

FERRARI CALIFORNIA / CALIFORNIA T

PRE-PURCHASE PROTOCOL · BUYER CHECKS · SPECIALIST PPI · RED FLAGS

Compiled from public sources, the Ferrari California family, its Model File and specialist review · Personal use only · v2.1

WHAT THIS CHECKLIST IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT

This checklist is written for enthusiasts who want a base of knowledge: enough context to follow what a PPI specialist tells them, to read an inspection report a dealer hands over, and to understand what is being discussed in videos and forums. It does not replace the diagnosis or judgement of a qualified specialist or workshop, and it is not a tool for saving the cost of one. If you are not deeply familiar with these cars technically and are unsure about a vehicle's condition, our standing recommendation is simple: commission and pay a qualified PPI specialist of your choice, whether an official dealership, a marque specialist, or an experienced supercar specialist who knows the brand. The checklist gives you context; the specialist gives you the verdict.

A · BUYER CHECK · PROVENANCE & PAPERWORK

- ☐ Owner chronology and catch-up status: what happened after the free maintenance years ended; annual services, fluids, software, campaigns.
- ☐ Recall matrix by variant, CRITICAL: NA: Takata waves (16V341, 18V188, 20V007) + 22V536 reservoir cap. T: 19V006 Takata, 19V411 airbag ECU, 15V811 fuel line (2016 production window), 22V536. Each by VIN with completion evidence.
- ☐ RHT repair history in detail: what was replaced (sensors, sliders, Bowdens, pump, cylinders), by whom, with what parts: a documented quality roof repair beats an untouched roof with symptoms.
- ☐ Early cars (2009–11): DCT sensor and repair history documented.
- ☐ Handling Speciale / California 30: authenticity by build sheet and software, never by badges.
- ☐ Battery and maintainer history: this generation cascades on low voltage.
- ☐ Date-stamped items: tyres by DOT (age over tread), battery, brake fluid, DCT oil.
- ☐ Accident history: the rear-quarter and roof-mechanism question asked directly; front damage on the T includes intercoolers and boost plumbing.
- ☐ Water history: boot moisture, roof-well staining, seal replacements.
- ☐ Market positioning completed: roof and DCT documentation, variant and catch-up weighted before any visit.

B · BUYER CHECK · AT THE CAR

- ☐ Battery first: age, resting voltage, load behaviour: the roof is only tested with a healthy battery, and warnings are only believed after stabilising.
- ☐ The roof programme, cold: two complete cycles: even speed, no hesitation, no cracking or grinding, panel clearance, flaps, latches, Bowden action, pump sound, window indexing.
- ☐ Roof red flags: one-sided drop, stop-and-return, panel contact, repeated pump running, hydraulic smell, "roof not secure", fresh scratches between panels.
- ☐ True cold start: idle, misfires, smoke, noises; engine mounts judged by idle vibration and load-change movement.
- ☐ T: turbo behaviour: no cold smoke or bearing noise, linear boost, no LH/RH deviation, no reduced-power warning; after heat soak: oil smell, smoke, coolant smell.
- ☐ DCT cold: R, D, 1-2 and 2-1, slow manoeuvring, parking moves. Warm: stop-and-go, reverse, gradient, manual shifts, downshifts: judder, delay, warnings or unavailable gears escalate.
- ☐ Brakes: CCM faces, edges, pads, discoloration; reservoir cap and fluid level (22V536 context); repeated warm stops.
- ☐ Seals and water: glass indexing, wind-noise potential, drain channels, boot moisture, roof-well trim, luggage-divider sensor area.
- ☐ Cabin: sticky surfaces, dashboard leather, headliner; infotainment functions as fitted.
- ☐ Tyres and wheels: DOT age, inner edges, correct spec, mismatches, repairs; suspension felt for tired bushings on daily-driven cars.
- ☐ Road test: full temperature, then heat soak: and the roof cycled again warm, followed by the second scan.

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C · SPECIALIST PPI SCOPE (MINIMUM)

- ☐ The ten-step order: battery · full scan · roof twice cold · cold start · lift · road · DCT warm · heat soak · roof again · post-scan.
- ☐ RHT diagnosis per Ferrari TI 2407: position sensors, microswitches, hydraulic pressure, pump behaviour, calibration, stored roof faults: with the mechanical guide/slider inspection alongside.
- ☐ DCT: fault memory, clutch adaptations, sensor history (early cars especially), leak inspection before and after the drive.
- ☐ Engine: leak mapping, cooling pressure test on suspicion, coil and misfire history; mounts checked under load.
- ☐ T: charge-air pressure test on any doubt; turbo oil feed and return, water lines, heat shields; boost plausibility LH/RH.
- ☐ CCM with wear values where readable; age and standing marks weighed with wear.
- ☐ Suspension on the lift: dampers, bushings, arms, joints, bearings.
- ☐ Airbag systems per the recall matrix: correct modules and ECU, no SRS faults.
- ☐ Structure: rear-quarter and roof-mechanism area after any rear damage: alignment, hinge mounting, lines, sensor calibration.
- ☐ Water audit where history indicates: connectors, grounds, boot electronics, corrosion mapping.
- ☐ Electronics: body modules, windows, TPMS, infotainment: judged after voltage is stabilised, never before.
- ☐ Typical full specialist PPI cost, rounded orientation by market (2026): ≈€600–1,100 / ≈£520–950 / ≈\$650–1,200. Indications, not conversions; obtain current local quotes.

"A California is bought on its roof cycle and its DCT diagnosis: the engines are the reliable part. Test the roof cold, test it warm, and believe nothing before the battery is healthy."

Deep dive: Supercar Models Paper 19 · Model File 19 · Owner's Intelligence series.

D · PRICE & INVESTIGATION ITEMS

Not every defect makes a bad car: the question is whether a problem is known, quantifiable and priced in. On a California, the roof file is the price.

- ☐ Roof findings priced by class: sensor/calibration €500–2,000 · slider/Bowden €1,500–5,000 · hydraulic partial €2,000–6,000 · larger repair €5,000–15,000+ : never as one scary number.
- ☐ Early-car DCT sensor findings: €2,000–6,000 territory with diagnosis; a documented repair is neutral to positive.
- ☐ Engine mounts due: a known age cost (€1,500–4,000).
- ☐ Aged tyres and battery: consumables on almost every older California; price the set.
- ☐ Open recall-matrix items: resolve before purchase with written Ferrari confirmation.
- ☐ Sticky trim, dash shrinkage, old infotainment: cosmetic and comfort items, openly priced.
- ☐ Thin documentation: acceptable only if priced and quantified by the specialist.
- ☐ Negotiate from roof and DCT findings plus catch-up, never from assumed margin.

E · RED FLAGS · WALK-AWAY OR ESCALATION

- A roof that stops, reverses, contacts panels or reports "not secure", undiagnosed.
- Any airbag or fuel-line campaign unresolved with no path to resolution.
- Active DCT malfunction or unavailable gears, undiagnosed.
- Rear-quarter accident evidence without roof-alignment and calibration records.
- Fuel smell (T: 15V811 context) nobody can explain.
- Water staining in the roof well or boot with no documented remediation.
- Mileage discrepancies or diagnostics cleared just before viewing.
- A car whose problems cannot be named, quantified and priced: the one category that cannot be negotiated.

F · FIRST WEEK OF OWNERSHIP

- ☐ Battery tender from night one; exercise the roof regularly: the mechanism ages better moving than parked.
- ☐ Insurance and storage confirmed; purchase file, recall evidence and PPI report archived.
- ☐ Options, not requirements: a tracker appropriate to value and insurer expectations, and a dash cam.