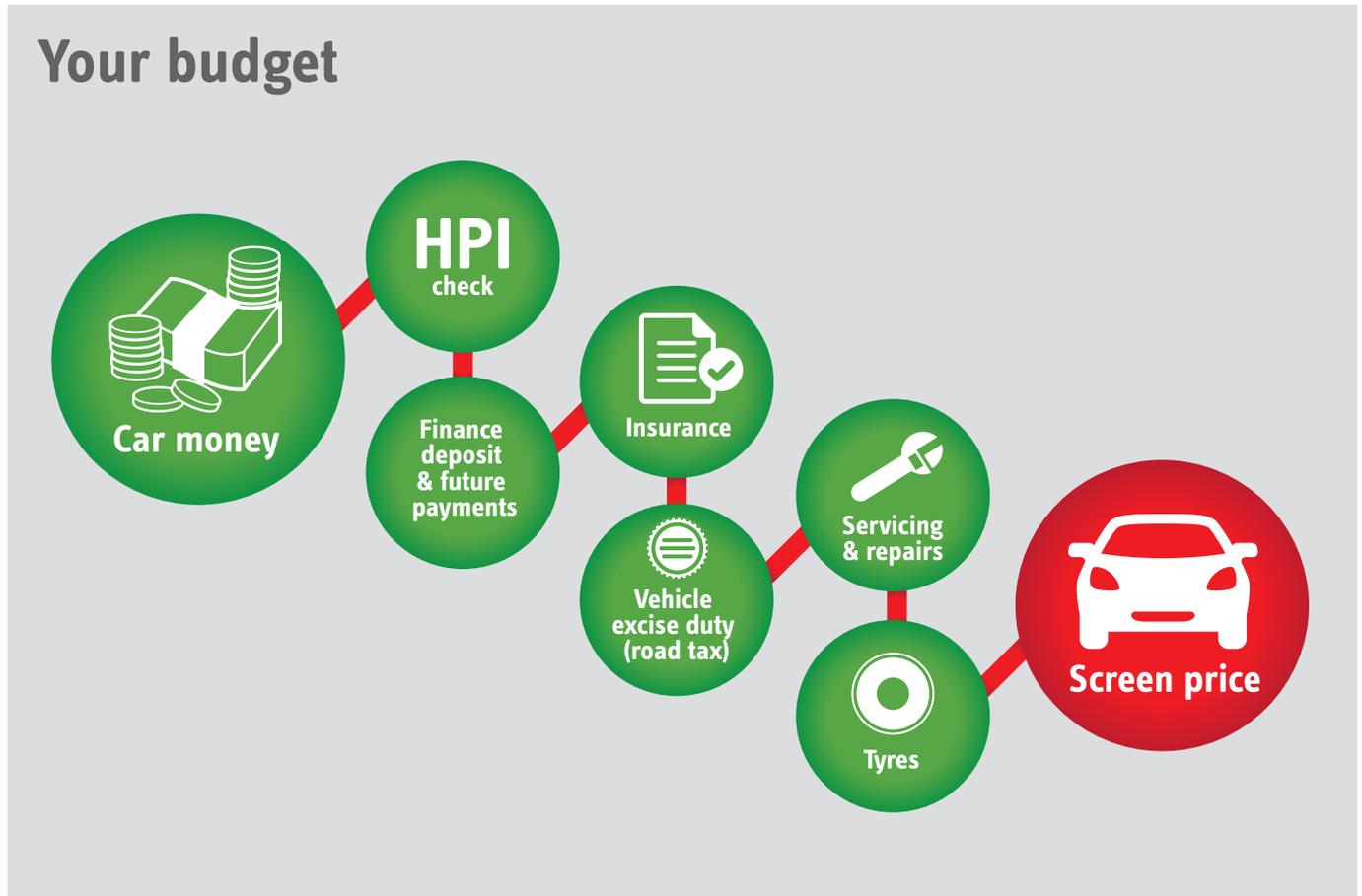


Car buying to a budget

Buying a car, no matter what the price, will always be about getting the best you can for the money you have.

But do you know what the actual cost is and will you be able to afford all the essential extras?

We would prefer you to avoid problems so here are a few essential tips to help you avoid the types of complaints that Trading Standards receive every day.



Work out the budget, your 'car money', remembering all the other things you buy every week, and other things you might be saving for.

There are then some costs in actually buying the car and keeping it running, these need to come out of your car money so the screen price you can actually afford will always be less than your total car money.

So the screen price you can start searching for needs to be less than your car money.

Get this right and you will be able to afford to run your car, get it wrong and every additional bill will be a real problem.

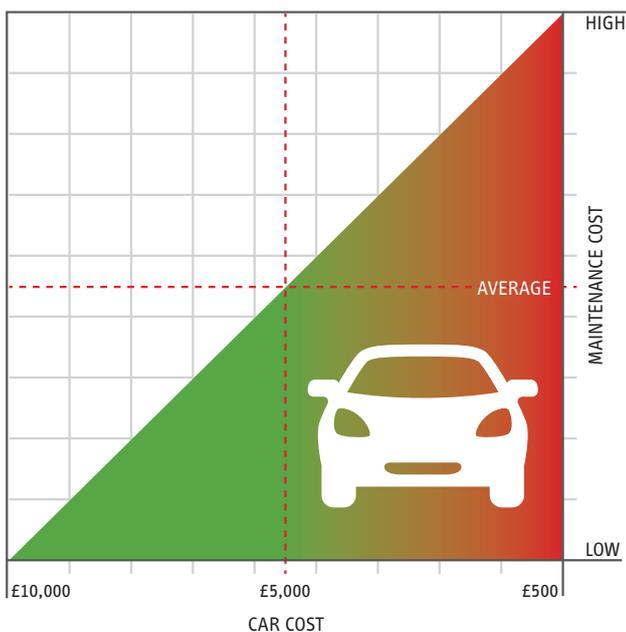
Maintenance & repair costs

Cheaper cars will also be older and have suffered more wear and tear. This means they are more likely to go wrong and if the faults are due to wear and tear, or to be expected for a car of that age and price, you are more likely to have to pay to fix this yourself rather than expecting the trader to fix it.

As an example a 3 year old car with full service history should be virtually fault free, everything should work and it is reasonable to expect that it will remain problem free for some while.

A 10 year old car will probably have done over 100,000 miles, be showing signs of wear and tear and it is becoming more likely that problems will occur.

A 15 year old car costing a few hundred pounds must pass an MOT but that is just about all that can be expected



So

- the older the car the less you pay, but repairs and defects become more likely
- the older the car the more likely that defects, faults and repairs become acceptable

Finance

The cost of borrowing needs to fit with your monthly budget although you may have to pay an initial deposit.

Look at the repayments and leave enough for fuel. Insurance and so on.

If the car breaks down you will still need to keep up payments, so make sure you have some money each month for emergencies

The total cost is important, if you borrow the same amount for a longer period the monthly payments will be lower but the total cost will be higher.

Think about the age of the car, you don't want to still be paying for a car that no longer works.

