

# 4x4 Trucks & SUVs Buyers Guide

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Published by: 4x4OffRoads.com

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# 1. HOW TO BUY 4X4 TRUCKS AND SUVs ONLINE

Buying a 4x4 truck or SUV on eBay is the sure way to turn your dream of owning the 4x4 you've always wanted into a reality. The best part is that you can often get the truck of your dream for less than anywhere else.

There are a few things you should know and keep in mind – just like when you buy a used car on a sales lot.

Use the [4x4Sale section of 4x4OffRoads.com](#) to find the truck or SUV of your dreams:



## 2. SELECT YOUR 4X4

*The biggest mistake people make in life is NOT making a living at doing what they most enjoy.*

- Malcolm S. Forbes (1919-1990)

I tend to look at vehicles primarily from this angle. A-B cars are used to take you and your passengers from point A to point B. They can be equipped with various features to make the ride easier, more comfortable and even entertaining. A 4x4 can of course also be used to take you on the same route. On the other hand they can also be used to get to locations where it would be difficult or impossible to reach in an A-B car.

A 4x4 is used for supporting various activities. Some use it to go fishing on the weekends, others go skiing in the mountains and a number of people use it just to get to remote and little traveled places. Only a few use it almost exclusively to take on extremely rough tracks and sometimes competitions.

Apart from this, 4x4s are often higher and therefore easier for elderly and disabled people to board.

All these uses are good reasons to own and operate a 4x4.

In recent years, the trend has been growing trend to market various levels of in-between cars. Subaru have from the beginning offered cars with drive to all four wheels. The recent Subaru Forrester is almost comparable to the Ford Escape. We

have also seen the expensive luxury SUVs like the BMW X5, Porsche Cayenne and the Mercedes ML. Although, I am not sure I would be comfortable taking one of them on some Icelandic tracks!

Of note are also recent developments in diesel engines. They are growing fast in fuel efficiency and power. Take the VW Touareg as an example. It has the most powerful diesel engine in a mass produced vehicle. The V10 TDI with its 10 cylinders produces 313 hp and 750 Nm of torque - has a top speed of 225 km/h and goes from 0-100 in 7.8 seconds - sure sounds impressive. Call me harsh but for me this is still an A-B car.

What worries me most though - is that recent vehicles have more gadgets that can break down and are also becoming more and more difficult to fix out in the field - given you use only minimal knowledge and primitive tools.

As always the choice is up to you to select a vehicle that fits your needs and lifestyle.

The types of 4x4 vehicles available are ever increasing. You will have to make your own decision based on your intended use and how much money you want to spend on this particular part of your life. Will your 4x4 be used for the occasional fishing or hunting trip? Or will it be used daily in extreme and demanding terrain?

Like anything made by humans - 4x4s are a compromise. There is no such thing as the perfect off road vehicle. Making it fit all your family and still be able to take it wherever you want to go can be challenging. A great rock crawler would be slow and uncomfortable for long journeys. A luxurious SUV with lots of space gives a great ride experience for long journeys but might run into problems doing some serious river crossing or mudding.

Use what you've got - try it out in various terrains. Enjoy the ride! Observe what can be improved and where you want to go. Minor things can be modified to make them function better and for major issues you may consider buying a new rig rather than performing some expensive modifications.

## CATEGORIES OF 4X4 VEHICLES

4x4 means a vehicle with 4 wheels with 4 of them connected to the engine by a driveline.

You can tell the difference between a real 4x4 and a 4x4 car or light SUV by a few important points:

- A 4x4 has a **transfer case** with **high** and **low** gear selection.
- A 4x4 has a **stronger driveline**.
- A 4x4 has a relatively **high articulation**.
- A 4x4 is in most cases **built on a frame**.

