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Certificate in Antique and Vintage Car Appraisal (Germany)

## Antique Car Authentication And Verification

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Antique Car Authentication is the systematic process of confirming that a vehicle claimed to be an antique or vintage truly meets the historical, technical, and documentation criteria that define its status. The practice combines knowledge of historical manufacturing practices, legal regulations, and hands-on inspection techniques. Mastery of the terminology is essential for accurate appraisal, legal compliance, and effective communication with owners, collectors, and regulatory bodies.

Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) refers to the company that produced the vehicle at the time of its initial assembly. In the context of antiques, the OEM's name, factory location, and production era are crucial identifiers. For example, a 1935 Mercedes-Benz 540K bears the mark of the Mercedes-Benz plant in Stuttgart, and any deviation from OEM-issued parts may affect authenticity.

Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) is the unique alphanumeric code assigned to each vehicle. Early automobiles used chassis numbers, serial numbers, or factory stamps before the standardized 17-character VIN was adopted in 1981. Recognizing the format of pre-VIN identifiers, such as the "chassis number" on a 1927 Ford Model A, is a vital skill for dating and authenticating antique cars.

Build Sheet is the original production record created by the OEM, detailing the specifications, options, and serial numbers of a particular vehicle. Access to a build sheet allows the appraiser to verify that the engine, body style, and equipment match factory documentation. Many European manufacturers retain these archives, and they are often accessed through national automotive heritage organizations.

Factory Plate or Data Plate is a metal plaque affixed to the chassis or body, bearing the VIN, model designation, engine type, and sometimes the date of manufacture. The plate's material, font, and placement can be used to confirm authenticity; for instance, a 1930s Bugatti Type 57 carries a brass plate riveted to the frame rail, whereas later reproductions may use stamped steel.

Chassis Number predates the VIN and is a sequential identifier assigned to the frames produced by a manufacturer. In British cars, the chassis number often appears stamped on the frame rails and is cross-referenced with the engine number. A mismatch between the chassis and engine numbers can indicate a later swap or a "franken-car" assembly.

Engine Serial Number is the unique identifier stamped on the engine block. Early engines often have this number cast into the crankcase or on a metal tag. Comparing the engine serial number with the chassis number and the build sheet helps confirm that the original powerplant remains in place.

Original Paint refers to the factory-applied finish as it left the assembly line. Authentic paint can be

identified by its composition, color code, and application method. For example, a 1955 Porsche 356 originally featured a two-stage lacquer system, and the presence of a single-stage modern enamel may suggest a later repaint.

Factory Color Code is the specific designation used by the OEM to denote a paint shade. Early manufacturers kept color charts, and these codes can be matched to period documentation. A 1938 Opel Olympia listed "Blau 12" as its factory color; locating this reference in original brochures supports authenticity.

Original Trim includes interior upholstery, dashboard components, and exterior accessories that were installed at the factory. Authentic trim often bears OEM stamps, embossed logos, or period-appropriate stitching patterns. Reproductions may use modern fabrics or hardware that lack the subtle wear patterns of genuine parts.

Factory Badges are metal emblems displaying the brand logo, model name, or special edition designation. Their shape, finish, and mounting method are distinctive for each era. A 1962 Jaguar E-Type features a chrome "Jaguar" badge on the grille; a later replica may use a plated version that feels heavier and lacks the original mounting holes.

Historical Documentation encompasses registration papers, original sales invoices, insurance records, and period photographs. These documents provide provenance, a chain of custody that traces ownership from the factory to the present. When evaluating a 1910 Ford Model T, a registration card dated 1912 and a dealer invoice confirming the chassis number greatly strengthen the authenticity claim.

Provenance is the documented history of a vehicle's ownership and location. A clear provenance reduces the risk of forgeries and may increase market value. For instance, a 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air once owned by a noted racing driver can be traced through newspaper articles, photographs, and auction records, establishing a compelling narrative.

Original Equipment (OE) denotes parts that were installed at the factory, as opposed to aftermarket or replacement components. Determining whether a part is OE involves examining manufacturing stamps, part numbers, and finishing techniques. An OE carburetor on a 1932 Bentley 4½ Litre will carry the Bentley cast number and may have a specific patina not found on later reproductions.

