



In the age of the internet, buying and selling is easier than ever, but with the potential for commensurate opacity. Sure, the miracles that are Amazon, Craigslist and Ebay have changed consumer attitudes and models over the past decade, but it has also opened up those same consumers to a host of fraudulent activities.

Whether the item in question is an apartment, a piece of sports memorabilia or even an apple, there are basic tenants when making a purchase. For now, let's focus on the apple. Generally speaking, a consumer would personally go to the grocery store, look at all the apples, test the feel of the best-looking ones and then make a purchase decision based on that criteria.

With digital shopping becoming more and more prevalent, it is sometimes not possible to check out a product in person. It could be that the computer being looked at will be shipped from hundreds, if not thousands, of miles away. If the consumer is relocating, it may not be feasible to go apartment hunting prior to arrival. In either case, it is **imperative to perform due diligence** when making sight-unseen purchases.

It's in this ambiguity where disreputable salespeople can thrive. Unfortunately, even the most diligent of buyers can miss the signs, and fall into a sales scam. In the **case of used cars**, where scams can be prevalent, it is wise to know what may be on the horizon. Shipping scams, where the seller requests a deposit before sending the car for inspections, and sight-unseen scams, where the seller makes excuses to not send pictures of the car before money has exchanged hands, are both common instances.

Check scams are also possible, where someone posing as a buyer 'mistakenly' sends a check for more than the agreed-upon amount, and asks that the seller return the difference. It is only later that it becomes apparent that the initial check was worthless, and the 'difference' has been absconded with.

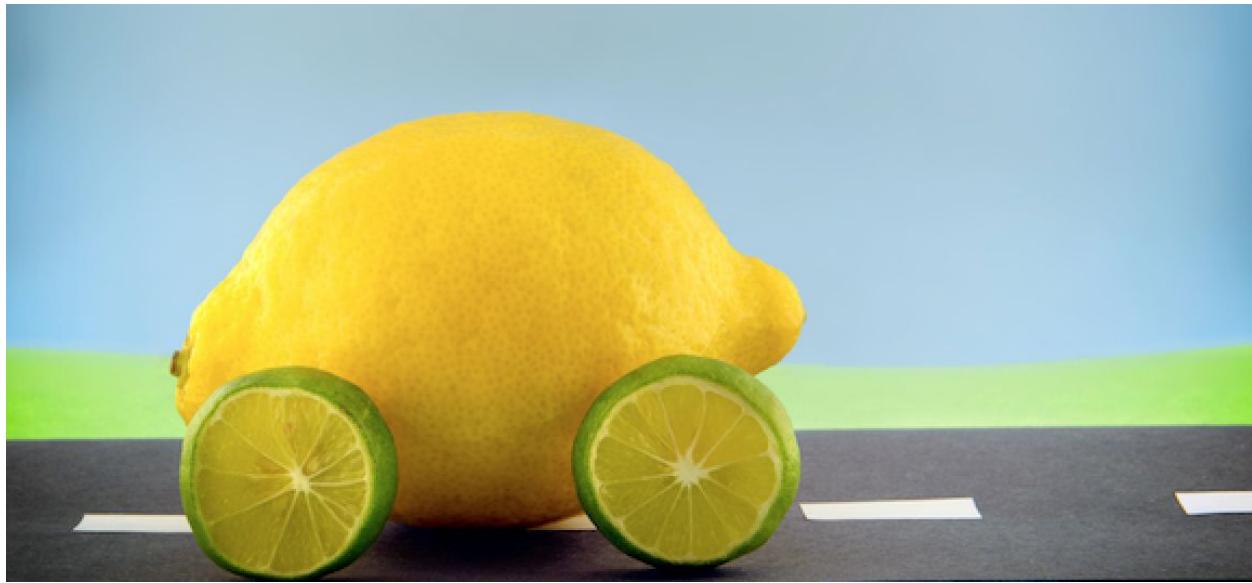


Image: A literal lemon automobile - Via [Endurance Warranty Services](#)

More often than not, the frequent mindset is that these scams will never actually happen. Constant vigilance aside, it is best to be prepared if a scam breaks through the best laid defenses. Sometimes the scammers will not be so nefarious as to carry out a planned scheme, but may simply **sell a lemon**. To that end, in the case of vehicle sales fraud, a used car warranty could be very useful.

At its core, a **used car warranty functions** similarly to that of any warranty, being a guarantee by any given manufacturer to cover any product issues within an agreed-upon period of time. As an industry, warranties would not be viable unless a majority of participants required minimal to no action. In the case of used cars, where the likelihood of critical repairs are much higher, the additional step of certification is now common prior to coverage.

When a used car **becomes certified preowned** (CPO), it means that the vehicle has been subjected to tests that are in line with the manufacturer's usual practices. Vehicles that become CPO are typically in better condition than the stereotypical concept of a used car would indicate. Furthermore, putting a potential vehicle for purchase through this inspection array would completely eliminate the potential of a lemon purchase.

While CPO warranty programs are common, they are by no means mandatory in order to secure a warranty. It is entirely possible to forego the CPO process. The key difference is that these 'aftermarket alternatives' are backed either by the dealer or by specific warranty companies, rather than by the manufacturer.

If this route is preferable, or the only option, depending on the age of the vehicle in question, then it's important to **perform thorough research** on the warranty companies in question. Should this course of action be on the horizon, our list of the **top 10 car warranty companies** would be a good place to start.