



Ohio Private Car Sale Checklist

Use this checklist to prepare for a private vehicle sale in Ohio. Requirements can vary by vehicle type, lien status, and situation, so always confirm with the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) before completing the transaction.

QUICK ANSWER

Ohio sellers must sign the back of the title in front of a notary public — a notarized seller signature is mandatory in Ohio. The buyer then applies for a new title at the County Clerk of Courts (not the Ohio BMV) within 30 days of purchase and pays the title fee plus applicable sales tax.

KEY FACTS

State	Ohio
Agency	Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV)
Process	See official source
Notary required	Yes
Bill of sale	Conditional
Odometer disclosure	Yes
Filing deadline	30 days
Last reviewed	May 10, 2026

QUICK REFERENCE

NOTARY Yes	BILL OF SALE Conditional	ODOMETER Yes	INSPECTION Not specified
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IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Within 30 days
Buyer must apply for title at County Clerk of Courts within 30 days of purchase

PRINTABLE CHECKLIST

Seller checklist

- ☐ **Signed vehicle title** **REQUIRED**
The seller must sign the title over to the buyer. Sign exactly as your name appears on the title.
- ☐ **Odometer disclosure statement** **REQUIRED**
Required by federal law for vehicles less than 10 years old under 16,000 lbs. Usually completed on the title itself.
- ☐ **Bill of sale** **RECOMMENDED**
A written record of the sale including VIN, price, date, buyer and seller information. Requirements vary by state.
- ☐ **Vehicle history report (recommended)** **RECOMMENDED**
Not required but strongly recommended. Helps buyer verify ownership and history.
- ☐ **Release of liability / notice of sale filed with state** **CONDITIONAL**
Protects the seller from liability after the vehicle is sold. Requirements and process vary by state.
- ☐ **Lien release (if vehicle had a loan)** **CONDITIONAL**
If there is an outstanding loan on the vehicle, the lienholder must release the lien before or at the time of sale.

Required forms

- ☐ **Signed vehicle title** **REQUIRED**
The certificate of title signed over to the buyer.
- ☐ **Odometer Disclosure Statement** **CONDITIONAL**
May be on the title itself or a separate form for older titles.



SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Notary: Yes — Ohio requires the seller's signature on the title to be notarized. A notary must witness and stamp the title before it can be transferred.

Bill of sale: Conditional — Not required by state law but recommended as proof of the transaction.

Odometer disclosure: Yes — Required for vehicles under 10 years old. Completed in the odometer section on the title.

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

- 1 Seller signs the back of the title in front of a notary public.
- 2 Notary stamps and signs the title.
- 3 Seller completes the odometer disclosure section on the title.
- 4 Seller provides the buyer with the notarized, signed title and a bill of sale.
- 5 Buyer applies for new title at the County Clerk of Courts within 30 days.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Seller signing the title without notarization — the County Clerk will reject a non-notarized title.
- Buyer missing the 30-day title application deadline — late fees and penalties apply.
- Not completing the odometer disclosure on the title.
- Using whiteout or correction fluid on the title.

OFFICIAL SOURCES

Ohio BMV — Titles

<https://www.bmv.ohio.gov/titles-new.aspx>

Ohio BMV — Buying and Selling a Vehicle

<https://www.bmv.ohio.gov/driver-license.aspx>

Ohio BMV

<https://www.bmv.ohio.gov>