

Pre-Delivery Inspection Goes Mainstream: 1.7 Lakh Indians Researched PDI in 2025

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Panel gaps, repaint and accident repair signs	That the car will never break down later
Engine noise, leaks and smoke on a cold start	The exact remaining life of a clutch or battery
Tyre wear, brake feel and suspension knocks	A guarantee in place of a written warranty
Odometer and service-record consistency	
Rust, flood damage and chassis welding	

For a long time, the riskiest part of buying a used car was that you were mostly buying on gut feel. You trusted the seller, or the dealer, or a relative who knew engines. The Gears of Growth 2025 report shows that trust is now being outsourced to a process. Over 1.7 lakh Indians looked up pre-delivery inspection in 2025, enough for the report to call PDI mainstream.

The report puts it inside a larger change it describes plainly: search behaviour has moved beyond features and price, toward inspections and trust signals. Buyers are no longer only asking what a car costs or what features it has. They want to know how they get the quality checked professionally.

What is a pre-delivery inspection (PDI) for a used car?

For a used-car buyer, a pre-delivery inspection (PDI) is a structured assessment of the vehicle before completing the purchase or taking delivery. A trained evaluator goes over the car against a fixed checklist, covering the body, engine, transmission, electricals, tyres, brakes and paperwork, and produces a documented assessment of the car's condition at the time of inspection. . On a platform like Cars24, the inspection is done before the car is even listed. Separately, if you are buying from a dealer or a private seller, you can book a PDI on that specific car and have an expert inspect it for you. The point is simple – a PDI replaces a stranger's word with a documented assessment.

This is why the search interest is telling. A used car buyer looking up PDI is a buyer who has decided that personal assurance is not enough on a purchase of this size. That is a real change in behaviour, and the report ties it to the same forces reshaping the rest of the market: certified inspections, transparent pricing and digital discovery giving people confidence they did not have a few years ago.

Why did buyers stop trusting the parking-lot check?

Two things pushed inspection into the mainstream. The first is money. As new car prices climb, more first-time buyers are spending a serious share of their savings on a used car, and a bigger cheque makes people careful. The second is that the internet gave them somewhere to take that caution. The report finds that family and peer recommendations still matter, but buyers now verify them through reviews, videos and experts rather than taking them at face value.

Video does much of that verification. The report singles out

YouTube as the platform playing the credibility role, shaping decisions through detailed reviews and ownership content. Someone can now watch an expert tear down the exact model they are considering, learn what tends to go wrong with it, and then go looking for an inspection that checks those specific things. Research and inspection have become one continuous habit.

What can a PDI catch, and what can it not?

This is where honesty matters, because an inspection is a powerful tool but not a magic one. A thorough PDI can identify many of the common mechanical, cosmetic and documentation issues that buyers may otherwise miss. It will not promise you a car that never breaks down.

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Pre-delivery inspection (PDI)

The 1.7 lakh research figure is from the Cars24 x Team BHP Gears of Growth 2025 Report. The inspection scope above is general guidance for buyers.

A PDI sharply lowers the odds of an unpleasant surprise, and it gives you a documented condition report you can hold the seller to. It does not remove risk entirely, which is why a written warranty or return window still matters alongside it. A buyer who understands both halves of that is far harder to mislead than one who treats the inspection stamp as the end of the conversation.

How much does a PDI cost, and can you book one on any car?

If you are one of those 1.7 lakh buyers, the practical question is where to get a PDI done. Cars24 runs a pre-delivery inspection service for exactly this: an expert comes to the car you are considering, whether it is with a dealer or a private seller, runs a 300 point mechanical, electrical and legal check, and gives you a digital condition report before you pay.

Because no inspection can promise a car will never fail, CarTruth backs its report with a Rs. 50,000 Moneyback Promise, so the risk of a missed fault does not sit entirely on the buyer. That is the difference between an inspection you read as advice and one you can actually rely on: the report, plus something standing behind it.

What this means for how India buys used cars

The 1.7 lakh figure is small next to the size of the market, and that is the point. It is early. Inspection research is where colour preference or fuel choice was a few years ago, a habit forming in the more informed corner of the market and spreading outward. The direction is not in doubt. Every year more buyers arrive expecting to verify a car before they trust it, and the sellers and platforms that make verification easy are the ones those buyers will choose.

The parking-lot uncle is not out of a job. He has just been joined by a checklist, a condition report and a YouTube playlist, and between them they have made the Indian used car buyer a good deal harder to fool.

