

How to fill out a Rhode Island title

Certificate of Title · 7 of 10 boxes are the seller's · rules as of 2026-08-23

This sheet is not the title. It is the checklist to keep beside one. ANY ALTERATIONS OR ERASURES WILL VOID THIS BILL OF SALE The requirement is spread over three statutes rather than printed as a checklist, and it is worth having in one place before the buyer arrives: an assignment and warranty of title to a named transferee, executed at the time of delivery of the vehicle; the mileage entered and the form signed by both seller and buyer with a statement that both parties have viewed the odometer; and the same mileage entered on the owner's title certificate.

Who has to sign

Every owner named on the front	If the face of the certificate names two people, both sign the seller's area. The DMV applies the same rule to its own bill of sale in bold - if two owners, both must print and both must sign.
Print as well as sign	The DMV's description of the block is print and sign your name, and every Rhode Island form that reproduces the odometer disclosure gives the signature and the printed name separate boxes.
The buyer, in the buyer area of the same block	Section 31-23.2-6(b)(1) is explicit that the mileage form shall be signed by both the seller and buyer and contain a statement that both parties have viewed the odometer of the motor vehicle. Watch it happen before the car goes.
Nobody from a bank, unless a lien is printed on the face	A lienholder signs the title off or gives you a letter of lien release to attach to it. Rhode Island does not require a new title once the loan is paid, so an old certificate with a released lien on it is still the certificate you sell on.
No notary	Not on the assignment, not on the bill of sale, not on the immediate-family gift letter. The notary blocks in this state's forms belong to duplicates, affidavits, powers of attorney and gifts to people outside the family.
An attorney-in-fact, only on a notarised Limited Power of Attorney	It expires when the transaction is processed or thirty days from signature, whichever comes first, and it explicitly cannot be used for a title assignment on a vehicle subject to federal odometer disclosure - that needs the secure MVT-10, which is issued to licensed dealers only.

Every box, in the order you meet it

#	WHO	BOX	WHAT GOES IN IT
1	YOU	The buyer area - the transferee's name and address	The first thing in the assignment block. Section 31-3.1-12(a) requires the assignment and warranty of title to be executed to the transferee, so it is a named person and their address, written by you. Watch out: Copy it off the licence they showed you rather than off the message they sent. An assignment with this area blank is an open title: the registration in your name has already expired under section 31-4-1, and nothing on paper records who has the car.
2	YOU	The odometer reading, in whole miles	One figure, and every Rhode Island form that carries this disclosure prints the same instruction beside it: no tenths. Watch out: Miles, not kilometres, and the number that is on the dial today rather than the one printed on the front of the certificate from the last transfer. Section 31-23.2-6(e) requires the face of the new certificate to show the mileage you disclose, so this figure follows the car.
3	YOU	Tick box one - mileage is in excess of its mechanical limits	Tick it only if the odometer has run past its own maximum and started again from zero. The DMV's bill of sale spells out what that means in brackets: the odometer started at zero again. Watch out: This is not the box for an old car with a lot of miles on it. It is a factual claim that the dial has rolled over, and on a five-digit instrument in a car of this age it may well be true - but tick it only if it is.
4	YOU	Tick box two - the reading is not the actual mileage	For a replaced cluster, a broken instrument, or any reading you cannot vouch for. Rhode Island prints the consequence next to the box: WARNING - ODOMETER DISCREPANCY. Watch out: Ticking it marks the record for the life of the car, and leaving it unticked when you know better is worse. Chapter 31-23.2 makes a false statement to a transferee a violation in its own right and gives the buyer a cause of action.
5	YOU	The seller area - print, sign, and date the transfer	Your name printed, your signature, and the date of the transfer. Everyone named on the front of the certificate does all three. Watch out: Section 31-3.1-12(a) fixes the moment: at the time of the delivery of the vehicle. Signing days early and leaving the certificate in a drawer while the buyer thinks about it is a signed assignment with no delivery behind it.
6	BUYER	The buyer signs the buyer area, in front of you	Their signature completes the odometer disclosure, which under section 31-23.2-6(b)(1) has to be signed by both parties with a statement that both have viewed the odometer. Watch out: A certificate with your half done and theirs empty is not a transfer, and you will not get it back once the car has gone. Photograph both sides before you hand it over.