Aftermarket Part is any component produced by a third-party supplier, often introduced after the vehicle's original production run. While aftermarket parts can be functional, they typically diminish the vehicle's originality. A 1929 Rolls-Royce Phantom I fitted with a modern steering wheel is an example of an aftermarket alteration.

Restoration is the process of returning a vehicle to a condition that reflects its original appearance and functionality. Restorations can be "full," meaning all components are replaced with OE-type parts, or

“partial,” where only certain elements are addressed. A well-documented restoration includes receipts, photographs, and a list of parts used.

Conservation differs from restoration in that it focuses on preserving existing original material, intervening only when necessary to halt deterioration. Conservation is the preferred approach for high-value antiques where originality is paramount. An example is the careful cleaning of a 1930 Mercedes-Benz 540K body without repainting.

Reproduction is a newly manufactured component that replicates the appearance of an original part but is not original to the vehicle. Reproductions are common for scarce items such as period-accurate headlights or upholstery. Accurate labeling of reproductions is essential to maintain transparency in an appraisal report.

Fabricated Part is a component created from scratch, often using modern techniques, to replace a missing or damaged original. Fabricated parts may be necessary for safety reasons but should be clearly identified as non-original. A fabricated chassis brace on a 1915 Cadillac Type 51 would be noted as such.

Period-Correct describes parts, finishes, or accessories that match the vehicle’s era, even if they are not original to the specific car. Using period-correct components can enhance authenticity when original parts are unavailable, provided they are documented. Installing a period-correct 1930s style leather steering wheel on a 1932 Ford V8 is an example.

Historical Accuracy is the degree to which a vehicle’s current state reflects its original specification and appearance. Accuracy is judged by comparing the car to factory records, period photographs, and known examples. Deviations, such as an incorrect grille pattern, reduce historical accuracy.

Condition Grading is a standardized system used to describe the state of a vehicle’s components, ranging from “concourse” (pristine) to “poor” (significant deterioration). Condition grades affect value and are often expressed using terms like “Excellent,” “Good,” “Fair,” and “Restored.” A 1949 Volkswagen Beetle in “concourse” condition would have flawless paint, original interior, and a fully functional engine.

Originality is the proportion of the vehicle that remains as it left the factory. Originality is assessed by counting OE parts, original paint, and documented history. A car with 80% originality, such as a 1954 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL retaining its original engine, transmission, and body panels, is more valuable than one with extensive replacements.

Authenticity Verification is the procedural checklist used by appraisers to confirm all claims of originality. This includes VIN cross-checking, inspection of factory plates, review of provenance, and material analysis. A thorough verification process reduces the risk of misidentifying a replica as genuine.

Material Analysis involves scientific techniques such as metallurgical testing, paint spectroscopy, and fiber

identification to determine the age and composition of components. For example, X-ray fluorescence (XRF) can confirm that a bronze badge on a 1920 Alfa Romeo RL is consistent with the alloy used at that time.

Carbon Dating is a method for estimating the age of organic materials, such as leather or wood, by measuring residual carbon-14. While rarely used due to the destructive nature of sampling, carbon dating can support authenticity claims for rare interior elements.

Radiography (X-ray imaging) can reveal hidden structural details, such as welding patterns or internal modifications, without dismantling the vehicle. Radiographic analysis of a 1936 Ford V8 frame may uncover a non-factory reinforcement that alters the vehicle's originality status.

Serial Number is a general term for any unique identifier stamped onto a component. In antique cars, serial numbers appear on the engine, transmission, and sometimes on the gearbox. Consistency among serial numbers is a key indicator of authenticity.

Engine Block Casting marks are the foundry stamps that indicate the foundry, year, and sometimes the model for which the engine was produced. Recognizing the casting marks on a 1932 Citroën Rosalie engine can confirm its period origin.

Transmission Code is the identifier stamped on the gearbox housing, often indicating gear ratios and model. Matching the transmission code to the build sheet ensures the transmission is correct for the vehicle's specification.

Gearbox Ratios are the specific gear reductions designed for a particular model and engine combination. Incorrect ratios can indicate that a gearbox has been swapped. For instance, a 1950 Porsche 356 equipped with a later 1960 gearbox would have incompatible ratios.