Here is a table with a simple system for categorizing the different types available on the market:

<b>Type</b>	<b>Example</b>
4x4 car	Subaru Legacy
4x4 light	Land Rover Freelander, Honda CR-V, Toyota RAV4
4x4	Ford Explorer, Toyota Land Cruiser, Dodge Ram, Chevy Blazer, Jeep Cherokee
4x4 truck	Any modified 4x4 with larger tires than original
4x4 extreme	4x4 taken to the extreme and used primarily for competition or show.

## **YOUR NEEDS**

Your selection should, of course, be based on your real needs but also, and no less, on your dreams. How many passengers will be with you? Where will you travel? Will your family fit into it?

Unfortunately talking with many 4 wheelers is not helpful. They tend to fall in love with a certain brand and tell you everything else is crap. Remember to take all

advice with a grain of salt – try to read between the lines. All brands have their weak as well as strong points.

Here are a few features to look for in your selection process:

- § **Engine** - The best engine for a 4x4 has lots of torque and is strong and durable. Simple design would also mean that it is easy to fix and is therefore an advantage.
- § **4x4** - Not every trip requires a real 4x4. If you can do with a 4x4 car, consider that an option. Otherwise you should select a 4x4 with high and low gears to makes future modifications easier.
- § **Driveline** - Unfortunately, newer 4x4s are often equipped with weak drivelines. They may work OK for easy trips but will break under heavy use. Changing these parts can be done, but it is less expensive if it is already in the 4x4 you choose.  
Take a moment to inspect the underside of the vehicle – a weak driveline is usually quite obvious. Compare it to the driveline of and ordinary family car. If it is similar in construction and thickness of parts – it is likely too weak!
- § **Modifiability** – If you have ANY dreams of future modifications remember: a 4x4 that is simple to modify is more economical in the long run. In extreme modification projects this will however matter less.
- § **Built on a chassis** – All trucks and many SUVs are built on a chassis. Unibody designed vehicles like the Grand Cherokee limit your choice of modification.

- § **Weight** – It is easier to get a light 4x4 unstuck than a heavy rig. Less weight also means better fuel economy and you can get by with smaller tires. However, too light may get you into trouble in river crossing.
- § **Doors** – Two doors are enough if you travel alone or with a co-driver. Otherwise I would recommend you go with four or more doors to ensure safe access for all passengers.
- § **Price** – Consider both the initial investment as well as the cost of running the 4x4, which includes the fuel it will use as well as the cost of spare parts, repairs and taxes.

## Street vs. Trail

The design of most manufactured 4x4s today is a compromise between highway driving, comfort and off road capabilities. American manufacturers are making 4x4s with independent front suspension (IFS) as the norm. This makes for a better highway handling but is often a weakness for off road because it tends to mean less articulation. In some cases the IFS systems will gather loose materials in front of the axle and eventually make the truck stuck in some ugly situations. This can be called the “snow plough” effect and happens when you are in deep snow or mud.

The best IFS systems are perhaps in the Hummer.

## SUV vs. Pickup

A pickup in most cases is a pretty basic design. It is built to carry heavy stuff and take it to some nasty places. As the load can vary, in most cases it has leaf springs at the rear. I am no fan of leafs, but a pickup is a good choice for modifications - especially if you want to keep your wallet safe.

SUVs are made to carry people and do it in some level of comfort. Early SUVs were simply made by adding small design modifications to a pickup but today they are designed from the ground up.

## Short Wheelbase vs. Long

The traditional Jeep has a short wheelbase. Being short and light weight means that it is easy to take to places that were narrow - and a Jeep is not easily high-centered. Unfortunately the suspension works against the short wheelbase in high speed off-roading, making the vehicle unstable and when taking on even small obstacles results in a bad rhythm for driving. Taking on steep slopes either up or down can result in a rollover backwards or forwards.

As the wheelbase gets longer the ride will be better for the suspension. To prevent becoming high-centered you may have to consider larger tires as well as some lift.

This is a matter of much debate among 4 wheelers. I tend to lean towards the longer wheelbase vehicles.

