

## Antique Vehicle Titling and Registration

Some antique car hobbyists have had trouble with vehicle titling and registration. The Car Club Council of Virginia invited DMV to attend our August 31, 2015 meeting to learn how to title an antique vehicle purchased from a non-title state, how to correct errors on titles and other questions about DMV procedures. The presenters from DMV were William Childress, Director Driver, Vehicle & Data Management Services (804-367-6745) and ([William.Childress@dmv.virginia.gov](mailto:William.Childress@dmv.virginia.gov)) and Kristen Gilbertson, Manager Title Department (804-367-1862) and ([kristen.gilbertson@dmv.virginia.gov](mailto:kristen.gilbertson@dmv.virginia.gov)). The meeting was very interesting and we learned a lot. I have combined the information we learned that evening with other information that I and other car hobbyists have learned over the years into this document for fellow car hobbyists. If you have serious questions be sure to contact DMV administration to get the proper answers ~ Fred Fann

**Be Prepared:** If you are going to purchase an antique vehicle you need to be prepared. You should research the vehicle you are buying so you know the location of the VIN, serial number, engine number and chassis number. You should make certain that the VIN on the title matches the VIN on the vehicle or in some cases it may match the serial number, engine number or chassis number. If the VIN on the title does not match the VIN on the vehicle then you should not purchase the vehicle until the seller corrects this error. Do not think that you can buy it and get it “fixed” later. The seller is in a better position to get this error corrected.

If you are going to purchase a vehicle from a non-title state then you need to find out how that state proves ownership. It may be a registration card. You will need that card or other proof of ownership and a bill of sale from the seller to provide to VA DMV to obtain a VA title and registration in your name. Do the research first and not after you have purchased the vehicle when it may be difficult to find the owner and obtain documents.

**Buying an antique vehicle in Virginia (or other title state):** You need to check that the VIN on the title matches the VIN (or serial number, engine number or chassis number on the vehicle - depends on vehicle and year) **before you purchase the vehicle**. Make sure there are no errors on the seller’s title. If you are buying from an internet site or print publication and are not inspecting the vehicle in person you need to have the seller provide you a copy and/or photos of the VIN on the vehicle and the title. If the seller has lost the title have the seller get a duplicate title from DMV. DMV stores information for 10 years so if the vehicle was titled long ago other steps may

have to be taken. The seller should provide a title that you can take to DMV to transfer into your name. DMV expects the seller to fill in all the information on the title except where the buyer signs and prints his/her name(s). It is DMV policy to ask for proof of the purchase price of a vehicle for tax purposes. DMV uses price guides to determine if you are being taxed at the proper vehicle value. It is good practice to get a bill of sale along with the title. The bill of sale price and the matching price on the title will protect you from being taxed a higher amount than actual purchase price. A bill of sale should include the seller and buyer names and addresses, date of sale, sale price, VIN, vehicle year make model body style. I have copies of bill of sales that can be downloaded for your use. DMV also has a printable bill of sale at this link:

<http://www.dmv.state.va.us/webdoc/pdf/sut1.pdf>

**Buying an antique vehicle from a non-title state:** The first step in buying a vehicle from a non-title state is for you to learn what document(s) are needed to prove ownership of the vehicle in that state. Next you will need be certain that the seller of the vehicle has those document(s) in his/her name. Just like with any antique vehicle purchase make sure that you see that the VIN on the document of ownership matches the VIN, serial number, chassis or engine number of the vehicle. Be sure to get the document(s) that prove ownership plus a bill of sale – a bill of sale should include the seller and buyer names and addresses, date of sale, sale price, VIN, vehicle year make model body style. I have copies of bill of sales that can be downloaded for your use. I have a bill of sale that does not have to be notarized and one that has places to be notarized. Usually a notarized bill of sale is needed if a loan is being taken out for the vehicle purchase and the lending institution requires a notarized bill of sale. You may wish to use one anyway. Only the DVM Titling Work Center can process Virginia titles for vehicles purchased from a non-title state without a title. There is a national data base for title and VIN information and the work center will research the information you provide. You will need to download VSA 12 at this link <http://www.dmv.virginia.gov/webdoc/pdf/vsa12.pdf>

