

SUGGESTED METHODS TO GUARD AGAINST ODOMETER TAMPERING

USDOJ, CIVIL DIVISION, Consumer Protection Branch

- Look for loose screws or scratch marks around the dashboard.
- On mechanical odometers, check to make sure that the digits in the odometer are lined up straight – particularly the 10,000 digit.
- Test drive the car and see if the speedometer sticks.
- Check for service stickers inside the door or under the hood that may give the actual mileage.
- Look in the owner's manual to see if maintenance was listed, or if pages that might have shown high mileage were removed.
- Ask the dealer whether a computer warranty check has been run on the car.
- Use a commercially available computer search program that checks for mileage alterations.
- Ask to see the title documents and look to see if the mileage reading on the documents has been altered.
- Look to see if the steering wheel is worn smooth. Look for other signs of excessive wear on the armrest, the floor mats, the brake and gas pedals, and the area around the ignition. If these items were recently replaced, that could also indicate efforts to hide the car's true use and mileage.
- An electronic odometer is not a guarantee of accuracy; do not assume that mileage is accurate just because the vehicle has an electronic odometer.
- Most importantly, have a trusted mechanic check out the car.