Most people do not have the ability to purchase a car in cash, so financing (taking a loan out for purchasing) a car may be necessary. Proof of auto insurance is required in order to purchase a vehicle in CT. There are a few minimum requirements for insurance [1] that you should be aware of as well.

While a Social Security Number [2] is not required to purchase a car, it may be required in order to finance one or obtain auto insurance. In some cases you may be able to obtain a loan and auto insurance with just a student visa. We recommend you contact potential lenders and auto insurers to determine their requirements before looking for a car to purchase.

Finding a Car to Purchase

Many used cars for sale privately can be found through bulletin board notices posted around campus, on search websites such as AutoList [3], on classified websites such as Craigslist [4], and using other online services. Other resources include local publications such as The New Haven Register [5]. Car dealerships will also sell used cars and new ones.

Cost analysis can be done online through Kelly’s Blue Book [6] and Edmunds [7]. Private Party Value is what you can expect to pay if you buy from an individual. Suggested Retail is the price you would pay if you purchase from a car dealer.

Check any used car thoroughly before you buy. Always test drive the vehicle and take it to a professional mechanic for a pre-purchase check. Carfax [8] is an online vehicle history check that can provide useful pre-purchase information as well.

Maintenance

Finding a good mechanic is a must for a car owner. For major repairs, you should always shop around. In addition to the listings here, you can ask for recommendations from your friends and colleagues. If you are a member of AAA [9] (American Automobile Association), you can get a list of AAA approved garages. There are also car dealers and national chains, such as Firestone [10], Meineke [11] and Midas [12] where you can get car care services; watch for specials and coupons. National chains sometimes offer deals on routine repairs such as mufflers and brakes.

Registration

Valid insurance is required in order to register a vehicle.

Shop around and compare prices. It may be helpful to have a copy of your driving record from home.
Dealership Car Sales

If you purchase a new or used car through an authorized dealer, they will walk you through the steps to register the car.

Private Car Sales

If you purchase the car through a private individual, refer to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) [13] for how to register your car.

Registration and Insurance cards

Always keep the registration and insurance papers in the car, and make a copy of each to keep in a safe place at home.

Source
URL: https://oiss.yale.edu/campus-community-life/for-students/practical-matters/transportation-driving/car-ownership

Links