

Spec P71: Buyers Guide (Updated: 03/14/2023)

Mission: To help potential drivers locate and buy long-lasting Crown Victorias for Spec P71 Racing Series at a reasonable price.

A.) Where to buy a Crown Victoria

- 1.) Local Police Auctions are the number one best bet for locating a well-rounded and long lasting Ford Crown Victoria. Typically speaking Crown Victorias that were utilized in Government service were well-maintained by the agencies they were assigned to and went through regular intervals of maintenance to ensure they live a longer life.

In Southern California the two main resources we recommend are as follows:

- a.) JJ Kane / Ken Porter Auctions (Los Angeles / San Bernardino)
 - i.) <https://www.jjkane.com/ken-porter-auctions/>
 - b.) TNT Auctions (San Diego / Las Vegas)
 - i.) <https://www.tntauction.com/>
- 2.) **Avoid buying private seller Crown Victorias.** Typically speaking these are already beaten to death by the general public or they are following our first guideline, buying these vehicles at auction, and then reselling them at a much higher rate. Unless you know where the car came from, buying from a local Police Auction is a safer bet.

B.) What to look for in a Crown Victoria

1.) Optimal Years

a.) 2006-2011

- i.) Throttle-by-wire
- ii.) 31-Spline + Optional 3.55 Gearing
- iii.) Revised SLA Front Suspension
- iv.) 2008+ E85 Capable

2.) Paint Color

- a.) Typically Speaking the "Oreo" (Black/White) colored P71's will always go cheaper at auction compared to the solid color vehicles. This is due to the fact that most bidders are resellers and want to avoid having to repaint the vehicles if they can. We **strongly** suggest bidding on the Oreo P71's to save some money.

3.) Rear Axle Codes

- a.) These rear axle codes can be found either on the door jamb or on the diff itself. The diff tag is more reliable as it is possible during its service life that the Agency replaced the rear axle.

- i.) 3.55 Limited Slip - **C6** (Preferred Rear Axle of Spec P71)
- ii.) 3.27 Limited Slip - **X5**
- iii.) 3.27 Open Diff - **Z5**

4.) Mileage

- a.) Most Crown Victorias sold at auction are sold between 50,000-200,000mi on the clock. This being said, another important factor to look at on these

vehicles is idle hours. While the car you may be looking at might appear low mileage, it could have sat a long time with the engine running during agency operations that effectively increases the overall use of the drivetrain.

- i.) Idle Hours Calculation: Per Ford, 1 Idle = 31 miles. Press the gauge cluster button to cycle to Idle hours to confirm the number of hours.
- ii.) Optimal Mileage: Typically speaking any Crown Victoria with a combined calculated mileage of 150,000mi will ensure a long lasting vehicle. This being said, actual mileage weighs more so the lower the better!

5.) Visual Inspection

a.) Oil Leaks

- i.) The Modular 4.6 is a very well sealed engine. If upon inspection you notice any leaking especially from the Engine to Transmission mounting surfaces or oil pan, note that it will take a considerable amount of effort to fix. The only exception to this rule is a confirmed valve cover gasket leak which is rather simple to fix.
- ii.) If the transmission is leaking anywhere other than the tailshaft, assume a major overhaul is required. A tailshaft leak will likely just be a tail shaft seal.
- iii.) If the 8.8 Rear Axle is leaking, from the diff itself it will be a rather easy fix with what is likely a pinion seal. If it's leaking from the axle seals at the end, it will be a bit more involved but nothing the average mechanic cannot handle.

b.) Transmission Fluid Burnt

- i.) We'd strongly suggest walking away from any car if you notice any burnt transmission fluid. With auctions, you are unable to take the vehicle for a drive so you will not be able to check the car through all the gears and one of the most frequent catastrophic failures of these cars is the transmission.

How much should I expect to pay?

This obviously will depend on the above factors and how well-versed your bidding competition is on each of the vehicles. Realistically, you should set a reasonable maximum limit when bidding and have multiple cars picked out in advance that you can bid on throughout the auction. Spec P71 Racing Series is all about the spirit of racing for as little money as possible so we believe you should set your bid maximum to somewhere around the *\$3k range*. If for whatever reason you find yourself buying a car in the private market, your maximum should be \$5k regardless of mileage.