

How to fill out a Wisconsin title

This sheet is not the title. It is the checklist to keep beside one. Any alteration, correction fluid, or erasure voids this title. It is printed down the certificate's own border, so nobody can say they were not told. The department's order is fixed and short: sign as the selling owner, fill in the odometer statement, complete the brand disclosure if it applies, fill in the selling price, fill in the buyer's name and address, hand over a lien release if there is a lien, take the plates off, then file the seller notification.

Who has to sign

You, as the selling owner	In the assignment block on the back. No notary, no witness, no appointment - Wisconsin asks for a signature and nothing more.
Every owner, if the front says "and"	Two names joined by and means both signatures. Joined by or, any one of you may sign alone. Read which word is on your own certificate before you set a date.
You again, on the odometer statement	Only for a model year 2011 or newer, in whole miles, with actual, not actual, or in excess of mechanical limits marked beside it.
The buyer, on the same odometer statement	Wisconsin's disclosure is not one-sided: s. 342.155(1)(b) requires the transferee to print their name on the mileage disclosure statement and sign it, and no one person may sign as both transferor and transferee.
Your lender, on a separate lien release	Not on the title. A Wisconsin lien release is a document from the lien holder that the buyer hands in alongside the certificate.
Nobody, over the top of a mistake	There is no correcting a Wisconsin certificate. A wrong entry is a Statement of Intent or a replacement title, never a crossing-out.

Every box, in the order you meet it

#	WHO	BOX	WHAT GOES IN IT
0	YOU	Before any box: check who holds the title	Wisconsin has posted titles to lenders rather than owners since 30 July 2012. If a loan was listed, what you have at home is a Confirmation of Ownership and not a certificate. Watch out: You cannot apply for a replacement of a title the lender holds - the MV2119 says owners are not eligible until the loan is cleared. Ring the lender before you advertise, not after somebody has agreed a price.
1	YOU	Signature of the selling owner	In the assignment block on the top back of the certificate. If the front joins two names with "and", both of you sign; if it joins them with "or", either of you may. Watch out: No notary and no witness. Wisconsin asks for the signature itself, and s. 342.15(5) makes failing to execute the assignment worth a forfeiture of up to \$500.
2	YOU	The odometer mileage statement	Whole miles, on a model year 2011 or newer, with actual, not actual, or in excess of mechanical limits marked beside the number. Watch out: In excess of mechanical limits means the dial rolled from 99,999 to zero, not that the car has done a lot of miles. Marking it because a number looks high is a false statement on a disclosure that carries a Class H felony for intent to defraud.
3	BUYER	The buyer prints and signs on the same statement	Wisconsin's mileage disclosure needs both of you. s. 342.155(1)(b) requires the transferee to print their name on the statement, sign it and return a copy to you. Watch out: One person may not sign as both transferor and transferee in the same transaction. If the buyer is not there in person, the disclosure is not finished, whatever else has been signed.
4	YOU	The brand disclosure	Four questions about your own years of ownership - taxi or public transport, salvage, flood damage over 70% of value, police use - answered on the title itself. Watch out: This is the \$5,000 one. s. 342.15(5m) sets a forfeiture of up to \$1,000 for getting it wrong and a fine of up to \$5,000 for doing it with intent to defraud.
5	YOU	The selling price	What you were actually paid, written on the title, because it is the figure the buyer's 5% sales tax is worked from. Watch out: WisDOT's own warning is that the Department of Revenue checks titles and investigates suspiciously low sale prices. A favour to the buyer here is a crime under the MV1's own words, and the MV1 prints them beside the box.
6	YOU	The purchaser's name and address	Filled in by you, before the certificate leaves your hand, so that what you hand over is not an open title. Watch out: The certificate's own instruction is to deliver the title to the purchaser with the vehicle - which means completed. An assignment with the buyer's block blank is the version that comes back to you as a parking ticket.
7	LENDER	The lien release, if a lien holder is printed on the front	A separate document from your lender. Wisconsin does not release a lien by signature on the certificate; the buyer hands the release in with the title. Watch out: If you cannot remember who the lender was, WisDOT runs a lien holder search on the vehicle record. Do it before the sale - a buyer at a counter with a title and no release is sent home.

