

Used Toyota Kluger inspection checklist

What to check on a used Kluger, petrol or hybrid, what a problem looks like, and when to walk away.



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COVERS **XU40** 2007–2014 **XU50** 2014–2021 **XU70** 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:** V6, turbo four-cylinder or hybrid; 2WD or AWD. Hybrid and AWD checks below are marked.
- ☐ **Ask how it was used:** school runs, towing a caravan or boat (how heavy, how far), dirt roads or fleet?
- ☐ **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. **\$**
- ☐ **Paint on the roof and bonnet.** Faded or peeling clear coat is common on older cars left in the sun. **\$**
- ☐ **Lights and glass.** All lights work, no condensation inside; windscreen free of chips in the driver's view. **\$**
- ☐ **Doors and tailgate** open, shut and lock cleanly; a power tailgate (if fitted) runs smoothly. **\$**
- ☐ **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. **\$**

- ☐ **Coolant** at the mark and a clean pink colour. Pink crusty residue or drips at the front of the engine are a leak sign. **\$**
- ☐ **Hybrid: second coolant tank.** Hybrids have a separate coolant tank for the hybrid system. Check it's at the mark too. **\$**
- ☐ **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 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: starts easily and idles smoothly, no rattle or smoke. Hybrid: "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. **!**
- ☐ **Towbar.** A worn tow ball means lots of towing; check the wiring plug works. **\$**
- ☐ **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 and drips.** Heavy rust, holes or loose heat shields; drips where it's normally parked. **\$**

! **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. 
- ☐ **Third-row seats** 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. Check child-seat anchor points. 
- ☐ **Wear matches the kilometres.** Steering wheel, pedals, driver's seat and cargo area. 
- ☐ **Air con** blows cold front and rear, without a musty smell; heater gets hot. 
- ☐ **Electrics.** Screen, Bluetooth/CarPlay, cameras, sensors, windows and sunroof. Count the keys. 

5 Test drive

- ☐ **Idle in Drive.** Foot on the brake, in Drive: no heavy shaking through the seat or steering. Heavy shaking can mean worn engine mounts. 
- ☐ **Automatic.** Pulls away smoothly with no jerk, shudder, slipping or delay into gear. 
- ☐ **Hybrid.** Moves off on electric power at low speed, and the engine joins in smoothly with no surges or warnings. 

- ☐ **AWD.** In a car park, drive slowly on full lock both ways: no clunking or juddering. 
- ☐ **Brakes.** Firm pedal; stops straight with no pulling, pulsing or grinding. 
- ☐ **Steering and noises.** Drives straight; no knocks over bumps. A hum that grows with speed is often a 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. Heavy towing should mean extra gearbox and diff servicing. 
- ☐ **Hybrid battery health checks.** Ask for any reports. Toyota's extended battery warranty depends on them. 
- ☐ **Fleet records.** Ex-fleet cars are often well maintained; ask for the log. 
- ☐ **Warranty.** A newer Kluger may still be under Toyota'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 Kluger you're looking at

13+

recalls on Klugers built since 2007*

7

common faults reported on Klugers built since 2007*

5,568

owner complaints on Klugers (also sold as the Highlander) built since 2008*

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