## Size and Weight

Generally speaking it is best to have a light 4x4. It will require smaller tires and consume less fuel. The major drawback comes when crossing deep rivers where the danger of floating is higher. Too heavy and nobody is going to be able to pull you out of a stuck – except for a bulldozer or something similar.

Another problem with heavy vehicles is the fact that wheel size needs to increase more than you might think. The tire size will actually need to grow squared to achieve the same character of grip, traction and floatation (think in terms of vehicle weight vs. tire footprint in kg/cm<sup>2</sup> or pounds pr. square inch).

## Room for Passengers

All your passengers should have a safe and comfortable ride. Getting everybody out of the vehicle when you are stuck in the middle of a river is your responsibility. Therefore, enough doors are more than just a luxury.

Having a seat belt for everyone is highly recommended and a legal requirement in most countries.

“Cushy” is a word that many 4 wheelers hate. However for longer trips it is just so much easier to keep everybody happy if they are comfortable. Think about your kids and how irritated they may get.

### 3. EVALUATE 4X4 TRUCKS AND SUVS

Buying a 4x4 truck or SUV online is a bit different than buying at a live auction. Several simple steps can help ensure you have a positive experience from finding your dream 4x4 on the web until it is safe in your garage.

- **Decide how much you want to spend:** Deciding how much to spend on a 4x4 is probably the most important thing to consider. If you put more into a truck than you can realistically afford, you'll end up spending your time thinking about how to sell it and get your money back rather than using it to get to the great outdoors and enjoying it. When you put together your budget, it is a good idea to include the cost of transportation and in addition add another 10% of the final price to fix the little things that you'll discover need fixing (there will always be little things).
- **Know when to spend more:** Prepare to spend a little more than some price guides might recommend if the 4x4 has been lifted and is sitting on larger tires or if it has some other special modifications that you want. These things cost a lot of money initially and you should take note of that. The right color, engine upgrades and accessories, or even an especially nice restoration of an older truck can all justify a higher price. Saving on shipping is also possible if you find a 4x4 that is close to your residence and might mean you can spend more on the truck itself.

- **Research before you bid or buy:** Make sure you check out VINs and even engine numbers before you place a bid or buy a 4x4, especially with modified trucks or SUVs. It may take a while and some work to research VINs and engine numbers, but the payback is great in added comfort. The 4x4's seller should be able to provide you with the engine number. If they can't, consider another seller or another truck or SUV.
- **Find a 4x4 truck or SUV seller you trust:** A trusted seller should answer your questions quickly and provide additional information and pictures when asked. For example, if a 4x4 has been modified, the seller should be able to tell you who did the work and even show you receipts for material and labor. If an eBay seller doesn't respond in a timely manner or you don't trust his honesty, keep searching – there are always more 4x4s. To feel even more secure, you can contact other eBay Buyers who purchased a truck, SUV or a car from the seller (view the seller's Feedback from buyers and use the Contact Member feature in their Member Profiles). Evaluate all information you get from these references. Ask how the seller represented other cars and if the descriptions turned out to be accurate when the car was delivered. Get the seller on the phone to help you get a sense of his or her character. Remember to keep a record of any email dialog you have with a seller. That way you will have something to concrete if you find a discrepancy between the truck or SUV you paid for and the 4x4 you get.

Right from the beginning, remember to get the 4x4 you really want. Successfully buying a truck or SUV requires a harmony between your feelings and your

common sense, with your emotions picking the car, and your thinking to make sure it's a great 4x4 that will last a long time. Just keep searching until you find a truck or SUV that you are happy with on all levels.

## 4. FIND 4X4 TRUCK AND SUVS ON EBAY USING 4X4SALE.NET

Once you know what type of 4x4 you want, go to [sale.4x4OffRoads.com](http://sale.4x4OffRoads.com) and start browsing!

- **Categories:** Use the Categories list on the left side of the page to narrow listings by 4x4 make or model or other features you want to have.
- **Search box:** The search box on the header allows you to find specific keywords that describe your dream 4x4 quickly. You can select the advanced option to narrow the selection further. The advanced option allows you to specify make, model, and year range. If location is important, try searching by distance in miles of your ZIP code.
- **Compare:** Click on each 4x4 listing that interests you and it will open in a separate window so you can compare auction and product details side-by-side.