#	WHO	BOX	WHAT GOES IN IT
8	YOU	Take the plates off the car	Before it is driven away. On an auto or light truck the department's instruction is never to leave them on, and there is no refund for the time left on them. Watch out: If they went with the car anyway, the MV2514 has a box that says so, and ticking it gets the vehicle notated as sold in DMV records - which the seller notification does not.
9	YOU	File the seller notification within thirty days	Online at sellernotify.wi.gov: the VIN, who bought it, the price and the date. Required by s. 342.41 for every individual-to-individual sale, junk vehicles included. Watch out: Save the confirmation, because that confirmation is all you get. WisDOT's own sentence is that it will not be noted on the vehicle record - the record changes when the buyer titles the car, not when you file.

Six rules for the pen, on a document that voids itself when corrected

- **Blue or black, and nothing erasable** — Correction fluid and erasure void a Wisconsin title outright, and it is printed on the certificate's own border. A pencil, a gel pen that lifts, a hopeful scribble - all of them turn a \$214.50 transfer into a \$20 replacement and a delay.
- **Read whether your title says AND or OR** — It decides whether you need one signature or two, and it is printed on the front where the owners are named. Finding out on the day is how a completion slips a fortnight.
- **Write the buyer's name and address in yourself** — An open certificate is the one mistake that outlives the sale. The department's instruction on the face of the title is to deliver it to the purchaser completed.
- **Do not touch the odometer boxes on a 2010 or older** — Exempt means the line stays empty. Writing a reading into a box the rule does not ask for invents a disclosure and gives a counter a reason to look harder at the rest.
- **Photograph the completed back before you hand it over** — WisDOT's own suggestion, printed on the title: retain a copy with the purchaser's information and signature as proof of sale. Nothing else in this state gives you a receipt.
- **Take the plates off in the driveway** — Not tomorrow, not after they have driven home. They are yours, they are worth nothing to the buyer, and they are the fastest route to somebody else's parking ticket.

WisDOT SPECIMEN - Wisconsin Certificate of Title, front (title-sample.pdf, published by WisDOT)

MAILING LABEL ONLY

WISCONSIN CERTIFICATE OF TITLE

Vehicle Identification Number: **1GGEC19W8VE180255** Year: **1997** Make: **CHEVROLET**

Title Number 130789987001-3	Issue Date 03/19/2013	Chassis Type AUTO	Odometer Reading	Odometer Status EXEMPT	Odometer Date
Product Number 12812130784	Body Style 4DR SEDAN	Color BLACK	Fleet No.		

Titled Owner(s)
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
4802 SHEBOYGAN AVE
MADISON, WI 53705

The person, firm or corporation named on this Title is the lawful owner of the vehicle described, subject to any Security Interest (liens) shown. The order in which the Lien Holders appear on this Title does not necessarily represent their priority. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation will not be responsible for false or fraudulent odometer statements made in the assignment of the Certificate of Title or for errors in reporting mileage, brand disclosures or the history of the vehicle. The department has no actual knowledge about the history of the vehicle and makes no warranty that the title brands or mileage disclosures on prior titles have been carried forward onto this document.

Lien Holder(s) **NONE.**

Additional Vehicle Detail

SELLER: When the vehicle is sold, complete the ASSIGNMENT OF CERTIFICATE OF TITLE on the top back of this title and deliver the title to the purchaser with the vehicle. You may wish to retain a copy of this title with the purchaser's information and signature as proof of sale for your records.

PURCHASER: Apply for a new title with the Wisconsin Division of Motor Vehicles immediately. To legally operate this vehicle, you are required to register it with the Division of Motor Vehicles.

