



## Danger in Buying Cars from Rental Companies

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Have you ever bought a used car from a rental company such as Enterprise? Many people believe this is a good way to get a car that has been properly maintained and has relatively few miles, and in fact there are some good reasons to buy from rental companies. But there is one big reason to avoid such a purchase, or at least to do a little extra homework first.

General Motors, as one example, has a policy of allowing rental companies making fleet purchases to “opt-out” of paying for the otherwise standard-equipment side air bags. This saves about \$145 per car. But the rental companies have been under no obligation to inform buyers about the omitted side air bags. And in fact the rental companies are actually allowed to list side air bags as standard equipment on the cars they sell, *even if those cars do not have side air bags!* (Here’s a personal request from me: *Please* do not ever buy another vehicle without side air bags. They save lives.)

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is going to try to change the system so that either manufacturers will not be allowed to sell vehicles without side air bags, or at the least, rental companies will have to disclose to buyers that the cars do not have the side air bags. But until that happens you need to be extra cautious when purchasing from a rental car company.

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