Use [sale.4x4OffRoads.com](http://sale.4x4OffRoads.com) to find the truck or SUV of your dreams:

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[Lifted 4x4 Trucks](#)

[4x4 Pickups](#)

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 [Singapore 4x4s](#)

## 5. BUY 4X4 TRUCKS & SUVS WITH CONFIDENCE

Hundreds or even thousands of 4x4s on eBay available through [sale.4x4OffRoads.com](http://sale.4x4OffRoads.com) will likely interest you. When you select your dream truck, make sure you know exactly what you're buying, research the seller, and understand how eBay and PayPal can help protect your hard earned cash.

As with all major decisions, in buying a 4x4 truck or SUV, you should make sure you get full information and the best advice possible.

### REGISTER AS AN EBAY MEMBER

The one-time registration process at eBay is free and easy.

When you [register at eBay](#), you will be asked to:

1. **Provide your basic contact information.** Your information will be kept private on eBay's secure servers.
2. **Create your own User ID and password** to ensure that transactions are safe and secure when you sign in at eBay.

3. **Confirm your eBay registration via email.** eBay will send you a message with a link and instructions to confirm your registration.

## Advantages to being a registered eBay user:

- **Watch auctions without bidding.** You can request email notification for your watched items and bid when the time is right for you.
- **Save your favorite searches.** eBay will also email you new search results.
- **Search completed listings.** You can research completed listings to make informed buying and selling decisions.
- **You can bid or buy immediately.** Bid or buy without delay when you find an item of interest.

## KNOW YOUR PURCHASE

Many 4x4 sellers put a lot of time into creating their listings, making an effort to ensure they include all the information buyers need. Carefully read the details in listings for the vehicle you consider buying and carefully review available photos. Before placing a bid or buying an item, be sure to:

- **Have all your questions answered.** If you still have questions after reading the listing and reviewing the photos, contact the seller using the Ask seller a question link in the "Seller information" box in the top right corner of every 4x4 vehicle eBay listing. Also request additional photos if you want to see the 4x4 from a particular angle that isn't shown in the photos included in the listing. If you have more questions than you can address in email, ask for the seller's phone number and call him or her. Some sellers even include their phone number so you can call them directly. Always keep in mind that you need to actually buy on eBay to be covered by the eBay protection programs and pay with PayPal in order to be covered by PayPal protection programs (see "Buyer protection" below for more details).
- **Run a vehicle history report:** By running a vehicle history report on a used 4x4 truck or SUV you intend to purchase, you can learn about the history of the vehicle, including accident reports - things like "flooded" or "salvage" are always great to know.
- **Get the 4x4 vehicle inspected:** An independent third-party inspection can validate a seller's claims about a 4x4 vehicle's condition. You may consider finding an eBay recommended inspection company that will arrange a thorough vehicle inspection report.
- **Consider additional costs:** Remember to consider other potential costs such as title, registration, state taxes and insurance. Once you purchase the vehicle, be sure to complete all of the title paperwork and pay any required taxes and insurance on the vehicle. Please note that this varies by state and country and vehicle type. Contact your local Department of Motor Vehicles

(DMV) office (or equivalent) for more information on insurance, taxes, title transfer, and registration.

- **Get delivery details.** Calculate and include delivery costs into your final price. This may simply be the cost of driving across the city or state if the 4x4 is close-by or it may mean working with a shipping company that can transport the truck or SUV from anywhere in the country. To learn more about shipping costs, ask the seller or contact an eBay Motors-approved vehicle shipping service.
- **Track items with eBay Toolbar.** Use the free eBay Toolbar to track items you bid on and watch. It includes Account Guard, a feature that indicates when you're visiting a verified eBay or PayPal website and warns you when you enter your eBay password into an unverified site, even if it looks like eBay or PayPal.

