Used Honda HR-V inspection checklist

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

COVERS **1st gen** 2015–2021 **2nd gen** 2022 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

- ☐ **Paint condition.** Look closely at the bonnet, roof and door tops for paint that looks dull, bubbled or flaking in small flecks, and check for mismatched colour or overspray near seals. Flaking confined to flat horizontal panels can spread further if left untreated. $
- ☐ **Bumpers.** Check the front and rear bumpers for parking scrapes, cracks or a poor colour match from a repaint. A bumper that sits unevenly may have been refitted after a knock. $
- ☐ **Lights.** Check every light works, including indicators and the reversing light, and look for hazy or cloudy headlight lenses. Cloudy lenses cut how far the headlights throw light at night. $
- ☐ **Windscreen.** Check the windscreen for chips or cracks, especially in the driver's line of sight. A chip near the edge can spread into a crack with temperature changes. $
- ☐ **Panel rust.** On older cars check the wheel arches, sills and the bottom edge of the tailgate for bubbling paint or rust. Rust starting at the tailgate seam often means water has been sitting there a while. $

2 Under the bonnet

- ☐ **Engine oil.** Pull the dipstick and check the oil sits between the marks and looks brown, not black. Dark, old-looking oil suggests servicing has been skipped. $
- ☐ **Coolant.** Check the coolant reservoir is at the mark and the fluid is brightly coloured, not rusty or oily. Frequent top-ups or rusty coolant point to a leak needing a mechanic's look. $
- ☐ **Belts.** With the engine off, check drive belts for cracking or fraying and hoses for soft, swollen spots. A belt showing small cracks across its ribs is close to failing. $
- ☐ **Cold start.** Ask to start the car from cold. Hybrid: the dash should show READY, and the petrol engine may start and stop on its own without hesitation or warning lights. Hesitation or a warning light at startup can mean an expensive hybrid system fault. $

3 Underbody and wheels

- ☐ **Tyre tread.** Check tread depth on all four tyres is above the wear bars and even across the tyre face. Wear on one edge only usually means the wheels are out of alignment. $
- ☐ **Underbody rust.** Crouch down and look along the floor and around the suspension mounts for rust, bent metal, fresh welds or a patch of new black coating in just one spot. Fresh coating in one area only usually hides a repair rather than protects it. !
- ☐ **Suspension.** Push down hard on each corner of the car and let go. It should bounce back once and settle, not keep bouncing. Oily residue on a shock absorber body means it's leaking and losing its damping. $
- ☐ **Brake discs.** Look at the visible edge of each brake disc through the wheel spokes for deep grooves or a raised lip. A lip you can feel with a fingernail means the disc is thinner than it should be. $

4 Interior and electrics

- ☐ **Warning lights.** Turn the key or button to on and watch the dash. Every light should come on then go out once the car is running. An airbag, brake, engine or hybrid warning staying lit needs an explanation before you buy. !
- ☐ **Seatbelts.** Pull each seatbelt out fully and let it retract, checking it latches properly and shows no fraying in the webbing. A belt that doesn't retract smoothly may have a damaged mechanism. !
- ☐ **Rear seats.** Fold the rear seat bases up and the seat backs flat. The latches should click and lock without you forcing them. A latch that won't catch can mean a broken mechanism, which is fiddly to fix. $
- ☐ **Cabin leaks.** Lift the carpet near the front and rear footwells and check for damp patches, musty smell or watermarks, and run a hand along the door and window seals for softness or gaps. A damp smell or stained carpet usually means water is getting in through a seal, not a one-off spill. $

6 Documentation

- ☐ **Seller's ID.** Check the seller's ID matches the name on the rego papers, and the VIN matches on the papers and the VIN plate under the bonnet.

! **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

- [ ] **CVT automatic.** Accelerate gently from a stop and again from around 20km/h. The car should pull smoothly with no shudder, surging or flaring of the revs. A shudder felt through the floor on light acceleration is worth asking the seller about. $
- [ ] **Hybrid drive.** Pull away gently and feel for the car moving off on electric power alone, with the petrol engine joining in smoothly and without warning lights. Any jerk, cut-out or warning light as the engine joins in points to a hybrid system problem. $
- [ ] **Brakes.** Brake firmly from a reasonable speed on a quiet road. The pedal should feel firm and the car should stop straight, without pulling, pulsing or grinding. A pedal that sinks slowly to the floor can mean a brake fluid leak. !
- [ ] **Steering.** Drive on a straight, flat road and check the car tracks straight without wandering or pulling to one side. Constant correcting at speed can mean worn steering or alignment parts. $

6 Documentation continued

- [ ] **Service history.** Check the logbook is stamped on time and ask for receipts. Ask when the CVT fluid was last changed, if ever. A car with no record of CVT fluid changes is more likely to show rough shifting on the test drive. $
- [ ] **Hybrid battery.** Ask whether the hybrid battery has ever been tested or replaced, and ask the seller to show any paperwork for this. A hybrid battery replacement is a major expense, so proof of a recent healthy test is valuable. $

What this guide can't tell you about the HR-V you're looking at

2+
recalls on HR-Vs built since 2015*

13
common faults reported on HR-Vs built since 2015*

1,352
owner complaints on HR-Vs built 2016–2022*

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:

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- PPSR and government recall checks included
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- Spots issues from your photos and audio
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* Shufti analysis, October 2026, of official recall notices, complaints lodged by vehicle owners with vehicle safety regulators, and independent reviews and owner forums. Faults are counted when two or more independent sources report them.

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