MAIL ADDRESS:
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
PO Box 7849, Madison, WI 53707-7949

QUESTIONS:
Contact the Division of Motor Vehicles at:
414-266-1000, 608-266-1466
www.dot.wisconsin.gov

11-1-0878228

KEEP IN SAFE PLACE **DO NOT KEEP IN VEHICLE**

Vertical text on left: This document void without watermark - Hold to light to view
Vertical text on right: Any alteration, correction fluid, or erasure voids this title

WISCONSIN CERTIFICATE OF TITLE

the top back — the half a private seller fills in

ASSIGNMENT OF CERTIFICATE OF TITLE

The name the front of the certificate gives this block, in the department's own sentence: "SELLER: When the vehicle is sold, complete the ASSIGNMENT OF CERTIFICATE OF TITLE on the top back of this title and deliver the title to the purchaser with the vehicle."

6 PURCHASER NAME AND ADDRESS

Written in by you before the certificate changes hands, so that what leaves your kitchen table is not an open title. MV2489 calls this the purchaser area, and exists because sellers put their own names in it.

YOU

5 SELLING PRICE

What you were actually paid. The Department of Revenue reads it, and the MV1 prints its own warning beside the box: it is a crime to understate the purchase price.

YOU

2 ODOMETER MILEAGE STATEMENT

READING (NO TENTHS) ☐ ACTUAL ☐ NOT ACTUAL ☐ IN EXCESS OF MECHANICAL LIMITS

Required on a model year 2011 or newer under Trans 154.05, in whole miles, with one of the three notations marked. WisDOT defines all three on its Selling a vehicle page, and its eMV Public page puts the disclosure here: the seller is required to write the odometer reading from the date of sale on the back of the title.

YOU

3 PURCHASER PRINTED NAME AND SIGNATURE

On the same mileage statement, s. 342.155(1)(b) makes the transferee print their name, sign, and return a copy to you — and forbids one person signing as both.

X _____

4 BRAND DISCLOSURE

Taxi or public transport, salvage, flood damage, police use — four questions about your own years of ownership. Up to \$5,000 for getting it wrong with intent to defraud.

YOU

1 SIGNATURE OF SELLING OWNER OR OWNERS, AND DATE

The signature that sells the car. No notary, no witness. If the front joins two owners with "and", both sign; joined with "or", either may. WisDOT's instruction is to sign and date the title in the area for the signature of the selling owner or owners, and the date it carries is the date of sale — which your thirty-day notification counts from.

X _____

YOU

BELOW THE ASSIGNMENT — NONE OF IT YOURS

LIEN AREA

Where a lender being recorded is written in. MV2489's third tick box is for a seller who signed here by mistake: "I do not wish to be a lien holder of the vehicle."

DEALER REASSIGNMENTS

EACH WITH ITS OWN ODOMETER STATEMENT

Trans 154.02(2): a conforming title carries the odometer disclosure language for each reassignment. A private seller uses the assignment above and none of these.

AUCTION / SALVAGE POOL NOTATION

Trans 154.06(2): an auction dealer or salvage pool prints its business name, licence number and date of sale here, or in the left margin if there is no space for it.

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

Drawn because WisDOT publishes a specimen of the front of its certificate and none of the back - block names transcribed from the front specimen's own SELLER paragraph, Wis. Stat. s. 342.15(1)(a) and s. 342.155(1)(b), Wis. Admin. Code s. Trans 154.02, s. Trans 154.03 and s. Trans 154.06, WisDOT's Selling a vehicle and eMV Public pages, and the four tick boxes of form MV2489 - no colour, proportion, guilloche or security printing of the real certificate is reproduced, and the layout here is illustrative rather than to scale

WisDOT SPECIMEN - the SELLER and PURCHASER paragraphs at the foot of the front

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Every rule here is transcribed from WisDOT, Selling a vehicle and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Division 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.