## KNOW YOUR PAYMENT OPTIONS

Always complete your purchase using eBay (with a bid, Buy It Now, or Best Offer). Outside transactions are not covered by eBay and PayPal protection programs (see "Buyer protection" below for more details).

Never pay for an item using instant cash wire transfer services such as MoneyGram or Western Union. These payment methods are unsafe when paying someone you do not know. Instead, pay with PayPal for amounts less than \$2,000 (including deposits), a money order, or direct bank-to-bank fund transfer.

- **Provide eBay with your credit card information:** You are required to have a credit card on file with eBay if you bid more than \$15,000 for an item. You will be notified that you need to provide this information when you bid; therefore, allow yourself some extra time if you are bidding during the last minutes of an auction. Your credit card will not be charged; instead, eBay uses it to confirm your identity—a safety measure to help protect both buyers and sellers from potential high-bidding fraud.
- **Apply for financing:** eBay, together with several top lenders, can help you get the financing that you need. Visit the eBay Financing Center to arrange financing before you bid or after you buy or to calculate monthly payments.

## KNOW YOUR SELLER

Just as important as researching your 4x4 purchase is getting to know the seller. Take time to research the seller so that you can feel positive and secure about every transaction. Key things to look for when evaluating a seller are:

- **Positive Feedback.** What is the seller's Feedback rating? How many transactions have they completed? What percentage of positive responses do they have? What do buyers and sellers say in their Feedback? Did the seller receive praise?
- **Sales history.** Find out how long the seller has been a registered eBay user and look at the types of items a seller typically sells. It's okay to buy a 4x4 from a seller who hasn't sold one before — many of the truck and

SUVs listings on eBay are from individuals selling their own 4x4. If the seller's feedback seems low, take the time to look at the Feedback details; sometimes a seller's Feedback looks low until you realize that they're a car dealer and their Feedback count comes entirely from car sales.

- **Terms and conditions.** What are the terms and conditions of the sale? Are the terms agreeable to you? Sellers typically set terms and conditions, but you should make sure you agree with them. If not, find another seller/car or contact the seller to find out if he/she is open to your suggestions.
- **Good communication.** Once you've initiated communications with the seller, how is he/she communicating with you? Is the seller courteous and professional? Is the seller responsive? Once you bid on a big-ticket item such as a 4x4 truck or SUV, communicate with the seller through My Messages in My eBay. All legitimate Second Chance Offer messages will come through My Messages and not to your email address alone. Always contact the seller before accepting a Second Chance Offer, and never respond to any request to send money via Western Union or other instant cash transfer service.

## BUYER PROTECTION

In the unlikely event a problem arises during your transaction, you can typically work it out with the seller. However, if you can't, eBay and PayPal are there for you.

- **eBay Motors Vehicle Purchase Protection up to \$20,000:** Most 4x4s and other cars purchased through eBay are automatically covered against fraud and material misrepresentation up to the cost of the car or \$20,000 (whichever is lower) with eBay Motors Vehicle Purchase Protection. To qualify for this safety program, complete your transaction on eBay with a bid, Buy It Now, or Best Offer and see additional terms of the eBay Motors Vehicle Purchase Protection.
- **Put down a deposit with PayPal:** PayPal enables you to pay up to \$2,000 without the seller ever seeing your bank account or credit card numbers. Also, PayPal protects buyers 100% against unauthorized payments from their accounts. While \$2,000 may not be a high enough limit for the full purchase price of most 4x4s, it's great for deposits (many sellers require a deposit on a car within several days of the close of a listing).
- **eBay Security & Resolution Center:** Visit the eBay Security & Resolution Center to learn how to protect your account and use eBay's quick and efficient resolution tools.

## 6. 4X4 TRUCKS & SUVs FOR SALE

Use [sale.4x4OffRoads.com](http://sale.4x4OffRoads.com) to find the truck or SUV of your dreams:

[Cheap 4x4](#)

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