

Car buying guidelines?

Posted by timwat - 05 Nov 2014 18:08

I'm new to the site and considering getting a 944 to do track days and eventually race. Are certain years better for track duty and racing? Any models or features that I should avoid? Thanks, Tim

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Re: Car buying guidelines?

Posted by Grenadiers - 06 Nov 2014 05:58

Go to a track day and look around, ask questions, check the NASA forum for your region for 944 Spec dates, etc. I have a relatively cheap '88 924S in Arizona for example, that's almost Spec ready. Just needs a few safety pieces, but for DE's it's ready. Check the for-sale section.

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Re: Car buying guidelines?

Posted by Brian Evans - 06 Nov 2014 06:07

Welcome to the site, Tim!

If you are thinking about eventually racing 944-Spec the 1983-1988 NA 2.5 liter 8 valve cars are the ones eligible.

The early cars (83-85) seem to be a little more desirable for track cars- they are a little lighter than the later (85.5-88) cars and the suspensions are a little easier to work on. They are typically less expensive to buy than the later car.

88's, though, have a little more stock HP, about 10, and come with a shorter 5th gear which is desirable at nearly all the tracks we race here in the Southeast.

Most racers end up with an early model car with an 88 engine.

Starting out in DE, though, I wouldn't worry too much about the year, just find one that is mechanically sound, has a decent body and is inexpensive. I've noticed a few good candidates on craigslist in Atlanta lately, there is also a 944-Spec racer in NC selling his old 944 DE car.

In addition to new brake fluid and pads and making sure the timing belt is recent, the only specific item I would replace before tracking would be the rod bearings.

These can be a weak point on the engines when they are tracked but are fairly easy to do yourself with a little experience- I'd be glad to help you with it. Also- some racers put a baffle in the pan to increase the life of the bearings.

As far as the other 944 models go, I don't have any first hand experience with the 944S or S2. The engines have a reputation as being a little more fragile than the standard cars and require more expensive/harder to find engine parts.

I do have have experience with the 944 Turbo on track- great power but it was very unreliable in my hands. I switched to an NA car and never regretted it.

What area of Georgia are you in?

EDIT: Grenadier's post reminded me that 87 & 88 924S cars are also eligible for 944-Spec. They are supposed to be a little lighter than 944's with better aero and the 88 version has the higher HP engine with the short fifth.

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Re: Car buying guidelines?

Posted by timwat - 07 Nov 2014 12:28

Thanks for the welcome and for the info. Exactly what I was looking for! I did notice quite a few on craigslist. I'll be looking at a couple and hopefully pick one up in the next week or two. I'm in NW Georgia (Rome).

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Re: Car buying guidelines?

Posted by Brian Evans - 10 Nov 2014 06:18

timwat wrote:

Thanks for the welcome and for the info. Exactly what I was looking for! I did notice quite a few on craigslist. I'll be looking at a couple and hopefully pick one up in the next week or two. I'm in NW Georgia (Rome).

You might want to try Manley Hurley first- he is the racer in NC I mentioned selling his DE car. If memory serves it is an 85, the body is straight, black paint is faded, and it always seemed to be a reliable car. Tracking a car that someone else has already shaken down is nice, too! His # is 336-260-0207.

Are you planning on making the December event at Road Atlanta?

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