

Used Nissan Patrol inspection checklist

What to check on a used Patrol 4x4 wagon, what a problem looks like, and when to walk away.

COVERS

GU (Y61) 1997–2016

Y62 2013 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.

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:** a GU (diesel or petrol, manual or auto, maybe LPG) or a Y62 (petrol V8 auto). Manual and LPG checks are marked.
- ☐ **Ask how it was used:** towing a caravan or boat (how heavy, how far), outback trips, beach driving or school runs. Heavy towing and corrugated roads wear a Patrol much faster than suburban kilometres.
- ☐ **Ask for a list of modifications** and their paperwork: lift kit, higher load limit (GVM upgrade), bigger tyres, bullbar, long-range tank, LPG, engine tune.
- ☐ **Ask for the engine to be cold**, and bring a torch, gloves and something to lie on.

1 Exterior

- ☐ **Panels and paint.** Uneven gaps or paint on trim (crash repair), scrapes low on the body (off-roading), hail dimples on the roof and bonnet. **\$**
- ☐ **Rear doors.** Barn doors or tailgate shouldn't sag, and should close cleanly. A heavy spare or carrier on the door wears the hinges. **\$**
- ☐ **Roof and rack.** Dents, cracked paint or leaks around rack mounts. An overloaded roof rack on corrugations can crack the roof. **\$**
- ☐ **Bullbar** is made to work with the airbags and is solidly mounted. **!**
- ☐ **Rust** on older wagons: windscreen frame, door bottoms, wheel arches and around the rear doors. **\$**
- ☐ **VIN plate** (in a door frame or under the bonnet) is there, untouched, and matches the papers.

2 Under the bonnet

- ☐ **Coolant** at the mark and brightly coloured. Rusty or oily coolant, or regular top-ups, needs a mechanic. **\$**

- ☐ **Engine oil** between the marks, not milky. Diesel: a rising level or a diesel smell means fuel is getting into the oil. **\$**
- ☐ **Diesel: turbo.** Oil inside the big air pipes, a loud siren-like whistle, or blue smoke. **\$**
- ☐ **Tunes and deletes.** An extra box wired into the engine, or emissions parts removed. Removing emissions parts is illegal and can void insurance.
- ☐ **LPG: tank date.** The tank's compliance plate shows when it was made or last tested. LPG tanks must be re-tested every 10 years to stay legal.
- ☐ **Water crossings.** Silt or mud in the air filter box or around the engine. **\$**
- ☐ **Extra wiring** for a second battery, fridge, lights or UHF radio is neat and fused. Messy wiring causes faults and fires. **\$**
- ☐ **Cold start.** Starts easily and settles to a smooth idle. Heavy knocking, rough running or smoke that won't clear needs a mechanic. **\$**

3 Underbody and 4x4

- ☐ **Chassis** (the frame under the car). Kinks, cracks or fresh welds, especially near the towbar and rear suspension. **!**
- ☐ **Beach use.** Sand or salt packed into the frame rusts it from the inside. Surface rust is normal; flaking or holes are not. **!**
- ☐ **Suspension.** Oily shock absorbers, sagging coils or cracked mounts. Y62 with linked hydraulic suspension: look for oily lines near the wheels. **\$**
- ☐ **Front end.** Split rubber boots or loose steering parts; oil or grease leaking from the front hubs. Worse on lifted 4x4s. **\$**
- ☐ **Oil leaks** from the axles, transfer case and drive parts underneath. **\$**
- ☐ **Underbody guards and towbar.** Dented guards show hard off-road use; a worn tow ball means lots of heavy towing. **\$**
- ☐ **Tyres** match the sticker in the door frame (or are engineered), wear evenly and are under ~6 years old. Check the spare too. **\$**

! **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": engine, ABS, airbag and 4WD lights come on, then go out once running. An engine or 4WD light that stays on needs explaining. !
- ☐ **Water and dust.** Damp carpet, a stained headlining or fine dust inside. Check holes drilled for racks, a snorkel or aerials. \$
- ☐ **Third-row seats** (if fitted) fold and lock; belts work. Worn cargo area and seat trim show a hard family life. \$
- ☐ **Seatbelts** pull out fully, retract and latch, with no fraying. !
- ☐ **Wear matches the kilometres.** Seat bolster, steering wheel, carpet under mats; screw holes from removed radios. \$
- ☐ **Air con** blows cold front and rear; heater gets hot. Count the keys and test the remotes. \$

5 Test drive

- ☐ **Automatic gearbox.** Smooth changes, no slipping or thump into gear. Towing wears autos; ask when the fluid was changed. \$
- ☐ **Manual.** In 4th at 50 km/h, floor it: if revs rise faster than speed, the clutch is slipping. \$
- ☐ **Power and smoke.** Pulls strongly, with no flat spots, sudden power loss or smoke. LPG: runs smoothly on gas too. \$

- ☐ **4WD.** On gravel or grass, select 4H then 4L: no clunks or grinding, and the 4WD lights come on. Don't use part-time 4WD on dry bitumen. \$
- ☐ **Steering and brakes.** No wandering or wobble at speed, or shaking through the brake pedal (common on towing 4x4s). !
- ☐ **Noises.** Clunks over bumps, a hum that grows with speed (wheel bearing), or a whine as you accelerate. \$
- ☐ **Afterwards,** check for a steady temperature gauge, no warnings and no new drips underneath. \$

6 Documentation

- ☐ **Seller's ID** matches the rego papers, and the VIN matches on the papers, VIN plate and chassis.
- ☐ **Modification paperwork:** certificates for any load-limit (GVM) upgrade, lift, bigger tyres or LPG your state requires, and the insurer told.
- ☐ **Tunes and emissions.** Ask directly whether it's been tuned or had emissions parts removed, and get the answer in writing.
- ☐ **Service history.** Oil changes on time, with receipts. Heavy towing should mean extra gearbox and diff servicing. \$
- ☐ **Warranty.** A newer Y62 may still be under Nissan's new-car warranty. Check the start date and that servicing kept it valid.

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

3+

recalls on Patrols built since 2005*

16

common faults reported on Patrols built since 2005*

449

owner complaints on Y62 Patrols (also sold as the Armada) built 2017–2024*

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