Brake System components, such as drums, shoes, and hydraulic lines, must be examined for period-correct design. Early vehicles used mechanical brakes, while later models transitioned to hydraulic systems. A 1925 Rolls-Royce Phantom I should retain its original mechanical drum brakes; the presence of hydraulic brakes would be a clear modification.

Suspension Type is another critical specification. Early cars employed semi-elliptic leaf springs, while later models introduced independent suspension. Verifying that a 1934 BMW 303 retains its original leaf-spring setup helps confirm authenticity.

Steering Mechanism evolved from worm and sector to rack-and-pinion designs. Identifying the correct steering gear for a given model year is essential. A 1929 Cadillac V-63 should have a worm gear; an aftermarket rack-and-pinion would be a deviation.

Wheel Design includes rim style, spoke count, and hub dimensions. Original wheels often bear manufacturer stamps on the rim. For example, a 1937 Mercedes-Benz 540K came with 5-spoke wire wheels

stamped "Mercedes-Benz." Reproduced wheels may lack the correct stamping or have different spoke patterns.

Tyre Specification is part of the vehicle's original equipment. Early cars used bias-ply tyres, while later models moved to radial constructions. A 1935 Ford V8 should be fitted with period-correct bias-ply tyres; modern radials would be a non-original addition.

Body Style refers to the external shape and design elements such as roofline, fender length, and grille configuration. Body styles were often offered in multiple variations (e.g., "Touring," "Sedan," "Roadster"). Accurate identification of the body style is essential for matching the VIN and build sheet.

Coachbuilder is the firm that constructed the body over the chassis, especially common in early European cars. Recognizing a coachbuilder's signature, such as "Müller & Sohn" on a 1930 Mercedes-Benz, aids in confirming authenticity.

Chassis Frame is the structural skeleton of the vehicle. Original frames exhibit specific welding techniques, material thickness, and dimensions. Alterations such as frame elongation or reinforcement can be detected through visual inspection and dimensional measurement.

Measurement Tolerances are the acceptable variations in dimensions for components such as wheel track, axle length, and chassis width. Historical specifications often include tolerances; exceeding them may indicate a replacement or modification.

Serial Plate is a metal plate that records the chassis and engine numbers together, often riveted to the frame. The plate's font, spacing, and rivet pattern can be compared to known authentic examples.

Serial Number Correlation is the process of matching the chassis number to the engine number using factory records. This step is critical because many forgeries involve swapping engines or chassis to improve appearance.

Documentation Authenticity involves verifying the legitimacy of registration papers, sales invoices, and other paperwork. This may include checking watermarks, paper type, ink aging, and signatures. A forged registration document can be uncovered by examining the paper's fiber composition or the ink's chemical profile.

Provenance Gaps are periods in a vehicle's ownership history where documentation is missing. Gaps can raise questions about authenticity, especially if they coincide with known periods of high fraud activity. Appraisers should note these gaps and, where possible, seek corroborating evidence such as photographs or oral histories.

Historical Context provides background on the vehicle's era, including economic conditions, technological advancements, and cultural trends. Understanding context helps explain why certain features were offered

and can aid in detecting anachronisms. For example, a 1930s Volkswagen Beetle would not have a power-assisted steering system, as that technology was not introduced until later.

Regulatory Compliance in Germany includes the Kraftfahrzeug-Zulassungs-Verordnung (KfzV) and the Oldtimer-Gesetz. Vehicles classified as Oldtimer must be at least 30 years old, retain originality, and be listed in the historic vehicle register. Appraisers must be familiar with these regulations to advise clients on eligibility for historic vehicle plates and tax benefits.

Historic Vehicle Registration Plate (H-Plate) is a special licence plate that indicates a vehicle's historic status. The plate format and issuance criteria differ between German states, and the presence of an H-Plate can be a useful clue in verifying authenticity.

Technical Specification Sheet (Technisches Datenblatt) provides detailed measurements such as wheelbase, track width, and engine displacement. Comparing a vehicle's actual measurements to the specification sheet can reveal modifications.

Factory Paint Codebook contains the color references used by the OEM during a specific production year. Access to the codebook allows the appraiser to match the existing paint to the original shade. A mismatch may indicate a repaint or a later touch-up.

Original Accessories include items such as the owner's manual, spare tire, tool kit, and factory-issued horns. Presence of these accessories, especially when they bear serial numbers or stamps, adds to the vehicle's authenticity. A 1952 Chevrolet Corvette with its original "Blue Flame" horn is a strong authenticity indicator.

