

Used Kia Carnival inspection checklist

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



SHUFTI
shufti.com.au

COVERS **YP 2015–2020** **KA4 2020 on**

☐ **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:** V6 petrol, diesel or hybrid. Diesel and hybrid checks below are marked.
- ☐ **Ask how it was used:** family, airport shuttle, hire or disability transport? Commercial use means very high kilometres and hard-worn seats and doors.
- ☐ **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. **\$**
- ☐ **Sliding doors.** Open and close each one by hand, button and remote: smooth, no grinding, and they latch first time. A door that stops, reverses or rattles needs a repair quote. **\$**
- ☐ **Tailgate** opens, shuts and locks cleanly; a power tailgate (if fitted) runs smoothly. **\$**
- ☐ **Hail and dents.** Look along the roof, bonnet and tailgate at a low angle to the light. **\$**
- ☐ **Bumpers and wheels.** Parking scrapes and kerbed alloys. A badly kerbed wheel can be bent, causing vibration. **\$**
- ☐ **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. Ask how often it's topped up between services. **\$**

- ☐ **Diesel: oil level** not above the top mark, and not smelling of diesel. A rising level usually comes from short trips interrupting the exhaust filter's self-clean. **\$**
- ☐ **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 swollen hoses. A weak 12V battery can stop a hybrid starting. **\$**
- ☐ **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, or knocking, needs a mechanic. **\$**

3 Underbody and wheels

- ☐ **Tyres** above the wear bars, worn evenly and under ~6 years old. Wear on one edge only means the wheels are out of line. **\$**
- ☐ **Rust and crash repairs.** Rust on the floor or around the suspension; bent metal, fresh welds or new black coating in one spot. **!**
- ☐ **Sliding-door tracks.** Look along the rail under each door and at the back: no bent rails, broken rollers or rust. **\$**
- ☐ **Scrapes and drips.** Dents under the low front bumper; 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. A heavy van wears brakes fast. **\$**
- ☐ **Diesel: exhaust.** Heavy black soot at the tailpipe 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 hybrid warning that stays on needs explaining.

!
- ☐ **Every seatbelt** (up to eight) pulls out fully, retracts and latches, with no fraying. Check child-seat anchor points.

!
- ☐ **Seats.** Middle and third rows slide, fold and lock; the third row folds into the floor. Stains, tears and broken latches show a hard family life.

\$
- ☐ **Wear matches the kilometres.** Steering wheel, pedals, driver's seat and door handles.

\$
- ☐ **Air con** blows cold front and rear, without a musty smell; heater gets hot.

\$
- ☐ **Electrics.** Screens, Bluetooth/CarPlay, cameras, sensors, windows and sunroof. Count the keys.

\$

5 Test drive

- ☐ **Automatic.** Smooth changes with no slipping, shudder or thump into Drive or Reverse.

\$
- ☐ **Hybrid.** Moves off smoothly on electric power, and the engine joins in with no surges, cut-outs or warnings.

\$

- ☐ **Engine.** Pulls smoothly with no stutter, hesitation or smoke. Diesel: ask how often the exhaust filter light has come on.

\$
- ☐ **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.

\$
- ☐ **Rattles and noises.** Sliding doors quiet on rough roads; no hum that grows with speed (wheel bearing).

\$
- ☐ **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.** Logbook stamped on time, with receipts. Ask when the gearbox fluid was last changed, if ever.

\$
- ☐ **Commercial or hire records.** Ask directly whether it was used for paid transport, and ask for the log.

\$
- ☐ **Warranty.** A newer Carnival may still be under Kia's new-car warranty. Check the start date and that servicing kept it valid.
- ☐ **Rego and roadworthy.** Rego checked online; roadworthy supplied if your state requires one on sale.

\$

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

15+

recalls on Carnivals built since 2015*

8

common faults reported on Carnivals built since 2015*

1,514

owner complaints on Carnivals (also sold as the Sedona) built since 2015*

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.

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

Disclaimer. Shufti is not affiliated with or endorsed by Kia; Kia and Carnival are trademarks of Kia Corporation. 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.

* 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.

© 2026 Shufti. App Store is a service mark of Apple Inc. Google Play is a trademark of Google LLC.

Page 2 of 2