

How to fill out a Washington title

sellmycarhub.com

Washington Certificate of Ownership · 8 of 9 boxes are the seller's · rules as of 2026-08-23

/forms/washington/certificate-of-title/

This sheet is not the title. It is the checklist to keep beside one. Any alteration or erasure voids the certificate of ownership. There is no correcting a Washington title - there is only replacing it. DOL's order is fixed and it is short: locate the title, complete a bill of sale, collect payment and sign the title over, take the plates off, take your belongings out, file the Report of Sale, then drop the car from your License eXpress account.

Who has to sign

You, in the release of interest section	Your signature, and every other registered owner's. No notary, no witness, no appointment - the exemption is written into rule 308-56A-265 for a release given on the certificate itself.
You again, on the odometer disclosure	Only on a model year 2011 or newer vehicle, and only in whole miles. On anything 2010 or older the section stays blank.
Every registered owner, not just one	Two names on the face means two signatures. DOL's instruction to the buyer is to make sure it is signed by all owners of the vehicle before they take it.
The lienholder, if one is named	A secured party assigns the certificate to you or straight to your buyer once the loan is clear. RCW 46.12.675(5) gives it those two routes and no third.
The buyer, on form 420-001 rather than on the title	Washington puts the buyer's signature on the application, not on the certificate, and that one has to be notarised or certified.
Nobody, in pencil	The certificate is the document of record for eleven statutory facts. Anything erased on it voids it and sends both of you back for a duplicate.

Every box, in the order you meet it

#	WHO	BOX	WHAT GOES IN IT
0	YOU	Before any box: find the certificate	Washington will not let the sale proceed on a promise. DOL's first step is to locate the title, and if it cannot be found the replacement takes four to eight weeks by post. Watch out: A quick title office prints one at the counter for \$89.50 instead. Look at the map before you agree a completion date, because quick title offices are a subset of licensing offices, not all of them.
1	YOU	The release of interest section	Printed on the certificate itself. Sign it, and have every other registered owner sign it too. Watch out: This is the signature that needs nobody watching. Sign the same words on form 420-050 instead and it must be notarised or certified - the exemption belongs to the certificate, not to the sentence.
2	YOU	The odometer disclosure section	Whole miles, on the face of the certificate, for any vehicle of model year 2011 or newer. Watch out: If the section is already full or the certificate is not to hand, the separate odometer statement is one of the few things DOL refuses to publish - it is printed for you in the office on tamper-proof paper.
3	YOU	The buyer's name and address	Filled in before the certificate changes hands, so that what leaves your kitchen table is not an open title. Watch out: An open certificate is how a car ends up abandoned with your name still on the record. The report of sale alone will not save you there - RCW 46.12.650(4)(b) says it is not proof of a completed transfer where nothing shows the buyer accepted the vehicle.
4	YOU	The bill of sale, form 420-065	Both of you sign it. DOL's instruction is that you need one unless the sale price and date are included on the title. Watch out: Keep your copy. DOL does not hold one for you: if you lose it, the department's own advice is to file a public records request.
5	YOU	Take the plates off	Before the buyer drives away, not after. They cannot use them and they will be issued new ones. Watch out: Moving them onto another vehicle of yours costs \$10 and has to be like for like. A car plate does not go on a truck.
6	YOU	File the Report of Sale, form 420-062	Plate number, date of sale, sale price, the buyer's name and address, and the VIN. Online, in person, or by post. Watch out: Five business days, counted on receipt. Post it and there is no confirmation and no receipt, and DOL says processing takes another 7 to 10 business days after it arrives.
7	BUYER	The buyer's Vehicle Title Application	Form 420-001, signed in front of a notary or a licensing agent, lodged within 15 days of delivery. Watch out: Their clock is not yours and it is longer. Do not wait for them to finish before you file your own form - a report of sale filed on time protects you whether or not they ever apply.
8	YOU	Drop the car from License eXpress	The last step on DOL's own list. Open the vehicle in your account and use the remove from list button under I Want To. Watch out: Do it after the transfer shows as complete, not before. Removing it from a list is housekeeping - it is not a notice to the department and it does not replace the Report of Sale.

