

Used Pantera Buyer's Checklist

based on a guide written by Lawrence Buja and Roger Garnett

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FIRST PHONE CONTACT:

Name: _____ [affix original ad here]

Address: _____ Dealer? Broker? Private?

Time Zone Differential: plus / minus _____ hours

Phone: (h) _____ (f) _____

(w) _____ (f) _____

(c) _____ (p) _____

email: _____@_____

Date/Time: _____

Model: _____

Serial #: _____

Mileage: _____

Color: _____

Interior: _____

Asking Price \$ _____

INITIAL PHONE QUESTIONS

1. Can you describe the car and its condition?
2. Does it run well? How was the car generally driven?
3. How is the:
 - Body?
 - Any Rust?
 - Paint? Dings/Chips
 - Interior? paint work
 - Driver seat side bolster worn?
 - Redyed?
 - Tires?
 - Rims? Condition/curbed?
 - original size?
 - aftermarket?

Engine?
Brakes?
Shocks?
Clutch?

4. What special features or options does it have?
5. Any aftermarket parts on the car?
6. Why are you selling it?
7. How long have you owned it? ...had it for sale?
8. Is it currently registered and licensed?
9. Where is the car located?
10. Is it a US or European Car?
11. If European, do you have original DOT/EPA paperwork?
12. What problems have you had with the car?
13. What gas mileage have you been getting?
14. Has it ever been hit or in an accident?
15. Has the car been raced or had track time?
16. Any major components been replaced?
17. Has there been any Warranty work done?
18. What work remains to be done or corrected?
19. Are there any missing parts?
20. Do you have any extra parts or wheels for it?
21. Are you the Original Owner?
22. Is there a traceable ownership history on the car.
23. Can the previous owner(s) be contacted?
24. Is there a complete service history on the car?
25. Who was your mechanic? name/address/phone?
26. Are there any repair or gas mileage records?
27. Oil change interval? Type of oil?
28. May I bring the car to a place where it can be put in the air for inspection?
29. Has it passed emissions recently?
30. Any interesting history?
31. What's the least you're willing to take for it?
32. Additional questions...

At this point you might want to schedule an appointment to see the car yourself or have it inspected by a third party. In the interim you may want to have the seller fax or send copies of certain records such as the title (both sides) and verification of major services / repairs? If the seller hesitates or insists on a deposit first be wary.

FOLLOWUP QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF AFTER YOU'VE HUNG UP THE PHONE:

What's your gut reaction?
Does this car seem like a possibility?
Does the current owner seem like he cared for the car?
Why am I interested in buying "this" car?

Am I willing to pay a premium because someone else has already done most of the serious work on the car?

or

Is this a car I can buy cheap and put some sweat equity into?
What is the most that I'm willing to pay for this car?

What is the least that I think that the car can be had for?

TAKING THE NEXT STEP: CHECKING OUT YOUR DREAM CAR WHILE KEEPING YOUR HEAD

It can be said that owning a Pantera is not a logical decision, but one of emotion. Nonetheless buying a Pantera (especially your first) with your heart overriding your head can lead to a less than enjoyable experience in the long run. Here's a LOGICAL checklist and some suggestions on how to go about evaluating a Pantera without letting emotions get in the way. Remember: patience is a virtue and is often rewarded. If this isn't the car, there will be another and don't forget the age-old caveat: If it sounds too good to be true...!

SUGGESTIONS:

1. Read some of the "How to buy Used Cars" books available at your library. They provide useful strategies and cautions that go far beyond the scope of this list. Also, review this list carefully before using it. Also check out as much about the model Pantera as you can thru books, past magazine road tests, and general knowledge of owners you talk with online, at Pantera events or info you gather in searching for your Pantera.

2. Always inspect/take delivery of the vehicle in broad daylight, never in the evening/night or in the rain.

3. A clean piece of cardboard placed under the engine/trans after the test-drive will help show fluid leaks.

4. In some states, older non-titled vehicles may be titled with just a bill of sale. Other states may require an additional security bond to be posted. Use extreme caution in either of these cases! Make sure title is not marked "SALVAGE" or "TMU" True Mileage Unknown

5. Require seller have the vehicle pass all state inspections (safety, emissions) at a mutually agreeable shop (NOT one of his choosing) before you pay for it. Old (>30days) inspections are of absolutely no use to you.

6. A general guide to reading exhaust smoke:

Black smoke = unburned fuel

Valves bad or out of adjustment? Carb out of adjustment?

Blue smoke = burning oil

Accelerating: Piston rings bad? Decelerating: Valve seats/guides bad?

White smoke = burning coolant!

Bad head gasket? Warped or cracked Head or Block? \$\$

PART 1. MECHNICAL INSPECTION CHECKLIST

TOOLS TO BRING FOR INSPECTION:

Essentials: A cynical, mechanically minded friend, Your standard tool set, Voltmeter, Compression Gauge, Tire gauge, Flashlight, Magnet, the 2 different spark plug sockets, spray lube, clean rags Clipboard, pen and hi-liter to use with a photocopy of this list, some cash, drivers license and copy of your insurance showing you are covered driving the sellers car.

