

How to fill out a South Carolina title

This sheet is not the title. It is the checklist to keep beside one. ANY ALTERATIONS OR ERASURE VOIDS THE ASSIGNMENT - printed across the head of the block, and meant as written. Section 2 of the manual sets out what a South Carolina title is and what has to happen to it before a new one can be issued, and the specimen certificate in section 5 is the picture below. Every block name on the reverse is transcribed from the SCDMV's own photograph of a completed assignment, published on page 5 of the Dealer Connection, Spring 2026.

Who has to sign

Every owner the face names, if it reads AND	The relationship is printed on the certificate between the two names. AND is joint ownership and both signatures are required; OR is co-ownership and either signature moves the car.
Any one owner, if it reads OR	The SCDMV's own words are that anyone on the title can complete any transaction for that vehicle without the other person's signature.
The buyer, once	On the buyer's rule inside the same block, under the printed line I am aware of the above odometer certification made by the seller(s). It is a federal requirement rather than a South Carolina flourish.
Nobody in front of a notary	There is no acknowledgement block on the document and no South Carolina statute asking for one. If somebody tells you a South Carolina title needs notarising, they are describing a trust deed or an out-of-state power of attorney.
An attorney-in-fact, with paper in the envelope	The SCDMV publishes no ordinary power of attorney form. Its rule is that the document names the individual, the attorney-in-fact and the vehicle by VIN, year, make and model, and carries the individual's signature and a witness signature.
A personal representative, signing as one	The SCDMV's instruction where the owner has died is to sign the back of the title as the seller in your name with (PR) beside it, with the Probate Court's certificate of appointment attached.
Not a dealer, in the first block	The second and third assignment blocks carry a Dealer/Wholesaler Auction License Number line. A private seller who uses one has filled in the wrong block on the right document.

Every box, in the order you meet it

#	WHO	BOX	WHAT GOES IN IT
1	YOU	Before the pen: read the face	The owner names and the conjunction between them, the VEHICLE BRAND(S) block, and whether the 1ST LIEN RELEASED line is signed and dated. Watch out: All three can stop the sale after the money has changed hands. A lien that was paid in 2019 but never released on the face is still a lien as far as the SCDMV is concerned, and it is the lender who has to sign it off, not you.
2	YOU	The undersigned hereby certifies that title to the vehicle described herein has been transferred on this ___ day of ___ year ___	The day, month and year of the handover, written into the printed sentence that opens the assignment block. Watch out: Write the date the keys moved, not the date the deposit cleared. This date and the date of sale in the panel on the right are read against each other, and against the 45-day clock the buyer is now on.
3	YOU	Name, Street, City, State, Zip Code	The buyer's full legal name and complete address on the rules under the transfer sentence, copied off their identification rather than off a text message. Watch out: Never hand the certificate over with these blank. An assignment with nobody named in it is an open title, and South Carolina's way of correcting one is a TEA-1 signed by whoever made the mistake - which means finding them again.
4	YOU	and is subject to the following lien: Name of Lienholder, Address, Date of Lien	Left empty on a car you own outright. Filled in only where the buyer is borrowing from you - South Carolina calls that seller-financing, and the SCDMV's instruction is that you complete Section 2 of the buyer's Form 400 and become the lienholder. Watch out: If you do finance the buyer, the new certificate is posted to you rather than to them, and the buyer cannot get a clear title until you sign the lien off. Do not fill this line in for a lender who has already been paid.
5	YOU	Odometer Reading (no tenths)	The reading off the dash on the day of the handover, in whole miles, in the box on the left of the odometer certification. Watch out: The SCDMV's own training adds a rule that is not printed anywhere on the form: the odometer can never decrease. A figure lower than the one already on the record is not accepted as a correction, it is recorded as a discrepancy.
6	YOU	STOP! DO NOT check one of the following unless it applies	Two statements and no third: the mileage stated is in excess of its mechanical limits, and the odometer reading is not the actual mileage, WARNING: ODOMETER DISCREPANCY. Watch out: There is no exempt box on the certificate. If the car is old enough to be exempt, the reading line stays empty and EXEMPT is ticked on the Form 400 instead - ticking statement 2 to mean exempt brands the car permanently.