Six things to settle before the certificate leaves your kitchen table

- **Nothing erased, ever** — Alteration or erasure voids the certificate outright. There is no version of a corrected Washington title that a licensing office will take.
- **Fill the buyer's name in yourself** — Handing over a signed certificate with the transferee blank is the one mistake that outlives the sale.
- **Whole miles, and only if it is a 2011 or newer** — Under that year the odometer section stays empty, and putting a number in it invents a disclosure the federal rule did not ask for.
- **Do not sign the buyer's application** — Form 420-001 is theirs, it is notarised, and your signature has no place on it.
- **Keep a copy of everything before it leaves** — DOL keeps no copy of your bill of sale, and the only way to get one back afterwards is a public records request.
- **Read the perjury line** — Almost every DOL vehicle form carries the same declaration under penalty of perjury under the law of Washington, and a knowingly false statement is a felony carrying up to \$5,000 or ten years.

DIAGRAM — not a copy of a Washington Certificate of Ownership

sellmycarhub.com

WASHINGTON CERTIFICATE OF OWNERSHIP

the face — eleven things the statute makes the department print, and one blank space

RCW 46.12.540(2) SETS OUT WHAT EACH CERTIFICATE MUST CONTAIN. IT LISTS CONTENTS AND NOT POSITIONS, SO THE ORDER BELOW IS THE ORDER A SELLER MEETS THEM RATHER THAN THE ARRANGEMENT ON THE PAPER.

DATE OF APPLICATION		BRAND ACROSS THE FRONT		DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE AND SEAL	
1	CERTIFICATE OF TITLE NUMBER The number you copy onto the Report of Sale. There is nowhere else to get it once the certificate has left your hands.	2	VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER Seventeen characters on a modern vehicle. Everything else you file is matched against this.		
3	REGISTERED OWNER — NAME AND ADDRESS As the department holds them. This is the name that has to appear in the release of interest, and a name changed since the certificate was issued needs a Certificate of Fact to explain it.	4	LEGAL OWNER — NAME AND ADDRESS A lender, where there is one. Where the lender holds the record electronically there is no paper certificate at all until the lien is released and the department prints one.		
5	MILEAGE READING Printed by the department from the odometer disclosure that came in with the last application, where one was required.	MILEAGE NOTATION ACTUAL · NOT ACTUAL · EXCEEDS MECHANICAL LIMITS One of three, and the statute makes the department print it. It follows the vehicle from then on.			
6	EVER REGISTERED AND OPERATED AS AN EXEMPT VEHICLE OR TAXICAB A yes-or-no fact the statute requires on the face of every certificate. Alongside it sits the other brand the statute names: a mark shown conspicuously across the front where the vehicle has been rebuilt after becoming a salvage vehicle.				
7	A BLANK SPACE FOR THE SIGNATURE OF THE REGISTERED OWNER Paragraph (g) of the statute, and the only thing on the face of a Washington certificate that is yours. This is where the release of interest is made, and a signature made here needs no notary — the exemption in WAC 308-56A-265(3)(a) belongs to the certificate the department issued and to nothing else. X _____				YOU

ANY ALTERATION OR ERASURE VOIDS THE CERTIFICATE OF OWNERSHIP UNLESS DOCUMENTATION SATISFACTORY TO THE DEPARTMENT IS SUBMITTED WITH IT.

THE TRANSFER SECTIONS

the release of interest, the odometer line, and what the buyer does not sign here

AN OWNER RELEASING INTEREST IN A VEHICLE SHALL SIGN THE RELEASE OF INTEREST SECTION PROVIDED ON THE CERTIFICATE OF TITLE, GIVE THE CERTIFICATE TO THE PERSON GAINING THE INTEREST, GIVE THEM AN ODOMETER DISCLOSURE STATEMENT IF ONE IS REQUIRED, AND REPORT THE VEHICLE SOLD.

