

Used Toyota Yaris inspection checklist

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



SHUFTI
shufti.com.au

COVERS **XP90** 2005–2011 **XP130** 2011–2020 **XP210** 2020 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.
- ☐ **Ask how it was used:** private, ex-rental, fleet or a learner's first car? Yarises are rental and learner favourites: expect parking scrapes and a worn clutch on manuals.
- ☐ **Petrol or hybrid?** Hybrids have extra checks below, marked **Hybrid**.
- ☐ **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 for small dimples. **\$**
- ☐ **Bumpers and wheels.** Parking scrapes, cracked bumper tabs and kerbed wheels or scuffed hubcaps. **\$**
- ☐ **Rust** on older cars: sills, wheel arches, door bottoms and the tailgate. **\$**
- ☐ **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; windscreen free of chips. Hazy, yellowed headlight lenses cut light output. **\$**
- ☐ **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. **\$**
Budget cars often miss services; old black oil is a clue.

- ☐ **Coolant** at the mark and a clean pink colour. Pink crusty residue or drips at the front of the engine can mean a leaking water pump. **\$**
- ☐ **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. **\$**
- ☐ **Cold start.** Petrol: starts easily and idles smoothly, no rattle or smoke. Hybrid: press start and "READY" should show; the engine may start and stop by itself, which is normal. **\$**

3 Underbody and wheels

- ☐ **Tyre tread** above the wear bars, worn evenly. Wear on one edge only means the wheels are out of line. **\$**
- ☐ **Tyre age.** The 4-digit code on the side is the week and year made (2319 = week 23, 2019). Over ~6 years: budget for new ones. **\$**
- ☐ **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 that rattle. **\$**

! **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.

!
- ☐ **Hybrid: battery cooling vent** near the rear seat is clear of dust, pet hair and clutter. Blocked vents can overheat the hybrid battery.

\$
- ☐ **Wear matches the kilometres.** Steering wheel, gear knob, pedals and driver's seat.

\$
- ☐ **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, Bluetooth, reversing camera (if fitted), windows and mirrors. Count the keys.

\$
- ☐ **Boot.** Spare wheel or repair kit and jack present. Lift the floor for water.

\$

5 Test drive

- ☐ **Automatic.** Pulls away smoothly with no jerk, shudder, slipping or delay into gear, and no whine that grows with speed.

\$
- ☐ **Manual.** In 4th at 50 km/h, floor it: if revs rise faster than speed, the clutch is slipping.

\$
- ☐ **Hybrid.** Moves off on electric power at low speed, and the engine joins in smoothly with no surges, cut-outs or warnings.

\$

- ☐ **Brakes.** Firm pedal; stops straight with no pulling, pulsing or grinding. Hybrid brakes feel different but should still be progressive.

!
- ☐ **Steering and suspension.** Drives straight; no knocks or clunks over bumps.

\$
- ☐ **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. Cheap cars often skip services; gaps are worth a lower offer.

\$
- ☐ **Hybrid battery health checks.** Ask for any reports. Toyota's extended battery warranty depends on them.

\$
- ☐ **Fleet or rental records.** Ex-fleet cars are often well maintained; ask for the log.

\$
- ☐ **Warranty.** A newer Yaris 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 Yaris you're looking at

8+

recalls on Yarises built since 2005*

5

common faults reported on Yarises built since 2005*

1,027

owner complaints on Yarises built 2007–2018*

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 Toyota; Toyota and Yaris are trademarks of Toyota 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 serious problems. It is not a substitute for a pre-purchase inspection by a qualified mechanic, which we strongly recommend before you buy, especially for anything tagged **Safety critical**. 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.

* Shufti analysis, September 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.

© 2026 Shufti. App Store is a service mark of Apple Inc. Google Play is a trademark of Google LLC.

Page 2 of 2