Optional: tow rope, starting fluid, jumper cables, timing light, ramps, jack (floor or scissors), mirror, coveralls, rags, gas can, oil, duct tape, wire, repair manuals, misc. fuses, calculator

PART 2. EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR INSPECTION. (Don't start the engine yet)

OWNERSHIP VERIFICATION: (Do all the following agree and seem right?)

Name on title: _____

Name on registration: _____

Model/Year on title: _____

VIN on title: _____

VIN on registration: _____

VIN on dash: _____

VIN on door: _____

Mileage on title: _____

Mileage on odometer: _____

Price on title: _____

Asking price: _____

Blue Book price: _____

IS THE CAR READY TO SELL:

OK Not-OK

- ___ ___ Title ready for transfer? Any liens?
- ___ ___ Do body numbers match those on title?
- ___ ___ Title in sellers name?
- ___ ___ Title marked Salvage or TMU?
- ___ ___ Do body numbers match registration?
- ___ ___ Current Emissions certificate, < 30 days old?
- ___ ___ Current registration? Current Plates?
- ___ ___ Current Safety certificate if req'd, <30days?

EXTERIOR WALK-AROUND:

OK Not-OK

- ___ ___ Check door edges and underside for rust/tears
- ___ ___ Check doors/hinges for stress/tears
- ___ ___ Doors/hoods open/close freely? Rubs?

___ ___ Is anything obviously broken?
___ ___ Are grill/lights cracked, dented or broken?
___ ___ Car sits level? (view from all sides)
___ ___ Are bumpers dinged? Rusty? Loose? Level?
___ ___ Paint OK? Panels same shade? Cracks?
___ ___ Any of the trim or hubcaps rusty or missing?
___ ___ New paint? Why? Any body ripples?
___ ___ Find bottom of trunk/side wells. Rust? Holes?
___ ___ Rust/repair on body? Fenders? Sills?
___ ___ Raise/lower the top. Condition? Does it leak?
___ ___ Any Bondo? Fiberglas? (magnet) Why?
___ ___ Rubber parts and seals condition? Cracked?
___ ___ Any fender dings or misalignment? Why?
___ ___ Gas tank and fill hose OK? Rusty? Patched?
___ ___ Door/hood dings? Misalignment? Why?
___ ___ Jack OK? Spare tire good? Jack points good?
___ ___ Tires: Tread? Bulges? Cracks? All the same model/brand?
___ ___ Rims: Bent? Rusted? Cracks? All the same?

UNDERSIDE:

OK Not-OK

___ ___ Anything dented? Bent? Welded? Why?
___ ___ Any underbody/floor pan/trunk rust?
___ ___ Any rocker panel or wheel well rust?
___ ___ Are main frame members rusted? Dogs?
___ ___ Disks grooved? Brake pads? Any leaks?
___ ___ Turn, push/pull driveshaft by hand
___ ___ Any movement or slop? U-joints OK?
___ ___ Constant velocity joints and boots OK?
___ ___ Camber? Caster? Tire wear even?
___ ___ Suspension loose? Pull on side/top of wheels
___ ___ All shocks and struts damp OK? Any leaks?
___ ___ Exhaust pipe/cats/muffler solid and original?
___ ___ Tail pipe: Grey=OK, sooty/oily/greasy=Not-OK
___ ___ Anything hanging down, taped or wired up?
___ ___ Any non-stock suspension mods?
___ ___ All emissions/smog equipment intact?

UNDER HOOD:

OK Not-OK

___ ___ Anything broken? Patched? Leaking?
___ ___ Is engine clean? Any rust? Stock?
___ ___ Has it overheated? Paint blistered?
___ ___ Check fluid levels. Look for leaks
___ ___ Check fluid condition with flashlight
___ ___ Any play in main crankshaft pulley?!\$
___ ___ Any play in any of the other pulleys?
___ ___ V-Belts cracked? frayed? missing?
___ ___ Radiator corroded? Hoses cracked?
___ ___ Check coolant; run finger inside radiator neck to check for oil.
___ ___ Heater hoses stiff? Cracked? Patched?
___ ___ Vacuum hoses stiff? Patched? Capped? Missing?
___ ___ Is emissions equip original and working?!\$

___ Are catalytic converters original and working? \$
 ___ Distributor, cap, rotor, and points OK?
 ___ Wiring harness appearance? Any new electrical tape?
 ___ Open fuse box. Any missing? Any wiring hacks?
 ___ Any non-stock engine modifications?
 ___ Remove grounding cable, check for shorts
 ___ System polarity: + or - ground?
 ___ System voltage: _____ volts
 ___ Battery age/voltage _____/_____ volts

INTERIOR/ELECTRICAL:

