Service-history evidence timeline

Connect each claim to a dated record. Keep the original documents alongside this sheet.

VEHICLE / MODEL YEAR / VERSION

VIN

REVIEW DATE

RECORD SET / FILE LOCATION

One row per document or unresolved claim. Keep dates and mileage units as recorded.

Date / mileage	Record or claim	What it supports	Follow-up

VIN RECALL CHECK DATE / RESULT / MANUFACTURER INSTRUCTIONS

Keep recalls separate. A zero lookup result is not a complete recall or repair history.

MISSING INTERVALS / CONFLICTS / QUESTIONS FOR THE SELLER OR INSPECTOR

Distinguish proposed, inspected, declined and completed work. A missing record is an unresolved interval, not proof of neglect. Documents do not establish current mechanical condition.

US references: FTC auto repair and used-car guidance; NMVTIS; NHTSA recalls.

FULL GUIDE / SOURCES AND CONTEXT

roadfelt.com/articles/service-history

Car symptom log

One sheet per occurrence. Record observations first; label possible causes as questions.

SAFETY FIRST - FOLLOW YOUR OWN VEHICLE MANUAL

Do not keep driving, restart repeatedly or recreate a worrying symptom for this log. Write notes or use a camera only when safely parked; stay clear of traffic, moving parts and suspected hazards. Ask the shop or roadside assistance if unsure how to proceed.

VEHICLE / YEAR / MAKE / MODEL / ENGINE OR POWERTRAIN

DATE / APPROXIMATE TIME

ODOMETER / UNIT

EVENT NO.

WHAT I HEARD, FELT, SMELLED OR SAW

DURATION / NUMBER OF OCCURRENCES

TIME PARKED BEFORE / TIME INTO JOURNEY

WEATHER / ROAD CONDITIONS / APPROXIMATE SPEED

WHAT THE VEHICLE WAS DOING: BRAKING, TURNING, ACCELERATING, STATIONARY...

EXACT WARNING TEXT / SYMBOL / FLASHING OR STEADY / ENGINE RUNNING?

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT / WHAT ACTION I TOOK

RECENT WORK, REFUELING, CHARGING OR OTHER CHANGE / DATE

PHOTO, RECORDING OR DOCUMENT FILENAME

DETAILS I DO NOT KNOW

QUESTIONS FOR THE SHOP / WHAT WAS CHECKED / AGREED NEXT STEP

Use unknown when you cannot recall a detail. Timing alone does not show cause. Ask about diagnostic charges and agree the authorized work before repairs begin.

US references: FTC auto repair guidance; NHTSA distracted-driving guidance; your vehicle manual.

FULL GUIDE / SOURCES AND CONTEXT

roadfelt.com/articles/car-symptom-log

Annual car-cost worksheet

Purchased cars. Use the same next 12 months and annual mileage for both views. USD / miles.

CAR / EXACT VERSION

PLANNING DATES: FROM / TO

ANNUAL MILES

INPUT SOURCES / QUOTE DATES / KEY ASSUMPTIONS

1 ENERGY INPUTS

Fuel: miles _____ / mpg _____ x $/US gal _____ = $_____

Electricity: miles _____ / 100 x kWh/100 mi _____ x $/kWh _____ = $_____

CONSUMPTION SOURCE / DATE / METER BASIS / HOME-PUBLIC SPLIT / EXTRA FEES

EPA label consumption includes AC charging losses; do not add those losses again.
Prefer billed kWh. Price each charging source and add fees once. Allocate both fuels for PHEVs.

2 CASH PAYMENTS DURING THESE 12 MONTHS

Payment	USD	Source / due date
Fuel and charging, including fees	$	
Insurance	$	
Registration and recurring vehicle taxes	$	
Scheduled service, tires and known repairs	$	
Parking, tolls and other paid services	$	
Loan payments: principal, interest and fees	$	
Down payment or cash purchase, if buying	$	
Other one-time costs / charging installation	$	
TOTAL CASH PAYMENTS	$	

3 OWNERSHIP COST / SAME 12 MONTHS

Operating expenses $_____ + depreciation $_____ + loan interest / fees $_____

Other applicable costs counted once $_____ = ANNUAL OWNERSHIP COST $_____

Depreciation: start value $_____ - end value $_____. Exclude loan principal and purchase/down payment.
If buying at period start: price after discounts, before trade-in/financing; acquisition taxes and fees once.

REPAIR RESERVE (SAVINGS, OUTSIDE BOTH TOTALS) $_____

Count repairs once when paid. No opportunity cost included. Guide explains depreciation inputs.

Methods: DOE AFDC; EPA; Argonne; CFPB. Planning inputs are yours, not price forecasts.

FULL GUIDE / SOURCES AND CONTEXT

roadfelt.com/articles/car-running-costs