

Used Mazda6 inspection checklist

What to check on a used Mazda6, sedan or wagon, what a problem looks like, and when to walk away.



SHUFTI
shufti.com.au

COVERS **GH 2008–2012** **GJ/GL 2012–2025**

☐ **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 or diesel; manual or auto. Diesel and turbo checks below are marked.
- ☐ **Ask how it was used:** private, fleet or rideshare; short trips, towing or long country runs?
- ☐ **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, bonnet and boot.** Faded or peeling clear coat on cars left in the sun. **\$**
- ☐ **Hail and dents.** Look along the roof and bonnet at a low angle to the light for small dimples. **\$**
- ☐ **Wheels.** Kerbed or cracked alloys. A badly kerbed wheel can be bent, causing vibration. **\$**
- ☐ **Rust** on older cars: wheel arches, sills, door bottoms and the boot lid. **\$**
- ☐ **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. Old, dark oil means servicing has been skipped. **\$**

- ☐ **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. Cars with stop-start need a special battery; check its date sticker. **\$**
- ☐ **Leaks.** Wet oil on the engine or turbo pipes is a leak. **\$**
- ☐ **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. 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. **!**
- ☐ **Drips** under the car, and oil stains 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). **\$**
- ☐ **Towbar.** A worn tow ball means lots of towing; check the wiring plug works. **\$**

! 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 exhaust filter light that stays on needs explaining.
- ☐ **Water leaks.** Damp carpet, a wet boot floor or a stained headlining. A damp headlining can mean blocked sunroof drains.
- ☐ **Wear matches the kilometres.** Steering wheel, gear selector, pedals and driver's seat bolster.
- ☐ **Seatbelts** pull out fully, retract and latch, with no fraying.
- ☐ **Air con** blows cold within a minute or two, without a musty smell; heater gets hot.
- ☐ **Electrics.** Screen and control knob, Bluetooth/CarPlay, cameras, sensors, windows and sunroof. Count the keys.

5 Test drive

- ☐ **Automatic.** Smooth changes with no slipping, flare or thump into Drive or Reverse.
- ☐ **Manual.** In 4th at 50 km/h, floor it: if revs rise faster than speed, the clutch is slipping.
- ☐ **Engine.** Pulls smoothly with no stutter, sudden power loss 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.
- ☐ **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 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. Diesels need on-time oil changes; ask for receipts.
- ☐ **Engine work.** Ask whether the engine has ever been repaired or replaced, and get the paperwork.
- ☐ **Fleet or rideshare records.** Ask directly how it was used, and ask for the log.
- ☐ **Warranty.** A newer Mazda6 may still be under Mazda'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 Mazda6 you're looking at

9+

recalls on Mazda6s built since 2008*

22

common faults reported on Mazda6s built since 2008*

1,758

owner complaints on Mazda6s built 2009–2021*

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.

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 Mazda; Mazda and Mazda6 are trademarks of Mazda Motor 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.