



Virginia Car Title Transfer Checklist

Use this checklist to prepare the documents commonly needed to transfer a vehicle title in Virginia. Requirements can vary by vehicle type, lien status, county, and transaction details, so always confirm with the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) before submitting.

QUICK ANSWER

A Virginia title transfer is handled by the Virginia DMV. The seller signs the title over to the buyer — no notarization is required — and the buyer generally should title the vehicle within about 30 days of purchase; a late fee may apply after that. Virginia charges 4.15% Motor Vehicle Sales and Use Tax on the sale price or \$75, whichever is greater, plus a title fee (\$15 for a paper or substitute title; a first electronic title with no lien may be issued at no charge). Verify current fees and the deadline with the Virginia DMV before filing.

KEY FACTS

State	Virginia
Agency	Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
Process	See official source
Notary required	No
Bill of sale	Conditional
Odometer disclosure	Yes
Filing deadline	30 days
Last reviewed	July 6, 2026

QUICK REFERENCE

NOTARY No	BILL OF SALE Conditional	ODOMETER Yes	INSPECTION Conditional
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IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Within 30 days

Virginia generally expects the buyer to title the vehicle within about 30 days of purchase; a late fee may apply after that. Verify the current deadline with the Virginia DMV.

PRINTABLE CHECKLIST

Buyer checklist

- ☐ Signed title from seller **REQUIRED**
- ☐ Government-issued photo ID **REQUIRED**
- ☐ Proof of insurance **REQUIRED**
- ☐ Title transfer fee payment **REQUIRED**
- ☐ Sales tax payment **CONDITIONAL**

Seller checklist

- ☐ Signed vehicle title **REQUIRED**
Sign exactly as your name appears on the title. Do not use a different signature.
- ☐ Odometer disclosure **REQUIRED**
Complete the odometer section on the title or a separate form.
- ☐ Lien release (if applicable) **CONDITIONAL**
If the vehicle had a loan, obtain a lien release letter from the lender.

FEES



\$15 (paper or substitute title) — Title fee (Virginia charges \$15 for a paper or substitute title; a first electronic title with no lien may be issued at no charge. Verify the current amount with the Virginia DMV.)

4.15% (minimum \$75) — Motor Vehicle Sales and Use Tax (Charged on the vehicle's gross sales price, or \$75, whichever is greater, when the vehicle is titled in Virginia.)

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Notary: No — Virginia does not require notarization for a standard private-party title transfer.

Bill of sale: Conditional — Recommended for all title transfers. May be required in some states.

Odometer disclosure: Yes — Required by federal law for vehicles under 10 years old.

Inspection: Conditional — Virginia requires an annual safety inspection for all vehicles, and an emissions inspection in Northern Virginia (Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, Stafford and certain cities) before the vehicle can be operated or registered. Confirm what applies to your locality with the Virginia DMV.

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

- 1 Seller signs the title in the seller's signature section.
- 2 Seller completes odometer disclosure on the title.
- 3 Buyer collects the signed title, bill of sale, and any other required documents.
- 4 Buyer submits all documents and fees to the state motor vehicle agency.
- 5 Buyer pays applicable sales tax and title fee.
- 6 New title is mailed to the buyer (timeline varies by state).

COMMON MISTAKES

- Missing the titling window — Virginia generally expects titling within about 30 days, and a late fee may apply after that.
- Forgetting the 4.15% Sales and Use Tax has a \$75 minimum, even on low-price vehicles.
- Driving before obtaining a valid Virginia safety inspection sticker.
- Leaving plates on the vehicle — Virginia plates belong to the owner, not the car.

OFFICIAL SOURCES

Virginia DMV — Titling a Vehicle

<https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/vehicles/buy-sell>

Virginia DMV

<https://www.dmv.virginia.gov>