#	WHO	BOX	WHAT GOES IN IT
7	YOU	Date of Sale, Sales Price, Less Trade-In, Taxable Total	The small panel on the right of the block: the day it changed hands, what was paid, anything taken in part exchange, and the figure the two produce. Watch out: This is the number the Infrastructure Maintenance Fee is worked from, and on a private sale the SCDMV is not bound by it - the Code lets the Department use a national used-value guide instead. Writing a low figure to help the buyer can simply be overridden, and it is a false statement on a document you signed.
8	YOU	Signature of Seller(s), Hand Print Name(s) of Seller(s), Address	Signed in dark ink in the name the face of the certificate prints, then the same name in block capitals underneath, then your own address on the line below. Watch out: Check the conjunction on the face before either of you touches a pen. AND between two owners means both signatures on this rule; a single signature on an AND title is a rejection, and the fix is not another signature squeezed in beside it.
9	BUYER	I am aware of the above odometer certification made by the seller(s)	The buyer's signature and hand-printed name, on the left-hand rules inside the same block, acknowledging the reading you have just certified. Watch out: Hand them the pen at the kerb rather than posting the certificate on. Federal law entitles them to a copy of the disclosure, and photographing the completed reverse takes five seconds and is the whole of your evidence later.
10	DEALER	The two blocks underneath belong to dealers	ASSIGNMENTS BY DEALER/WHOLESALER/AUCTION, twice, each repeating the same sentence with a Dealer/Wholesaler Auction License Number line added. Watch out: Start in the second block by mistake and you have used a dealer's space. The band at the foot - no additional re-assignment permitted, last assignee must retitle before disposal - is the certificate saying the chain ends here.
11	BUYER	The buyer's Form 400 and their bill of sale	The application that goes with the certificate, plus a signed bill of sale showing the total sale price less any trade-in. The SCDMV asks for one on all title transactions. Watch out: If the assignment on your certificate has no sales-price line - titles issued before 19 June 1989 do not - then the bill of sale is not optional paperwork, it is the only document carrying the price and the mileage.
12	BUYER	The county, before the plate	A property tax bill generated by their county auditor and paid to their county treasurer, with the receipt in their own name. Watch out: This is the step that sends a South Carolina buyer home without a tag. The SCDMV can title the car without it; it cannot register the car without it, because a registration may not be issued until the ad valorem tax is paid.
13	YOU	And the tag comes off	Nothing to do with the certificate. The plate stays with you, the registration card goes back with it, and the Code gives you thirty days to move it or return it. Watch out: Returning it with a Form 452 is the only step in a South Carolina sale that pays you: the county auditor orders a prorated refund of the property tax for the complete months left in the tax year.

