

The Maryland Vehicle Safety Inspection



There are two instances when you need a Maryland Safety Inspection:

1. When you have just moved into the state of Maryland and need to register your car.
2. When you are selling a car.

... But, if you happen to buy a car that hasn't had a Maryland State Inspection (not a good idea), you'll need to have an inspection performed in order to complete the titling and registration process.

Where Can I Get My Car Inspected?

In order to get a Maryland State Inspection certification, you must have your car inspected by a certified inspection station; there are over 1,600 of these stations across the state of Maryland. The certification, along with the list of items that are checked in an inspection must be posted prominently in the auto repair shop, so be sure to look for it, and if you don't see it, don't hesitate to ask.

BA Auto Care is a certified inspection station, and we would be happy to complete the inspection for you!

How Long Does the Inspection Take?

An inspection takes about 90 minutes to perform. In most cases, the car needs to be left at the inspection station for at least half a day. Be sure to call ahead and check to see if the shop you've decided upon requires an appointment.

How Much Will it Cost?

Inspections can cost anywhere from \$60 to \$110. Here at BA Auto Care the cost is \$98. If you have any questions, you can send us a tweet at [@BrianECarAdvice](#) or check out the official [Maryland MVA Vehicle Safety Inspection Page](#) on the web.

Before the Inspection

In order to have your vehicle inspected you must have a title and your vehicle must be properly registered in the state of Maryland or in another state. If your vehicle is not properly registered, you may need to get a [temporary 30 day registration](#). This will allow you to drive the vehicle to the inspection station or for any needed repairs. Additionally, you may want to check out the tires, wiper blades and lights and make sure they are functioning and in good condition before you go in, as that can help to move the process along.

What's not Covered in a Maryland Safety Inspection

The Maryland Safety Inspection is a great check of the key safety items on a car, but it's important to remember that it's just a safety inspection. It doesn't guarantee the mechanical soundness of the car. If you are purchasing a used car, it's still a good idea to have the mechanical as well as safety systems thoroughly checked out by someone you trust.

A Safety Inspection versus an Emissions Inspection

An emissions inspection is totally different from a safety inspection. The Maryland Vehicle Emissions Program (VEIP) has been put in place to help improve Maryland's air quality. Vehicles are scheduled for inspection every two years. To find out more visit the [Maryland Department of the Environment website](#).

Which of My Car's Systems are Checked?

During a vehicle safety inspection the vehicle identification and odometer reading will be noted and the following systems will be inspected:

1. **Steering** for steering wheel condition, steering column condition, lash, travel for jamming or binding, linkage for excessive free play, and power steering condition. Vehicle must be road tested.
2. **Wheel Alignment** for toe reading, caster and camber (only if road test indicates), and rear wheel alignment and axel.
3. **Suspension** for ball joint wear, king pin or spindle bolt condition, wheel bearing condition, springs and torsion bar condition, and shock absorber or strut condition.
4. **Brake Systems** for stopping distance, hydraulic system condition, drum and disc condition, lining and pad condition, general condition of mechanical linkage, vacuum or hydraulic booster system condition, and parking brake function.
5. **Tires and Wheels** for condition of tires - size, type & thread depth and conditions of wheels - nuts, studs or lugs.
6. **Fuel System** for fuel tank condition and leaks, choke, hand throttle & accelerator operation.
7. **Exhaust System** for condition of manifold, all piping, muffler, resonator and the tail piping. To include leaks and proper mounting.
8. **Bumpers** for condition including height and proper mounting
9. **Fenders** for condition including mounting and coverage of wheels & tires.
10. **Lighting** for condition and function of all original equipment and whatever added lights are authorized; headlights for condition, candle power output and aim; auxiliary or fog lights for aim & proper mounting.
11. **Mirrors** for condition including unobstructed view of both inside and outside mirrors when required.
12. **Window Glazing** for proper materials used for specific locations, operation of driver window, damage that exceeds allowable limits, and tinting not incorporated into the glazing except as noted in the procedures.
13. **Windshield Wipers** for satisfactory operation and condition of arms and blades.
14. **Hood/Catches** for condition and proper function of hood for full closure.
15. **Doors, Handles and Latches** for condition and proper function of all doors, latches, hinges and handles.
16. **Floor and Trunk** for holes or rusted out and weakened conditions in floor or trunk pan.
17. **Speedometer and Odometer** for operation and legibility as well as register in MPH or kilometers.
18. **Electrical System** for proper condition and function of horn, condition of wiring and switches, neutral safety switch in automatic transmissions only, and condition of battery cables and hold down.
19. **Driver's Seat** for presence, condition and mounting.
20. **Safety Belts** for presence, condition, operation and mounting.
21. **Motor Mounts** if originally manufactured with; check presence and condition.
22. **Gear Selection Indicator** for proper indication of correct position.
23. **Universal Joints/Constant Velocity Joints** for attachment and worn, damaged or loose joints and torn or damaged CV boots.
24. **Emissions Equipment** for presence and proper connection of catalytic converter, positive crankcase ventilation, air infection system, exhaust gas recirculation system, evaporative emissions system.

What happens if I pass?

Most cars that are well maintained will pass the inspection. If your car passes, you will receive a Maryland State Inspection certificate that is valid for 90 days. Take this certificate, along with other required documents, with you to the MVA to complete the titling & registration process.

What happens if I fail?

If your car fails, you have 30 days to have it repaired. It's a good idea to have the car repaired at the same place you have it inspected, so be sure to choose an auto repair shop for the inspection that you would feel comfortable with in completing any repairs.

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Looking Out for You and Your Car