



Consumer guide

Spotting a curber online

Shopping online for a vehicle? Here's a guide to help you recognize, reject and report fraud that could occur online.

Shopping online:

Before you visit the website of an automotive business or look for a private sale vehicle on an online classified website, go to [amvic.org](https://www.amvic.org) and familiarize yourself with your consumer rights.

Check out these webpages from [amvic.org](https://www.amvic.org):

- **All-in advertised pricing:** <https://www.amvic.org/consumer/your-rights/all-inpricingisthelaw/>
- **Before you sign:** <https://www.amvic.org/consumer/buying-a-vehicle/before-you-sign/>
- **Consumer guides:** <https://www.amvic.org/consumer/consumer-resources/consumer-guides/>

Know what a curber is:

A curber is an illegal, unlicensed seller, often selling damaged, stolen or odometer-tampered vehicles. Consumers who buy these vehicles are often disappointed and find that when problems surface, the seller is gone and they have limited recourse.

Some curbers may look like a legitimate automotive business. Verify the business is licensed and the salespeople are registered by using **AMVIC's online database:** <https://amvic.ca.thentiacloud.net/webs/amvic/register/>.

Curbers create an unfair marketplace for both consumers and industry in Alberta by undermining consumer protection laws and putting the public at a financial and safety risk.

Recognize:

When browsing online classified websites, check out the profile of the seller and be on high alert for any red flags when communicating with sellers.

- **Do they have multiple cars listed?** Legitimate private sellers usually only have one vehicle for sale.
- **Have you seen their email or number on ads for other vehicles?** Sometimes curbers buy used cars and re-list them after some time has passed to try to flip them. This is still considered operating as an illegal seller.
- **Sometimes the seller will tell a sad story on why they have to sell the vehicle.** Always focus on the actual vehicle and not the story around it.
- **The seller will only send you photos already uploaded on the classified ad or won't let you see the vehicle in-person.** Do not trust everything you see online. Make sure to see the vehicle in-person.
- **Are they asking you to send money?** Ask why and do not be pressured into it. Be prepared to walk away from the deal if you have to.

Reject:

If you think you are dealing with a curber, walk away from the deal. There are other vehicles out there. Do not be in a hurry to purchase a vehicle. Take the time to do your research and understand all the risks involved when shopping online.

Report:

Help shut down curbers! Visit [amvic.org](https://www.amvic.org) to file a complaint online so AMVIC can investigate any curbing activity to protect consumers and industry, or file a complaint anonymously through AMVIC's partner, Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477.

Vehicle history checklist*



Licensed automotive businesses are required to disclose to the consumer the information in the checklist below as per Section 31.1(1) of the Automotive Business Regulation. Beware of curbers who do not follow the law.

Step one: identify the business and the vehicle being sold below.

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Licensed automotive business name _____ | |
| Make _____ | Model _____ |
| Colour _____ | VIN _____ |
| Odometer reading _____ | Year _____ |

Step two: review the list below and check all that apply.

| Yes | No | If applicable, the following information must be provided in a clear and legible manner: |
|-----|----|---|
| | | Was the vehicle ever bought back by the manufacturer ? |
| | | Was the vehicle ever damaged by fire? |
| | | Was the vehicle ever damaged by flooding? |
| | | Was the vehicle ever used as a police or emergency vehicle? |
| | | Was the vehicle ever used as a taxi or limo? |
| | | Was the vehicle ever owned by a vehicle rental business or used as a rental vehicle? |
| | | Was the vehicle ever declared a salvage vehicle in Alberta, or the equivalent under another jurisdiction? |
| | | Was the vehicle ever declared a non-repairable vehicle in Alberta, or the equivalent under another jurisdiction? |
| | | Was the vehicle ever declared an unsafe vehicle in Alberta, or the equivalent under another jurisdiction? |
| | | Was the vehicle ever in need of repairs that cost more than \$3,000 including parts and labour due to an incident or collision? If yes, and those repairs were completed by the business operator, the total to complete the repairs was \$ _____. |
| | | Was the vehicle previously registered in a different jurisdiction? If yes, name the province/country: _____ |
| | | If the vehicle was registered in another jurisdiction, was it required to be inspected prior to being registered in Alberta? If yes, did the vehicle pass or fail any inspections? _____ |
| | | Was all of the above vehicle history information provided in writing to the consumer prior to purchase? |

*This guide is not a substitute for legal advice and is not designed as a substitute for advice from qualified independent legal counsel. This guide is not intended to be an exhaustive list of applicable legislation.