#	WHO	BOX	WHAT GOES IN IT
7	BUYER	The application for a new certificate, underneath	Section 31-3.1-7(c) says the certificate may carry a form for application for a certificate of title by a transferee, and section 31-3.1-12(b) makes it their job to execute it promptly after delivery. Watch out: Nothing here is yours to complete, but check they have not filled it in as the seller by mistake. Two blocks on the back of a certificate both ask for a name and only one of them is yours.
8	DEALER	The dealer's assignment, which is not yours	The statute prints a separate form for assignment and warranty of title by a dealer, used when a licensed dealer buys for resale and passes the car on without a new certificate being issued in between. Watch out: A private seller who runs out of room and continues into the dealer block has not found extra space, they have signed as somebody they are not. When a dealer runs out of blocks the next transfer goes on the MVT-10, which is a controlled form issued only to licensed Rhode Island dealerships.
9	YOU	Hand over the certificate and a bill of sale together	The certificate goes with the car. So does a bill of sale: the DMV lists it as a required document for a private-party sale, separately from the title. Watch out: If the car is model year 2000 or older and Rhode Island never issued a certificate, the bill of sale is not a supporting document, it is the transfer - and the buyer also needs proof of previous ownership in your name, such as the old registration or a stamped paid sales tax form.
10	YOU	Take the plates off and cancel the registration	Online through the DMV's cancellation service in a few minutes, free, with a confirmation email at the end. Then the plates may be destroyed or recycled. Watch out: Do it the same day. The registration expired the moment ownership moved, but the town's excise record and the DMV's insurance verification record do not know that until you tell them, and both of those cost money to argue with afterwards.

Before you write anything on the back of the certificate

- **One attempt, in ink** — Rhode Island's own instruction on the TR-1 is to please use blue or black ink only, and its bill of sale voids itself on an alteration or an erasure. A spoiled certificate is a \$53.50 duplicate, a notary, and a wait.
- **Never leave the buyer area blank** — An open assignment leaves a car in your name that somebody else is driving. The registration has already expired under section 31-4-1, so what you are left with is exposure and no record.
- **Whole miles, no tenths** — Every Rhode Island form that carries the odometer disclosure prints those two words beside the box. The figure follows the car onto the face of the buyer's new certificate.
- **Print the name as well as signing it** — Signature and printed name are separate entries in the block, and the DMV's description of the back of the title is print and sign your name.
- **Write the bill of sale even though the title is the transfer** — The DMV lists a bill of sale among the documents a private-party buyer must bring, and if your car is older than the 2001 line it is the only transfer document that exists.
- **Photograph both faces before it leaves** — It is the only record you will have of the mileage you disclosed and the date you disclosed it on, and Rhode Island gives a seller nothing else to keep.

RHODE ISLAND CERTIFICATE OF TITLE

the front — printed in Cranston, and not one box of it yours

THE ONE THING THAT MAY NOT EXIST AT ALL

BEFORE 1 JANUARY 2024 RHODE ISLAND ISSUED NO CERTIFICATE FOR ANY VEHICLE OF A MODEL YEAR BEFORE 2001.

WHAT s. 31-3.1-7(a) REQUIRES ON THE FACE

THE DATE ISSUED

Item (1) of the statute. The day the Division printed this certificate — not the day you bought the car and not the day you sell it.

NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE OWNER

Item (2). Whoever is printed here signs the back. Two names here means two signatures on the assignment.

THE TITLE NUMBER

Item (4). The number the Research Office in Cranston searches on, and the one a duplicate application quotes.

NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF ANY LIENHOLDERS

IN THE ORDER OF PRIORITY

Item (3). While one is printed here the lender holds the interest, and Rhode Island does not require a fresh certificate once the loan is paid — only that the lienholder signs the title off or issues a letter of lien release to attach to it.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE VEHICLE

Item (5), so far as the data exists: make, model, identifying number, type of body, number of cylinders, whether new or used, and on a new vehicle the date of its first sale for use.

THE MILEAGE DISCLOSED BY THE TRANSFEROR

Not from the title chapter but from s. 31-23.2-6(e)(2): the certificate issued to the new owner shall indicate on its face the mileage required to be disclosed by the transferor. It is the last transfer's figure, not today's.

ANY OTHER DATA THE DIVISION PRESCRIBES

Item (6), the catch-all. It is what the legend panel below is printed under.

LEGEND PANEL

Two legends are named in the statutes themselves. s. 31-3.1-7(b): where the vehicle last came from a state whose law does not require lienholders to be named on a certificate, a distinctive certificate is issued carrying the words "this vehicle may be subject to an undisclosed lien". s. 31-3.1-11(a): a replacement carries "this is a duplicate certificate and may be subject to the rights of a person under the original certificate". If either is printed on yours, the buyer will ask about it.

THE REVERSE — ASSIGNMENT AND WARRANTY OF TITLE

five entries are yours, and s. 31-3.1-7(c) names the block itself

THE OWNER'S BLOCK

1 THE BUYER AREA — NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE TRANSFeree

YOU

s. 31-3.1-12(a): at the time of the delivery of the vehicle, execute an assignment and warranty of title to the transferee in the space provided for it on the certificate. A transferee is a named person, so this area is filled in before the car leaves — never after.

2 THE ODOMETER READING

YOU

WHOLE MILES — "NO TENTHS"

s. 31-23.2-6(b) makes it unlawful to transfer ownership without entering the mileage, signed by both parties with a statement that both have viewed the odometer. Rhode Island states no exemption age of its own, so 49 CFR 580.17 is the only one there is.