It is called “AFFIDAVIT IN LIEU OF TITLE CERTIFICATE”. You will need to fill out this form and get it notarized. You can get paperwork notarized at most banks for free – go to one where you have an account and they know you. You will need to send VSA 12 along with the proof of ownership the non-title state recognizes and the bill of sale. In addition you may need one of more additional forms to get the vehicle registered but you must get it titled before it is registered. Send the information to the Titling Work Center using a mail service that provides a tracking number such as USPS Express Mail (\$19.95 for overnight tracked delivery). The address is: DMV

Title Department  
2300 West Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23269

You should also keep copies of everything you sent plus send the tracking information to Kristen Gilbertson, Manager Title Department at [kristen.gilbertson@dmv.virginia.gov](mailto:kristen.gilbertson@dmv.virginia.gov)

You may also contact her with any questions about the titling process. After you get the title you can go to a DMV customer service center to register the vehicle as a daily driver or antique. If you are going to store the vehicle or work on it you do not have to register it until you are ready to drive the vehicle.

**Getting errors on titles changed:** You may already own a vehicle that has an error on the title. Errors include a VIN number that doesn't match the VIN on the vehicle, wrong type of vehicle (sedan, hardtop, pickup, etc), incorrect mileage and incorrect year. First be sure you have everything correctly filled out for when you title a vehicle and before you leave the window at customer service inspect everything on the paperwork and point out any error. If you don't notice an error until you leave DMV then go back the same day and try to get it corrected. If time has passed you can still get a title corrected. You will need to provide DMV with proof that the title information is incorrect and proof of the correct information. If the VIN is not correct DMV Investigative Services may have to inspect the vehicle and there is a charge for this inspection. To find out what proof you will need to correct the title you should contact Kristen Gilbertson, Manager Title Department at [kristen.gilbertson@dmv.virginia.gov](mailto:kristen.gilbertson@dmv.virginia.gov)

The mileage is certified on the title so be sure to get the correct mileage. List the digits visible less the tenths digit. Do not put down 100,000 or more miles for a vehicle that has an odometer that registers to 99,999. Titles for vehicles that do not have speedometers or odometers are marked not actual because there is no way to tell the mileage. Be sure to check the mileage and how it is marked before leaving DMV.

**Original Titles and Old Titles:** If you purchase a vehicle with the original title or just an old title you should make a copy of the old title before going to DMV. It is DMV policy to take and destroy a title and then give you the new title; however DMV customer service centers may not follow that policy. If you ask for the old title to be returned to you DMV may say no, give you a photo copy or stamp VOID on the old title and give it back to you.

Duplicate title – a title that is a duplicate of another title (usually lost). There is a charge for the duplicate title and the title is exactly like the old title. Keep in mind DMV records are kept for 10 years.

Substitute title – a title that replaces the original title because the information has changed such as a VIN number or mileage correction.

Supplementary title – a title where a lien has been added such as with cash for car title loan.

**Plate Type:** DMV tries to issue a different set of characters for all license plates. There are plates out there with the same exact set of characters and they should be different plate types. For

example a motorcycle plate and a car plate could have the same characters but would be different plate types. Law enforcement needs to enter the correct plate type when checking a license plate.

There are vintage plates (most of them are the black and white year plates) that have the same set of characters but different years. These are not supposed to be used because they are the same plate type.

If you purchase a set of vintage plates you can go to the DMV website and check to see if the characters on the plate are already in use. Some of the older plates with fewer characters may be in use. The personalized character combination at this web page can be used to check the plate:  
[https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/dmvnet/plate\\_purchase/select\\_plate.asp](https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/dmvnet/plate_purchase/select_plate.asp)