

Top 10 Title & Registration Tips To Avoid Trouble

Making common title & registration mistakes can cost you money, time, or both – in some cases, a lot of both!

Here are 10 of the most critical tips to avoid trouble:

1. Get a title whenever you buy a vehicle.



Without receiving the title from the seller, you will not be able to get a regular title in your name. Idaho code Section 49-502(1) requires the seller to provide you with a title which has been properly assigned to you. If you don't have the title, you may not be aware of any **brand or designation** on it such as "Rebuilt Salvage" that could devalue the vehicle by thousands of dollars! If the seller had a loan on the vehicle that hasn't been paid off, the **lienholder** likely is holding the title and will not release it until the loan has been paid off.

2. Report any change of address.



If you move, you need to report your new address to the DMV within 30 days by law (Sections 49-320, 49-421, and 49-2444, Idaho Code). If you don't, you may miss important notifications such as registration renewal reminders or driver licensing notices.

3. Title before selling.



It is illegal to acquire and resell a vehicle without titling in your name unless you have a dealer's license [Section 49-502(3), Idaho code.] Failure to title first could result in fines and/or imprisonment. You may also be pestered by your buyer – and the State Tax Commission!

4. File a Release of Liability (ROL).



When you sell or otherwise transfer your vehicle, you are required by law to file a release of liability within five days of transfer (Section 49-526, Idaho code). Properly doing so may protect you from liability for property damage and injury/death caused by the vehicle after it has left your hands, e.g., from hit-and-run incidents. You may also be shielded from liability for parking tickets, and towing, repair, and storage charges for which you would otherwise be presumed responsible if you fail to file an ROL.

5. Keep your license plates when selling a vehicle.



The license plates you display on your personal vehicle belong to you.* When you sell or otherwise transfer a vehicle, you need to take the plates off of the vehicle. That way, law enforcement officers will not assume the vehicle is yours when they pull it over. When you keep your plates, you can use them on another vehicle you may acquire rather than having to buy new ones and receive credit for any remaining time on your registration. The buyer will be motivated to transfer the title out of your name and into his.

*Black and white restricted vehicle plates do not belong to the owner and need to stay with the vehicle when it is sold or otherwise transferred.

6. List the true selling price on the bill of sale and title.



It is a ***felony*** to list a false selling price on a bill of sale or title, and the DMV and State Tax Commission can look up your vehicle's fair market value and compare. Any other false statement on these documents is a felony as well. (Section 49-518, Idaho code). Consequences could include fines and/or imprisonment.

7. Bring proper ID to the county DMV office.



Before you can get a title or registration from your county DMV office, you need to provide your full legal name and an identifying number. If you have an Idaho driver's license or identification card, bring this with you. If a second owner is appearing on your title and registration, bring that person's Idaho driver's license number or identification card number.

If you or another person to appear on your title and registration do not have one of these numbers, provide the social security number or individual taxpayer identification number. By doing so, you won't be turned away for this on your first visit to your county DMV office.

8. When someone has signed a title or related document for someone else, provide the authorizing document.



Whenever an individual signs for someone else, the document authorizing the signature must be provided when you apply for title. For example, if you sign off a title on behalf of the owner, you need to provide the document that authorizes you to do so, such as a power of attorney if the owner is alive, or probate court appointment documents or an applicable inheritance affidavit if he is not. A title will not be issued until either an original, or a certified or verified copy of the authorizing document has been submitted.

9. Use the duplicate title if one has been issued.



When a duplicate title has been issued because the original was lost, mutilated, or illegible, the original title becomes void. If you have obtained a duplicate title for your vehicle and then find the original, destroy the original. If you lose the duplicate title, you will need to apply for another one.

10. Ensure all documents submitted are properly signed.

x *John Hancock*

Required documents for title transactions are not acceptable if they are unsigned, or have been signed incorrectly or by the wrong party. Be sure the correct person signs each document and signs the same way his/her name appears on each document.

If the name used on the document and the signature differ to the extent that it is questionable that they are the same person, a one-and-the-same statement must be completed and submitted.

If you have questions, please call the Idaho Transportation Department Vehicle Services Office at 208-334-8663 or contact your local county assessor's DMV office. For an online listing of county DMV offices, go to dmv.idaho.gov, and select "Vehicle Licensing Offices" from the column on the left.

