# Used GWM Ute (Cannon) inspection checklist

What to check on a used GWM Ute/Cannon, what a problem looks like, and when to walk away.

COVERS **NPW (Cannon)** 2021 on

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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.

## 1 Exterior

- ☐ **Chassis bend.** Stand side-on and compare the gap between the cab and the tub along its length; it should stay even from top to bottom. A gap narrower at the top means the chassis has been bent by overloading or towing. !
- ☐ **Tub or tray.** Look over the tub for dents, cracks and rust, especially at tie-down points and tailgate hinges, lifting any liner to check underneath. A liner is often fitted to hide old damage. $
- ☐ **Bullbar.** If a bullbar is fitted, check it's bolted on solidly with no rust or cracks and sits in line with the body. A poorly fitted bullbar can stop the airbags working properly in a crash. !
- ☐ **Towbar.** Check the towbar and wiring plug for rust, cracked welds or looseness where it bolts to the chassis. A sagging rear with a towbar fitted suggests the vehicle has towed heavy loads often. $

## 2 Under the bonnet

- ☐ **Oil level.** Pull the dipstick and check the oil isn't above the top mark and doesn't smell of diesel. A rising, diesel-smelling level means fuel is getting into the oil, often from short trips. $
- ☐ **Intake soot.** Look at the intake pipe near the air filter box for thick black soot buildup and ask if it has ever been cleaned out. Heavy soot narrows the intake and can choke the engine's airflow over time. Blocked airflow often shows up as sluggish acceleration before it fails outright. $
- ☐ **Turbo.** Check inside the big air pipes for oily residue, and listen for a loud whistle or watch for blue smoke on a hard pull. Oil in the pipes or a whistling noise points to a failing turbo. A turbo repair is a costly job once bearing wear sets in. $
- ☐ **AdBlue tank.** Check the AdBlue filler cap near the fuel filler and ask the seller when it was last topped up and whether any warning ever appeared on the dash. A dosing fault can leave the car unable to restart. Ask if a dosing fault warning has ever appeared. $

## 3 Underbody and wheels

- ☐ **Chassis rails.** Crouch and look along the frame under the car for kinks, cracks or fresh welds, especially behind the cab and near the rear springs. Fresh welds or paint in one spot can hide crash or overload damage. !
- ☐ **Chassis rust.** Look at the frame rails for rust; light surface rust is normal but flaking metal or holes are not. Vehicles used near the coast or beach rust from the inside out if sand and salt pack into the frame. !
- ☐ **Rear differential seal.** Look at the rear differential housing and the area around the output shafts for fresh oil wetness or drips. A leaking seal there lets gear oil escape and can starve the diff of lubrication. Dark, fresh oil around the shaft is the tell, not old dried grime. $
- ☐ **Rear springs.** Look at the rear leaf springs from the side; they shouldn't sit flat or curve the wrong way, and the leaves shouldn't be cracked. Ask for load-limit paperwork if aftermarket springs are fitted. $

## 4 Interior and electrics

- ☐ **Warning lights.** Turn the key to "on" and watch that the engine, ABS, airbag and 4WD warning lights come on then go out once running. A light left on, especially the AdBlue or engine light, needs explaining before you buy. !
- ☐ **Air con.** Run the air con and check it blows cold within a minute or two. Weak cooling often means a costly compressor or system repair. $
- ☐ **Water leaks.** Check the carpet, headlining and seat bolts for damp or rust, and look at the door and rear-window seals. Holes drilled for roof racks or a canopy are a common source of leaks. $
- ☐ **Spare wheel.** Lower the spare from its carrier under the tray and check it's the right size with good tread. The lowering mechanism can seize from rust and cost real money to free up. $

## 5 Test drive

- ☐ **Automatic gearbox.** Drive through all gears from a stop and at gentle throttle, feeling for slipping, harsh clunks or shuddering. Harsh or hesitant shifts point to an expensive gearbox problem. $

! **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.

## 5 Test drive continued

- [ ] **Driveline clunk.** Drive slowly, lift off the throttle, then reapply and feel for a clunk from underneath as drive takes up again. The clunk points to worn driveline parts. Most noticeable at low speed when backing off then reapplying throttle. $
- [ ] **4WD engagement.** On gravel or grass, select 4H then 4L and check both engage without grinding or warning lights. Never test part-time 4WD on dry bitumen as it can damage the drivetrain. $
- [ ] **Steering.** At highway speed, check the car tracks straight without wandering or pulling to one side. Wandering can mean worn steering or suspension parts. !
- [ ] **Brakes.** Brake firmly from speed and check the pedal stays firm with no shaking or pulling to one side. A shaking pedal often means warped brake rotors. !
- [ ] **Noises.** Listen for clunks over bumps, a hum that grows with speed, or a whine as you accelerate. A speed-related hum often means a worn wheel bearing. $

## 6 Documentation

- [ ] **Modification paperwork.** Ask for certificates for any load-limit (GVM) upgrade, lift or bigger tyres your state requires, and check the insurer was told.
- [ ] **Service history.** Check the logbook for oil and fuel-filter changes done on time, and extra servicing if the car has towed heavily. Skipped services can shorten the life of the turbo and injectors. $

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

**3+**
**recalls on GWM Utes built since 2021***

**6**
**common faults reported on GWM Utes built since 2021***

**Money owing, stolen or a write-off?**
A tidy car can hide all three.

**What's each fault worth?**
Shufti's negotiation coach turns it into leverage.

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