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) 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

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