3 THE TWO QUALIFYING TICK BOXES

YOU

In the Division's own wording, printed on the TR-2/TR-9 and on its bill of sale: "Mileage is in excess of its mechanical limits" — the odometer started at zero again — and "Odometer reading is NOT the actual mileage. WARNING — ODOMETER DISCREPANCY". There is no exempt box. Box two is item 4 of the walkthrough below.

4 PRINTED NAME AND SIGNATURE OF EVERY OWNER

YOU

The Division's own description of this side is to print and sign your name. Where the front names two owners, both do both. No notary: nothing in s. 31-3.1-12 is sworn.

X _____

5 THE DATE OF TRANSFER

YOU

The date possession changes hands. It is the date the registration expires under s. 31-4-1, the date the buyer's tax clock starts, and the date you write on the cancellation affidavit.

EVERYTHING ELSE ON THE REVERSE

THE BUYER'S SIGNATURE AREA

The other half of the pair the Division names — the buyer area and the seller area. Their signature is what completes the odometer disclosure, because s. 31-23.2-6(b)(1) requires the form to be signed by both the seller and buyer.

X _____

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF TITLE BY A TRANSFeree

s. 31-3.1-7(c) allows the certificate to carry it, and s. 31-3.1-12(b) makes it the buyer's job: promptly after delivery, execute the application in the space provided for it and deliver the certificate and application to the Division. Not yours to complete.

ASSIGNMENT AND WARRANTY OF TITLE BY A DEALER

s. 31-3.1-7(c) and s. 31-3.1-13(a). A licensed dealer who buys for resale executes this block on reselling, showing the transferee and any lienholder. A private seller signing here is signing as somebody they are not — and when a dealer runs out of blocks the next transfer goes on the MVT-10, a controlled form the Division issues only to licensed dealerships.

NAMING A LIENHOLDER, OR RELEASING A SECURITY INTEREST

The last of the four forms in s. 31-3.1-7(c). A buyer financing the purchase has their lender named here; a lender whose loan has been paid signs the release. Both belong to somebody with a security interest, which on a cash sale is nobody.

☐ You write it, in pen ☐ Not yours to fill ☒ Numbered to match the walkthrough below

Block names transcribed from: R.I. Gen. Laws s. 31-3.1-7(a), the six items a certificate must contain · s. 31-3.1-7(c), the four forms printed on it — the owner's assignment and warranty of title, a dealer's, the transferee's application for a certificate, and the naming or release of a security interest · s. 31-3.1-12(a) and (b), the assignment executed to the transferee at the time of delivery and the buyer's application promptly after it · s. 31-23.2-6(b) and (e), the mileage entered on transfer, indicated on the face of the new certificate, with a space for the transferee to disclose it at a future transfer · s. 31-3.1-7(b) and s. 31-3.1-11(a), the undisclosed-lien and duplicate legends · s. 31-3.1-13(a), the dealer's assignment · the Division's own TR-2/TR-9 and Bill of Sale for the odometer wording · and the RI DMV's Surviving Spouse page for the buyer and seller areas. The Division publishes no picture of its own certificate, so no proportion, colour, border engraving, watermark or security printing of the real document is reproduced here — none of it has been seen.



BILL OF SALE

1

DATE OF SALE: 08/14/2026

SALE PRICE: \$ 2,850

SELLER(S) INFORMATION:

2

Lucienne R. Sirois

SELLER(S) NAME (PRINT) - IF TWO (2) OWNERS, BOTH MUST PRINT

SELLER(S) SIGNATURE - IF TWO (2) OWNERS, BOTH MUST SIGN

3

214 Tillinghast Row, Pawtucket, RI 02861

SELLER(S) ADDRESS - STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

VEHICLE INFORMATION:

4

2000

YEAR

Volvo

MAKE

V70

MODEL

Wagon

BODY TYPE

5

CYLINDERS

Sage Green

COLOR

YV1SW61R1Y2487193

VIN NUMBER

BUYER(S) INFORMATION:

Amadeu G. Botelho

BUYER(S) NAME (PRINT) - IF TWO (2) OWNERS, BOTH MUST PRINT

BUYER(S) SIGNATURE - IF TWO (2) OWNERS, BOTH MUST SIGN

39 Seapowet Court, East Providence, RI 02914

BUYER(S) ADDRESS - STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

ODOMETER DISCLOSURE

I state that the odometer now reads 168432 (NO TENTHS) miles and to the best of my knowledge that it reflects the ACTUAL MILEAGE of the vehicle described herein UNLESS one of the following is checked:

- ☐ 1. Mileage is in excess of its mechanical limits. (The odometer started at zero again)
- ☐ 2. Odometer reading is NOT the actual mileage. **WARNING— ODOMETER DISCREPANCY**

ALL FIELDS MUST BE COMPLETED. ANY ALTERATIONS OR ERASURES WILL VOID THIS BILL OF SALE

rev 11-3-2023