Six habits that keep a South Carolina assignment out of the bin

- **Dark ink, and the certificate says so itself** — ASSIGNMENT(S) MUST BE MADE IN DARK INK is printed across the top of the block. Pencil, gel that beads on the security tint and anything pale enough to scan badly are all the same problem - the branch works from a scan.
- **No white-out, no correction tape, no writing over** — Alterations or erasure void the assignment, and the SCDMV's dealer guidance is blunter still: you can modify any field on documents exempt the VIN and the Odometer. Those two are not correctable at all.
- **A single line strikethrough, if it is a field you may correct** — The SCDMV's own instruction to dealers is to use a single line strikethrough rather than write over or scribble. It does not apply to the VIN or the odometer, and it does not apply to a signature.
- **Fill in the buyer before the certificate leaves your hand** — The name and address go on at the kerb. An assignment signed with the transferee blank is the open title, and South Carolina's route back is a TEA-1 signed by the person who made the error.
- **Whole miles, no tenths, no words** — The box is labelled no tenths. Write digits. Exempt is not a word that goes in it - there is nowhere on the certificate to write it and Form 400 has the box instead.
- **Scan it, do not photograph it** — The SCDMV rejects paperwork on quality: you cannot take pictures of documents on your phone, your documents must be scanned with a scanner. Your own photograph is for your records; anything going to Blythewood should come off a scanner.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA				
CERTIFICATE OF TITLE				
OF A VEHICLE				
VEHICLE ID NUMBER IN4BL2AP9CN530634	YEAR 2012	MAKE NISS	MODEL ALTIMA	NEW/USED USED
BODY STYLE SD	DATE 9/27/2023	ODOMETER 91010	WEIGHT 3357	TITLE NUMBER 770760450553002
VEHICLE BRAND(S) ACTUAL MILEAGE RETURNED TO MANUFACTURER UNDER LEMON LAW OR OTHER PROCEEDING				
FULL NAME OF OWNER(S) TEST, CUSTOMER 10311 WILSON BLVD BLYTHEWOOD, SC 29016-9018		CUSTOMER NUMBER: 35514087		
FIRST LIENHOLDER FIRST CREDIT 10311 WILSON BLVD BLYTHEWOOD, SC 29016-9018 DATE OF LIEN: 8/1/2022				
		1ST LIEN RELEASED _____ (DATE)		
		BY _____ (AUTHORIZED AGENT)		
THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES HEREBY CERTIFIES THAT THE PERSON HEREIN IS REGISTERED BY THIS DEPARTMENT AS THE LAWFUL OWNER OF THE VEHICLE DESCRIBED SUBJECT TO THE LIENS, IF ANY, HEREIN SET FORTH. KEVIN A. SHWEDO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HENRY MCMASTER GOVERNOR				
KEEP IN A SAFE PLACE. ANY ALTERATION OR ERASURE VOIDS THIS TITLE.				

41576756

ASSIGNMENTS BY DEALER/WHOLESALER/AUCTION

the rest of the reverse, under the block you signed — two more assignments and a band across the foot, none of it a private seller's

10 Second assignment

THE UNDERSIGNED HEREBY CERTIFIES THAT TITLE TO THE VEHICLE DESCRIBED HEREIN HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED ON THIS ____ DAY OF ____ YEAR ____ TO: · NAME · STREET · CITY · STATE · ZIP CODE · NAME OF LIENHOLDER · ADDRESS · DATE OF LIEN · ODOMETER READING (NO TENTHS) · DEALER/WHOLESALER AUCTION LICENSE NUMBER

Word for word the block above it, with one line added: a dealer, wholesaler or auction licence number. That line is the whole difference, and it is why a private seller who starts here has used somebody else's space on the right document. The way out is a TEA-1, which voids the assignment on the seller's signature alone.

Third assignment

THE SAME BLOCK AGAIN, WITH ITS OWN DEALER/WHOLESALER AUCTION LICENSE NUMBER LINE

South Carolina gives a certificate three assignments in total: yours, and two for the trade. A car that changes hands more often than that has to be retitled before it moves again, which is what the band below is saying.

NO ADDITIONAL RE-ASSIGNMENT PERMITTED — LAST ASSIGNEE MUST RETITLE BEFORE DISPOSAL

Printed across the foot of the reverse, in capitals. It is addressed to the trade rather than to you, and it is the certificate telling a dealer the chain has run out.

☐ You write it, in dark ink

☐ Not yours to fill

Drawn 23 August 2026. Every printed word above is transcribed from the one picture the South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles has published of the reverse of its own certificate — page 5 of the Dealer Connection, Spring 2026 — which is a scan of a genuine issued title carrying two dealerships' names, three real signatures and no redaction, and which is reproduced nowhere on this site. The department publishes no blank or void specimen of this side: checked against all 274 pages of dmvs.sc.gov, the 245 PDFs they link, the 2025 dealer titling class and all 215 form codes on the forms index. None of the certificate's typography, colour, proportion or security printing is reproduced here. The front of the certificate, higher up this page, is the department's own specimen and is a photograph rather than a drawing.

