

A 7-Item Checklist For Buying A Used iPhone

Getting a new iPhone can be exciting. However, it can be very expensive, even if you get it in installment. For most people, buying a used iPhone is a more affordable option.

And don't worry, just because they're used doesn't mean that they're damaged. Most used iPhones for sale are still in good condition.

So, if you're thinking of buying a second-hand iPhone, consider this checklist as a guide to make sure that you will get the best possible deal:

Picture 1 of A 7-Item Checklist For Buying A Used iPhone

1. Proof Of Purchase

First off, you want to ask the seller of the used iPhone to provide a hard or soft copy of the original receipt. This receipt can tell you two important things, the identity of the previous owner and the warranty status.

Once you have the receipt, check the purchase date and if the seller's ID or name matches the recipient. This allows you to identify if the seller was really the first owner and if the iPhone is still under warranty.

If the seller can't provide a receipt, then consider whether you're okay with not being able to trace its origin. Although most iPhones will still be in good condition after several owners, there's a higher chance of security risks and misuse.

2. Carrier Compatibility

In recent years, Apple has made it easy to use iPhones with any wireless carrier. Every new model and version of the iPhone in the US works with all major wireless carriers.

That said, if you're buying an iPhone X or older models, you'll have to check for their compatibility. For instance, the iPhone X comes in two models. One is X A1865, which is a combination of CDMA and GSM model that works on any carrier, and the A1901 which is GSM-only and is intended for carriers like T-Mobile and AT&T.

The bottom line is you want to check the details and make sure that the used phone is compatible with the carrier you want to use.

Unlock Your Used iPhone

That said, if you find a used iPhone that you really like but is not compatible with your current carrier, it doesn't mean you can't buy that.

If your Apple device is locked to an existing carrier, and you want to change it, then you may be able to use an iPhone unlocking service to fix that.

3. Verify The IMEI

Picture 2 of A 7-Item Checklist For Buying A Used iPhone

Short for International Mobile Equipment Identity, IMEI is a 15-digit number unique to each device. Think of it as a phone's fingerprint.

Phone manufacturers and carriers share IMEI numbers to allow tracking of smartphones that may be compromised or stolen.

So, when buying a used iPhone, you want to verify the IMEI on both software and body or sim tray. If the iPhone has been tampered with, then the IMEI number printed on the physical body of the iPhone will differ from the one shown in the iOS settings.

Here's how to check the two IMEIs:

1. For older models, you can check the IMEI at the back bottom of the iPhone. For newer models, it's usually found on the SIM card tray, printed along the edge of the tray.
2. To find the IMEI number on your phone's software, open Settings and navigate to General and tap About. Scroll down and find your IMEI number.

Compare the IMEI numbers that you find on the iPhone's body and in the Settings. If they're different, then the device's hardware may have been replaced. Or the device could have been stolen and had changes made to it.

4. Blacklist Status

Another important thing you need to check when buying a used iPhone is whether the device has been blacklisted.

Blacklisted iPhones are devices that have been reported for numerous reasons, but usually because it was stolen. With a blacklisted iPhone, you won't be able to connect the device to any network provider.

To check this status, all you need to do is get the IMEI number of the phone and run it through an IMEI checker online. You will see a brief report about the device, including the blacklist status and the reason if any.

5. Check Activation Lock

Picture 3 of A 7-Item Checklist For Buying A Used iPhone

When setting up a new iPhone, you're prompted to sign in with an iCloud account. This enables various security and iCloud features such as access to cloud backups.

One of the security features that's also enabled is the iCloud Activation Lock. When active, your iCloud account is locked to the device even after factory resetting. So, if you buy a used iPhone and find the previous owner's iCloud account still signed in, then you won't be able to sign in with your own account.

So, check if the Activation lock is enabled. If it is, then request the seller to remove their iCloud account before proceeding to purchase the secondhand iPhone.

6. Check The Battery

iPhone batteries are known to last a long time. However, battery health starts to deteriorate after even just a few months of use. This means that the device will take longer to charge and the battery won't last as long as it was brand new, requiring more frequent charging.

Luckily, you can check the battery health of a used iPhone. Simply open Settings then go to Battery and scroll to Battery Health. You'll see a percentage and you want this to be as close to 100% as possible. If the battery health is significantly lower, then you'll have to pay for a battery replacement at Apple stores.

When battery health is too low, you may negotiate a lower selling price from the seller since you'll be paying for the battery replacement.

7. Water Damage

Picture 4 of A 7-Item Checklist For Buying A Used iPhone

Something that you need to avoid when buying a secondhand iPhone is water damage. Water damage may appear insignificant at first. However, it can create a lot of trouble for the device's hardware over time, rendering it unusable. Water damage also voids the warranty, so make sure to check for it.

Fortunately, iPhones have a nifty feature called Liquid Contact Indicator. This indicator can be found on the inside of the SIM card tray slot. If it appears red, then there's water damage, otherwise, it remains silver.

Take Away

And there you have it! We hope that this checklist can help you find the best second-hand iPhone without negative surprises or hidden damages after handing over your hard-earned money. While buying a used iPhone is a great way to save money, it's still best to be vigilant and practice due diligence to make sure the purchase is still worth it.

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