

Used Holden Captiva inspection checklist

What to check on a used Captiva, 5 or 7, what a problem looks like, and when to walk away.



SHUFTI
shufti.com.au

COVERS **CG 2006–2011** **CG Series II 2011–2018**

☐ **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:** four-cylinder, V6 or diesel; 2WD or AWD; five or seven seats. Diesel and AWD checks below are marked.
- ☐ **Ask how it was used:** family, towing, dirt roads or short trips?
- ☐ **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 on cars left in the sun. **\$**
- ☐ **Bumpers and wheels.** Parking scrapes and kerbed alloys. A badly kerbed wheel can be bent, causing vibration. **\$**
- ☐ **Rust:** wheel arches, sills and the bottom of the doors and tailgate. **\$**
- ☐ **Tailgate and glass.** The tailgate and its opening glass both open, shut and lock; struts hold them up. **\$**
- ☐ **Lights and glass.** All lights work, no condensation inside; windscreen free of chips in the driver's view. **\$**
- ☐ **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. Diesel: a rising level can mean diesel getting into the oil. **\$**

- ☐ **Coolant** at the mark and brightly coloured. A low tank, a sweet smell or regular top-ups need 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 swollen hoses; clean battery terminals and a date sticker. **\$**
- ☐ **Timing belt.** Ask if it has one and when it was last replaced; look for a sticker in the engine bay. An overdue belt that snaps can wreck the engine. **\$**
- ☐ **Leaks.** Wet oil on the engine is a leak. A freshly degreased engine on an older car can be hiding one. **\$**
- ☐ **Cold start.** Starts easily and settles to a smooth idle. A rattle for the first few seconds, a steady tick 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. **\$**
- ☐ **AWD:** no oil leaking from the rear axle or drive parts underneath. **\$**
- ☐ **Rust and crash repairs.** Rust on the floor or around the suspension; bent metal, fresh welds or new black coating in one spot. **!**
- ☐ **Scrapes and drips.** Dents underneath from dirt roads; 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. **\$**
- ☐ **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. 
- ☐ **Water leaks.** Damp carpet, a wet cargo floor or a stained headlining. A damp headlining can mean blocked sunroof drains. 
- ☐ **Air con** blows cold front and rear, without a musty smell; heater gets hot. 
- ☐ **Electrics.** Screen, Bluetooth, reversing camera, sensors, windows and sunroof. Count the keys. 

5 Test drive

- ☐ **Automatic.** Smooth changes with no slipping, flare, shudder or thump into Drive or Reverse. 
- ☐ **Engine.** Pulls smoothly with no stutter, hesitation or smoke. Diesel: ask how often the exhaust filter light has come on. 
- ☐ **AWD.** In a car park, drive slowly on full lock both ways: no clunking or juddering. 

- ☐ **Brakes.** Firm pedal; stops straight with no pulling, pulsing or grinding. 
- ☐ **Steering and suspension.** Drives straight; no knocks over bumps or clunks through the wheel. 
- ☐ **Noises at speed.** A hum that grows with speed is often a worn wheel bearing. 
- ☐ **Afterwards,** check for new drips, a steady temperature gauge and no hot or sweet smells. 

6 Documentation

- ☐ **Seller's ID** matches the rego papers, and the VIN matches on the papers and VIN plate.
- ☐ **Service history.** Logbook stamped on time, with receipts. Ask about any timing-belt, timing-chain or gearbox work. 
- ☐ **Engine and gearbox work.** Ask whether either has been repaired or replaced, and get the paperwork. 
- ☐ **Parts and servicing.** Holden stopped selling cars in 2020. 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 Captiva you're looking at

6+

recalls on Captivas built since 2006*

15

common faults reported on Captivas built since 2006*

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.

A Shufti inspection covers all of that, plus:



Guided checks for the exact car you're inspecting



PPSR and government recall checks included



Crosschecks 3M+ recalls and owner complaints



Spots issues from your photos and audio



Test drive routes with turn-by-turn navigation



Negotiation coach with repair cost estimates

Get Shufti on your mobile now.

Not sure yet? Try the free sample vehicle in Shufti. No sign-up needed.



Disclaimer. Shufti is not affiliated with or endorsed by Holden or General Motors; Holden and Captiva are trademarks of General Motors LLC. Figures are counts from Shufti's analysis of official records and published reports, not a statement that any particular vehicle is affected. This checklist is general information only and is not professional, mechanical, legal or financial advice. It covers common checks, not every possible fault, and a car can pass every item here and still have problems. It is not a substitute for a pre-purchase inspection by a qualified mechanic, which is worth considering before you buy, especially if anything tagged Safety critical turns up. Repair costs vary widely; get your own quotes. Roadworthy, registration and transfer rules differ by state, so check with your state road authority. Private sales generally don't come with the consumer guarantees that apply when you buy from a dealer. You use this checklist at your own risk and, to the extent permitted by law, Shufti accepts no liability for any loss, damage or injury arising from its use.