8 ODOMETER DISCLOSURE SECTION MODEL YEAR 2011 AND NEWER — WHOLE MILES, NO TENTHS On a 2010 or older vehicle this stays empty: the federal exemption at 49 CFR 580.17 has already run. On a 2011 or newer one the reading goes here, and once it is written it cannot be tidied, because tidying it is an alteration and an alteration voids the certificate. Where the section is already full or the certificate is not to hand, the separate statement is one of the very few DOL forms you cannot download — it is printed for you in the office on tamper-proof paper.		YOU
RELEASE OF INTEREST — EVERY REGISTERED OWNER SIGNS Two names on the face means two signatures. This is the section RCW 46.12.650(1)(a) names, and it is the one signature in the whole Washington transaction that nobody has to watch you make. X _____	SECURED PARTY — ASSIGNMENT ON SETTLEMENT A lender assigns the certificate either back to you or straight to the person acquiring the vehicle, once the security agreement is met. Those are the only two routes RCW 46.12.675(5) allows, and there is a hundred dollar liability attached to failing to take one of them within ten days of a proper demand. X _____	
THE NEW OWNER'S DETAILS Written in before the certificate changes hands, so what leaves your kitchen table is not an open title. The buyer does not sign the certificate: Washington puts the purchaser's signature on the Vehicle Title Application, form 420-001, and it is that signature — not yours — that has to be notarised or certified.		

You write it, in pen Not yours to fill Where each block sits on the certificate itself

Block names and printed wording transcribed from RCW 46.12.540(2), RCW 46.12.650(1), RCW 46.12.675(5), WAC 308-56A-215(2), WAC 308-56A-265(3)(a) and the Department of Licensing's Buy and register a vehicle page · the statute lists what a certificate must contain and not where any of it is printed, so this is a reading order and not a reproduction of the layout · DOL publishes no specimen of its certificate of ownership, so none of its colour, proportion or security printing is reproduced here



Vehicle Report of Sale

Use this form to notify Department of Licensing (DOL) that you have sold, traded, or given up ownership of a car, truck, motorcycle, trailer, or other registered vehicle.

Seller

To release your interest in the vehicle:

1. Sign the Vehicle Certificate of Title and give it to the buyer.
2. File a Report of Sale **within 5 business days of the sale** with DOL to document the sale.

Filing options (see dol.wa.gov for fee information):

- Online at dol.wa.gov or use your [License express account](#)
- In person or mail this form to any vehicle licensing office (**include Report of Sale fees with this form**)

Buyer

1. Apply for a new registration/title **within 15 calendar days** of purchasing the vehicle to avoid paying a penalty.
2. Take or mail the signed Certificate of Title and completed [Vehicle Title Application](#) (TD-420-001) to any vehicle licensing office and pay the required fees and taxes.

Vehicle information

1	Plate/Decal/Metal tag # BKT4192	Vehicle identification number (VIN) 2T3RFREV5FW184726	Model year 2015	Make Toyota	Model RAV4	2
4	Certificate of title number 2846019375	Date vehicle sold 08/12/2026	Sale price (enter 0 if gift or inheritance) \$16,750.00		Today's date 08/18/2026	5

Seller and buyer information

8	Seller name <i>Rosalind T. Vandermeer</i>		
	Address <i>4118 N Ruby St</i>		
	City <i>Spokane</i>	State <i>WA</i>	ZIP code <i>99207</i>
9	Buyer name <i>Tobias K. Lindqvist</i>		Driver license number (if available) <i>LINDQTK291RJ</i>
	Address <i>2207 Harborview Ave</i>		
	City <i>Bremerton</i>	State <i>WA</i>	ZIP code <i>98337</i>

A person who files a vehicle report of sale without the knowledge of the transferee shall be guilty of fraudulent filing and punished under state law. RCW 9.45.270

TD-420-062 (R/7/21)VWA