

10 Tips to Buying Used Farm Equipment

Here are some tips worth bearing in mind when purchasing [used farm equipment](#).

1. Play by the book

Your best indicators of value on newer equipment are book values and number of hours on the clock, both of which you can get from the dealer manufacturer. Ask for clear evidence of age and usage.

2. An imperfect world

Many dealers admit to the fact that most machinery owners do not take great care of their equipment. It tends to be a case that, if previous owners haven't needed to repair something on a piece of machinery, then it hasn't been repaired until absolutely necessary. Therefore, it's not unreasonable to expect at least some form of minor fault post purchase.

3. Aim low.

Sounds obvious but when you're looking at a piece of equipment that may need repairing do bear in mind that the owner may just want to get shot of it and buy new because they are aware of all the things that need to be fixed before it can be used. Make a low offer and see how you get on. You may pick up a bargain.

Don't be too suspicious of equipment offered at a low price. Remember that used equipment dealers have lower overheads and expenses than manufacturer dealers, which often accounts for the difference.

4. All that glistens

If a machine has been repainted, don't automatically assume the seller is trying to cover up a problem. Rather, when the seller applies new paint, it is usually because the old paint has faded from the sun.

On the whole if the paint job is bad, it's likely to be bad underneath. Check beneath the surface.

5. Brands and quality

There are brand names you've heard of and those you haven't. Buy decent quality brand-name equipment and it's unlikely you'll go wrong.

You may have to pay a little over the odds to get hold of it but clean, good conditioned low-hour kit will save you time and money in the long run.

Unless you have plenty of time on your hands and you're mechanically inclined customised, heavily used or abused kit will end up costing you more than if you had paid more.

6. When you see a chance - take it

The fact is that many people don't actually know a bargain when they see one. However, if you have done your research and know what equipment you want and its value then you may come across an unexpected bargain.

As a precaution check the item's paperwork especially if it is being sold by someone not in the used-equipment business for appreciably less than its book value.

7. Check it out

As when buying a car, check the engine for knocks or smoke. Check the bearings, knuckles and joints for damage or indications of wear.

A book price is just that – a price in a book. When considering the value of a specific piece of kit give it a thorough work over.

8. Trust your instincts

Often when you feel something isn't right, it isn't and could even be worse than you imagined. Warning bells might ring if the motor sounds odd or doesn't start properly. Problems tend to only get worse not better when you get your new purchase home. At the same time, just because a piece of kit has only a minor problem doesn't make it a write off.

9. Stay local

Taking into account hidden costs such as fuel, travel time, hired help, trailer rental and the income they could have earned while staying home you may actually have found a better deal by buying from your local dealer.

10. Look online

There are a number of high profile websites that specialise in farm equipment and machinery – search for phrases such as “used farm machinery” or “second hand farm equipment” and you'll find a number of reputable dealers with a broad selection of equipment.

About the Author

Robert Tate – Region Sales Manager of [Mascus UK](#). Mascus is an electronic marketplace for [used equipment](#), farm machinery and trucks. Mascus makes trading in used machines and trucks quicker and more efficient by collecting in one place information about the supply and the demand. All dealers, producers and end users are welcome to offer their used machines and trucks for sale via the marketplace.

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