

Used Mitsubishi Outlander inspection checklist

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



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COVERS **ZH 2006–2012** **ZJ-ZL 2012–2021** **ZM 2021 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:** petrol, diesel or plug-in hybrid (PHEV); 2WD or AWD. Diesel, PHEV and AWD checks below are marked.
- ☐ **PHEV: ask the seller to charge it fully** before you arrive, and to have the charging cable there.
- ☐ **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. **\$**
- ☐ **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. **\$**
- ☐ **Rust** on older cars: wheel arches, sills and the bottom of the tailgate. **\$**
- ☐ **PHEV: charge port.** The flap opens and shuts; the socket is clean, dry and has no burn marks. **\$**
- ☐ **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. 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 PHEV reaching "READY". **\$**
- ☐ **Leaks.** Wet oil on the engine is a leak. A freshly degreased engine on an older car can be hiding one. **\$**
- ☐ **Cold start.** Petrol or diesel: starts easily and idles smoothly, no rattle or smoke. PHEV: "READY" shows; the engine may start and stop by itself. **\$**

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. **!**
- ☐ **PHEV: underfloor battery.** Dents, scrapes or damage to the large flat battery case under the floor. **\$**
- ☐ **Scrapes and drips.** Dents underneath from dirt roads; drips where it's normally parked. **\$**
- ☐ **Suspension and brakes.** Oily shock absorbers; deep grooves or a raised edge on the brake discs. **\$**
- ☐ **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 "check EV system" warning that stays on needs explaining. 
- ☐ **PHEV: electric range.** Fully charged, note the range shown. A range well below what the model had new can mean a worn battery; get a dealer battery report. 
- ☐ **Third-row seats** (if fitted) fold and lock; belts work. 
- ☐ **Seatbelts** pull out fully, retract and latch, with no fraying. 
- ☐ **Wear matches the kilometres.** Steering wheel, pedals, driver's seat and cargo area. 
- ☐ **Air con** blows cold within a minute or two, without a musty smell; heater gets hot. 
- ☐ **Electrics.** Screen, Bluetooth/CarPlay, reversing camera, sensors and windows. Count the keys. 

5 Test drive

- ☐ **CVT automatic.** Smooth, steady pull with no judder, surging or loud whine. Ask when its fluid was changed. 
- ☐ **PHEV.** Drives on electric power alone at low speed, and the engine joins in smoothly with no surges or warnings. 
- ☐ **Diesel: power.** Pulls strongly with no flat spots, sudden power loss or black smoke. 

- ☐ **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. Ask when the CVT fluid was last changed, if ever. 
- ☐ **PHEV: battery report** from a Mitsubishi dealer showing the battery's health. Ask for it, or ask the seller to get one. 
- ☐ **PHEV: charging gear.** The portable charging cable is included and works. 
- ☐ **Warranty.** A newer Outlander may still be under Mitsubishi'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 Outlander you're looking at

21+

recalls on Outlanders built since 2006*

31

common faults reported on Outlanders built since 2006*

1,612

owner complaints on Outlanders built since 2007*

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