OK Not-OK

___ Is anything broken? Torn? Patched?
 ___ Carpets OK? Underlayment condition?
 ___ Rust, rot or water under the carpets?
 ___ Any wiring hacks under the dash?
 ___ Seats dirty or torn, redyed? Look under seat covers.
 ___ Do both seats adjust?
 ___ Dash cracked? Headliner torn/dirty?
 ___ Windshield cracked? Chips? Scratched?
 ___ Windows all open and close freely? Any cracks?
 ___ Mirrors all present and adjustable?
 ___ Steering play? Does shaft move at all? Why?
 ___ Brake pedal feels right? Smooth? Firm?
 ___ Clutch pedal feels right? Smooth?
 ___ All gauges/controls work? Stereo? Tape?
 ___ Headlights high/low work? Lenses OK?
 ___ Tail and side lights all work? Lenses OK?
 ___ Brake lights all work? Any broken lenses?
 ___ Turn signals all work? Any broken lenses?
 ___ Windshield wipers and washer work?
 ___ Heater, defroster, AC, and fans work?
 ___ Safety equipment (seat belts, horn work?)
 ___ Sound system installed competently?

PART 3: ENGINE START-UP, RUNNING, AND TEST DRIVE.

IGNITION ON, BUT DON'T START ENGINE:

OK Not-OK

___ Temp gauge should come on! Connected?
 ___ Oil gauge should come on! Connected?
 ___ Charge warning light should come on!

START THE ENGINE YOURSELF:

OK Not-OK

___ Temp gauge works?
 ___ Oil gauge works?
 ___ Charge warning light goes out?
 ___ Do all idiot lights go on/out right?

_____ Are all other instruments working?
 _____ Does it start easily when cold?
 _____ Does it run smoothly when cold?
 _____ Depress clutch several times. Noises?
 _____ Oil Pressure: idle _____ 4000 RPM _____
 _____ Volts/Amps: idle _____ 4000 RPM _____
 _____ Any odd engine noises when cold?
 _____ Exhaust condition/noises? Pressure even?
 _____ Cap pipe with clipboard. Any exhaust leaks?
 _____ Any deposits on clipboard? Does it smoke?
 _____ Turn car off. Does it restart? Restart again.
 _____ Now pull forward. Check for leaks on ground.
 _____ Do you have any gas? Does gauge really work?

TEST DRIVE (Allow 30-40 minutes)

OK Not-OK

_____ Test the foot and hand brakes first!
 _____ Relax, drive a bit to get used to it.
 _____ How does car ride? Soft or hard?
 _____ Revs smoothly to red line? flatspots?
 _____ Any unusual engine noises/vibrations?
 _____ Any drive train noises or vibrations?
 _____ Any noticeable slop in drive train?
 _____ Reverse works? Rev. lights go on/off?
 _____ Trans shifts smoothly to all gears?
 _____ Overdrive engages/disengages properly?
 _____ Turbo engages/disengages properly?
 _____ Any clunks, whines, rumbles, rattles?
 _____ Clutch smooth? Slippage on hill test?
 _____ Hand brake works? Test against engine.
 _____ Is low engine speed operation OK?
 _____ Brakes strongly to stop from 50mph?
 _____ Do brakes still work? Stops straight?
 _____ Make 2 tight 360' turns each way. Any noises?
 _____ Accelerates smoothly from dead stop?
 _____ Are there any hesitations/flat spots?
 _____ Does the power seem right? Hill test.
 _____ Is it running too hot or cold? Why?
 _____ Drive beside a long wall. Any unusual sounds?
 _____ Is it too noisy in general at highway speeds?
 _____ Any noises or vibrations when accelerating?
 _____ Any noises or vibrations when coasting?
 _____ Any noises or vibrations when decelerating?
 _____ Any noises or vibrations when braking?
 _____ Steering action loose or tight? Parallel park.
 _____ Handles OK on bumps, curves and sharp corners?
 _____ Bad understeer, oversteer, lean?
 _____ Tracks straight with hands off steering wheel?
 _____ Brakes straight with hands off steering wheel?
 _____ Brakes still work? Pulls? Pulse? Drag? Noises?
 _____ Having fun yet? Comfortable? Does it fit you?
 _____ Do the heater, defroster and AC work right?
 _____ Are all the instruments and lights still working?
 _____ Now let it idle a while. Is temp stable/OK?
 _____ Any exhaust, gas or coolant odors? Pull forward.

___ ___ Turn it off. Go back to check ground for leaks.

Have friend get out and watch the car driving or ideally have him follow behind:

OK Not-OK

___ ___ Tracks straight? (Frame bent?)
___ ___ Smokes?
___ ___ Wheels wobble? Any noises?
___ ___ Leans? General impression?

POST DRIVE:

OK Not-OK

___ ___ Open hood. See or hear anything unusual?
___ ___ Does engine seem too hot?
___ ___ Check for fluid leaks after shutdown. (Oil, Coolant, Hydraulics, Trans, Fuel, Differential)
___ ___ Check oil cap and dipstick for signs of water. (Oil off-color, brown/grey/white or bubbly)

For the truly paranoid:

OK Not-OK

___ ___ Compression test: (disconnect coil, remove ALL plugs)

1. Dry:

1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___

2. Oiled:

1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___

3. Plug condition? (OK? Burnt? Oily? Sooty?)

1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___

___ ___ Does it restart when warm? Why not?

COMMENTS:
