Used Toyota LandCruiser 70 Series inspection checklist

What to check on a used LC70, Troop Carrier or ute, what a problem looks like, and when to walk away.

COVERS **70 Series (facelift)** 2007 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.

1 Exterior

- ☐ **Panels.** Walk around the body in daylight and check for mismatched paint or uneven panel gaps, a sign of past crash repair. Fresh paint on one panel only usually means a repair, not a full respray. $
- ☐ **Bullbar.** Check the bullbar is bolted on firmly with no play, and if airbags are fitted, confirm it's an airbag-compatible design. A loose or cheap bullbar can stop the airbags working properly in a crash. !
- ☐ **Tub or tray.** On ute or cab-chassis trucks, lift any tray liner and check for dents, cracks or rust around tie-downs and tailgate hinges. A liner is often fitted to hide old damage underneath. $
- ☐ **Rear doors.** Troop Carrier: open and close both barn doors fully, checking the seals aren't perished and the panels aren't dented or rusted from gear loaded in and out. Stiff or dragging doors often mean worn or rusted hinges. $

2 Under the bonnet

- ☐ **Coolant.** Check the coolant is up to the mark and a clean colour, not rusty or milky. Low or dirty coolant can point to a leak or head gasket trouble. $
- ☐ **Oil level.** Pull the dipstick and check the oil sits between the marks and doesn't smell of diesel fuel. A diesel smell in the oil suggests the engine isn't burning fuel properly. $
- ☐ **Turbo.** Look inside the big air pipes near the turbo for oil residue, and listen for a loud siren-like whistle or watch for blue smoke on start-up. Oily pipes or a screaming whistle point to a tired turbo. $
- ☐ **Water crossings.** Check the air filter box and around the engine bay for silt or mud, a sign the truck has been through deep water or on the beach. Water ingress into the engine can cause expensive hidden damage. $
- ☐ **Cold start.** Start the engine from cold and listen: it should fire within a couple of seconds and settle into a smooth idle. Knocking, rough running or black smoke on start-up can mean injector trouble. $

3 Underbody and wheels

- ☐ **Chassis rails.** Crouch and look along the chassis rails, especially near the rear spring hangers, towbar and suspension mounts, for cracks, kinks or fresh welds. Cracking around the rear spring hangers from heavy loads is a frequent and costly problem on these trucks. !
- ☐ **Beach use rust.** Look closely at the chassis rails for flaking rust or holes, not just light surface rust, which points to sand or salt packed in from beach driving. Rust eating through from the inside is worse than it looks on the surface. !
- ☐ **Suspension.** Check the shock absorbers for oily leaks, look for a sagging rear end, cracked mounts, and ask for paperwork if a lift kit is fitted. A sagging rear with no paperwork often means an unapproved or worn-out lift. $
- ☐ **Tyres.** Check the tyres match the size on the door sticker (or are rated for any GVM upgrade), wear evenly, and aren't older than about six years. Check the date code on the sidewall; old rubber can crack even with plenty of tread left. $

4 Interior and electrics

- ☐ **Warning lights.** Turn the key to "on" and watch the dash: engine, ABS, airbag and 4WD lights should come on, then switch off once the engine is running. A light that stays on needs an explanation before you buy. !
- ☐ **Seatbelts.** Pull each seatbelt out fully, let it retract, and check it latches properly with no fraying, including all rear bench belts in a Troop Carrier. Fraying or a belt that won't retract is a safety issue, not just wear. !
- ☐ **Air con.** Run the air conditioning and check it blows properly cold within a few minutes. Manual-only cabins get very hot inside, so weak cooling is a bigger issue here. $
- ☐ **Water leaks.** Check the carpet and floor for damp patches and the headlining for stains, paying attention to any holes drilled for a roof rack, snorkel or UHF aerial. A damp smell or stained roof lining points to a leak that's been there a while. $

6 Documentation

- ☐ **Seller's ID.** Check the seller's ID matches the registration papers, and that the VIN matches across the papers, VIN plate and chassis stamping.

! **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.

5 Test drive

- [ ] **Manual clutch.** Manual: pull away from a stop and check the clutch bites smoothly partway down the pedal, with no slip, shudder or judder at low speed. Judder or slip taking off usually means the clutch is near the end of its life. !
- [ ] **4WD engagement.** On gravel or grass, select 4H then 4L and check there's no clunking and the 4WD light stops flashing. Never test part-time 4WD on dry bitumen, it can damage the drivetrain. $
- [ ] **Steering.** At highway speed, check the car tracks straight with no wandering or pulling to one side. Wandering is common on trucks that have been towing or heavily loaded. !
- [ ] **Brakes.** Brake firmly from speed on a clear road and check the pedal doesn't shudder and the car pulls up straight. Shuddering through the pedal often means warped brake discs. !

6 Documentation continued

- [ ] **Modification paperwork.** Ask for engineering certificates for any GVM upgrade, suspension lift, bullbar, towbar or oversize tyres your state requires. Unapproved mods can cause rego and insurance problems later.
- [ ] **Service history.** Check the service book for oil and fuel-filter changes done on time, and ask about any injector, clutch or suspension work with receipts. Gaps in servicing often line up with the problems you found elsewhere. $

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2+

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14

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* 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.

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