

Used Ford Territory inspection checklist

What to check on a used Territory, what a problem looks like, and when to walk away.

COVERS

SY 2005–2011

SZ 2011–2016



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☐ **Tick it** if it's fine. **Cross it** if it isn't, and note what you found so you can price it into your offer.

! Safety critical: affects how safely it drives or protects you in a crash. Best to have a mechanic check it before you buy.

\$ Negotiate: costs money to fix, from wear to major repairs. Get a quote and take it off the price.

0 Before you go

- ☐ **Get the VIN and rego** before you travel. A seller who won't share them is a red flag on its own.
- ☐ **Know what you're looking at:** petrol, turbo petrol, diesel or LPG; RWD or AWD. Their checks below are marked.
- ☐ **Ask how it was used:** school runs, towing a caravan or boat (how heavy, how far), dirt roads or fleet?
- ☐ **Ask for the engine to be cold**, go in daylight, and bring a torch, paper towel and a friend.

1 Exterior

- ☐ **Panels and paint.** Uneven gaps, mismatched colour or overspray on seals and trim mean crash repair. **\$**
- ☐ **Paint on the roof and bonnet.** Faded or peeling clear coat is common on cars left in the sun. **\$**
- ☐ **Rust** at this age: wheel arches, sills, door bottoms and the bottom of the tailgate. **\$**
- ☐ **Tailgate and glass hatch** open and stay up on their own; they shut and lock cleanly. **\$**
- ☐ **Lights and glass.** All lights work; windscreen free of chips. Hazy, yellowed headlight lenses cut light output. **\$**
- ☐ **Windows and doors.** Every window goes fully up and down at a steady speed; doors lock from the remote. **\$**
- ☐ **VIN plate** (in a door frame or under the bonnet) is there, untouched, and matches the papers.

2 Under the bonnet

- ☐ **Engine oil** between the dipstick marks, brown not black. Old, dark oil means servicing has been skipped. **\$**
- ☐ **Coolant** at the mark and brightly coloured. Rusty or oily coolant, or regular top-ups, needs a mechanic. **\$**

- ☐ **Brake fluid** (small tank at the back of the engine bay) is clear to light amber, not dark. **\$**
- ☐ **Belts, hoses and battery.** No cracked belts or perished, swollen hoses. Rubber parts age with years, not just kilometres. **\$**
- ☐ **Leaks.** Wet oil on the engine is a leak; also check under the power steering tank. **\$**
- ☐ **LPG: tank date.** The tank's compliance plate (in the boot) shows when it was made or last tested. LPG tanks must be re-tested every 10 years to stay legal.
- ☐ **Cold start.** Starts easily and settles to a smooth idle. A rattle for the first few seconds, or smoke, needs a mechanic. **\$**

3 Underbody and wheels

- ☐ **Tyres** above the wear bars, worn evenly and under ~6 years old. AWD models need four matching tyres; mismatched ones strain the AWD system. **\$**
- ☐ **Rust and crash repairs.** Rust on the floor or around the suspension; bent metal, fresh welds or new black coating in one spot. **!**
- ☐ **Oil leaks** from the engine, gearbox, rear diff and AWD drive parts; drips where it's normally parked. **\$**
- ☐ **Suspension.** Push down on each corner: it should bounce back once and settle. Oily shock absorbers leak. **\$**
- ☐ **Brakes.** Deep grooves or a raised edge on the discs mean they're due. **\$**
- ☐ **Towbar.** A worn tow ball means lots of towing; check the wiring plug works. **\$**
- ☐ **Exhaust.** Heavy rust, holes or loose heat shields. Diesel: heavy soot can mean a damaged or removed exhaust filter (DPF). **\$**

! Stay safe. Never go under a car held up only by a jack, and never open the radiator or coolant cap on a hot engine. Keep hands, hair and loose clothing clear of fans and belts when the engine is running, and do checks under the bonnet with it switched off where you can. On the test drive, hold a current licence, confirm the car is registered and insured, obey road rules, and only brake hard when the road behind is clear. Meet in a safe, public-facing place, take someone with you, and don't carry large amounts of cash to a viewing.

4 Interior and electrics

- ☐ **Warning lights.** Key to "on": every dash light comes on, then goes out once running. An airbag, brake, engine or AWD warning that stays on needs explaining. !
- ☐ **Third-row seats** (if fitted) fold and lock; belts work. \$
- ☐ **Seatbelts** pull out fully, retract and latch, with no fraying. Check child-seat anchor points. !
- ☐ **Water leaks.** Damp carpet, a wet cargo floor or a stained headlining. \$
- ☐ **Air con** blows cold front and rear, without a musty smell; heater gets hot. \$
- ☐ **Electrics.** Screen, stereo, Bluetooth, reversing camera, sensors and mirrors all work. Count the keys. \$

5 Test drive

- ☐ **Automatic.** Smooth changes with no slipping, flare, harsh shifts or thump into Drive or Reverse. \$
- ☐ **Engine.** Pulls smoothly with no stutter or smoke. LPG: runs smoothly on gas too, and switches over cleanly. \$
- ☐ **Turbo or diesel.** No loud whistle, flat spots or sudden power loss. \$

- ☐ **AWD.** In a car park, drive slowly on full lock both ways: no clunking or juddering. \$
- ☐ **Braking stability.** Brake firmly from 60 km/h: it stops straight, with no pulling, wobble or shimmy through the wheel. !
- ☐ **Steering and noises.** No knocks over bumps; no whine or clunk from the rear as you accelerate or lift off. \$
- ☐ **Afterwards,** check for new drips, a steady temperature gauge and no hot smells. \$

6 Documentation

- ☐ **Seller's ID** matches the rego papers, and the VIN matches on the papers and VIN plate.
- ☐ **Service history.** Oil changes on time, with receipts. Ask when the gearbox fluid was last changed, if ever. \$
- ☐ **Repairs.** Ask about any steering, suspension or gearbox work, and get the paperwork. \$
- ☐ **LPG paperwork.** Installation or tank re-test certificate, where your state requires one.
- ☐ **Parts and servicing.** Ford stopped making the Territory in 2016. Ask where it's been serviced, and check parts prices for any repair you'd need. \$
- ☐ **Rego and roadworthy.** Rego checked online; roadworthy supplied if your state requires one on sale. \$

What this guide can't tell you about the Territory you're looking at

4+

recalls on Territories built since 2005*

16

common faults reported on Territories built since 2005*

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