DIAGRAM — not a copy of a South Carolina certificate of title

ASSIGNMENT OF A VEHICLE

the first of three identical blocks on the reverse, and the only one a private seller uses — shown completed for one sale, Delphine R. Ravenel of Summerville to Curtis N. Ashmore of Anderson, 12 September 2026

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Federal and State law requires that you state the mileage in connection with the transfer of ownership. Failure to complete or providing a false statement may result in fines and/or imprisonment.

NOTICE: ANY ALTERATIONS OR ERASURE VOIDS THE ASSIGNMENT · ASSIGNMENT(S) MUST BE MADE IN DARK INK

2 The undersigned hereby certifies that title to the vehicle described herein has been transferred on this ____ day of ____ year ____ to: YOU

12th day of September, year 2026

The opening sentence of the block, with the date written into it in three pieces. This is the date the keys moved, and it starts the buyer's forty-five days.

3 Name · Street · City · State · Zip Code YOU

... AND IS SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING LIEN

Curtis N. Ashmore · 3117 Ridgeway Church Rd · Anderson · SC · 29625

Five cells across one rule, read off the buyer's identification. Delivered blank this is an open title, and South Carolina's way back is a TEA-1 signed by whoever made the error.

4 Name of Lienholder · Address · Date of Lien YOU

Empty on a car you own outright. Filled in only where you are financing the buyer yourself, in which case the new certificate is posted to you and the buyer cannot clear it until you sign the release on the front.

5 Odometer Reading (no tenths) YOU

I CERTIFY TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE THAT THE ODOMETER READING IS THE ACTUAL MILEAGE OF THE VEHICLE UNLESS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS IS CHECKED

84,610

In whole miles, off the dash on the day. The SCDMV's own rule is that the odometer can never decrease.

7 Date of Sale · Sales Price \$ · Less Trade-In · Taxable Total \$ YOU

09/12/2026 · \$19,400.00 · — · \$19,400.00

The panel down the right-hand edge of the block, and the one that costs money: the Infrastructure Maintenance Fee is worked from it, at five per cent capped at \$500. On a private sale the Code lets the SCDMV use a national used-value guide instead of your figure.

6 STOP! DO NOT check one of the following unless it applies. YOU

□ 1. THE MILEAGE STATED IS IN EXCESS OF ITS MECHANICAL LIMITS. □ 2. THE ODOMETER READING IS NOT THE ACTUAL MILEAGE. WARNING: ODOMETER DISCREPANCY

both boxes left empty — which is the certification, not an omission

Two statements and no third. There is no exempt box on a South Carolina certificate: an exempt vehicle leaves the reading line blank and EXEMPT is ticked on the Form 400 instead.

9 I am aware of the above odometer certification made by the seller(s) YOU

SIGNATURE(S) OF BUYER(S) · HAND PRINT NAME OF BUYER(S)

Curtis N. Ashmore

The buyer's half of the same block, signed at the kerb. It is a federal requirement rather than a South Carolina flourish.

8 Signature of Seller(s) YOU

HAND PRINT NAME(S) OF SELLER(S) · ADDRESS

Delphine R. Ravenel

Signed, then printed, then your own address underneath. Where the front of the certificate joins two owners with AND, both of them sign here. There is no notary block, on this document or anywhere in South Carolina's title law.

☐ You write it, in dark ink

☐ Not yours to fill

☒ Numbered to match the steps on this page

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Every rule here is transcribed from South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles, Dealer and Wholesaler Manual and the South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles's own pages. Plain-language help with a form, not legal advice — where our wording and the agency's differ, theirs governs.