Factory Labels are adhesive or metal tags applied to interior panels, engine components, and exterior parts. Labels often carry the OEM logo, part number, and production date. For example, a metal label on the dashboard of a 1938 Porsche 356 reads "Porsche 1938," confirming the period.

Original Upholstery is identified by fabric type, stitching pattern, and seam style. Early vehicles used materials such as horsehair, wool, or leather. A 1909 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost may feature horsehair upholstery, and any synthetic replacement would be a clear deviation.

Patina is the surface condition that develops over time, including oxidation, wear, and coloration. Genuine patina is valued because it reflects the vehicle's age and usage. Over-polishing or chemical cleaning can remove patina, reducing originality.

Repaint is the process of applying new paint, either for restoration or damage repair. A repaint may be necessary for safety, but it must be documented and, ideally, performed using period-correct materials. An unrecorded repaint on a 1935 Mercedes-Benz 540K could mislead an appraiser.

Paint Sample is a small fragment of the vehicle's coating taken for laboratory analysis. The sample can be compared to known reference palettes to determine if the paint matches the original formula. A paint

sample from a 1959 Volkswagen Beetle can be matched to the factory "Alpine White" pigment.

Original Engine Configuration refers to the specific arrangement of components such as the carburetor type, ignition system, and exhaust manifold. A 1932 Ford Model A originally used a single-choke carburetor; an upgrade to a multi-choke unit would be a modification.

Ignition System evolved from magneto to coil-and-breaker setups. Identifying the correct system for a given model year helps confirm authenticity. A 1929 Ford Model T should have a magneto ignition; a coil-and-breaker retrofit would be noted.

Fuel System components, such as fuel pumps and filters, also vary by era. Early cars often used gravity-fed systems, while later models incorporated mechanical pumps. An original fuel pump on a 1934 Mercedes-Benz 540K is a strong authenticity indicator.

Exhaust Configuration includes the shape and material of the manifolds and mufflers. Early exhausts were often plain steel; later models introduced chrome-plated or alloy designs. A mismatched exhaust on a 1927 Cadillac V-63 may suggest a later alteration.

Instrument Cluster is the collection of gauges and indicators on the dashboard. Original clusters are marked with serial numbers and often have distinctive fonts. A 1961 Porsche 911 original cluster features "Mercedes-Benz" fonts; an aftermarket replica would lack these details.

Gauge Calibration is the process of ensuring that speedometers, tachometers, and other gauges read accurately. In antique cars, original gauges may be non-functional; a repaired gauge must be clearly identified as a restoration.

Original Wiring Harness is the set of electrical cables and connectors installed at the factory. Early wiring used cloth-covered conductors, while later models switched to rubber insulation. A replacement harness made from modern PVC would be a deviation.

Original Glass includes windshield, side windows, and rear glass. Early glass was often flat and made of plate glass, whereas later vehicles used curved laminated glass. A 1930 Mercedes-Benz with modern curved glass indicates a replacement.

Original Chrome Trim is the polished metal used on bumpers, door handles, and window frames. The composition and finish of chrome changed over the decades. Early chrome was often thin and prone to pitting; later chrome was thicker and more durable. Spotting a newer chrome finish on a 1925 vehicle suggests a later addition.

Original Badging is distinct from factory badges; it includes model designation plates that were often painted on the body rather than attached. For example, a 1935 Ford V8 may have a painted "V8" script on the grille, and the paint's age can be verified through pigment analysis.

Original Documentation also includes factory service manuals and parts catalogs. These documents can be cross-referenced with the vehicle's condition to verify that components match the specifications. A 1947 Volkswagen Beetle service manual listing a specific carburetor model can be used to confirm the part present on the car.

Authentication Certificate is a formal document issued by a recognized authority or expert, attesting to the vehicle's authenticity. The certificate typically includes a detailed description, VIN verification, provenance summary, and a statement of originality percentage. It may be required for insurance or auction purposes.

Expert Opinion differs from a certificate in that it may be an informal assessment, often provided verbally or in a brief written note. While valuable, expert opinions should be corroborated with documented evidence before being used for valuation.

Condition Report is a comprehensive record of the vehicle's current state, noting any defects, restorations, and areas of concern. The report should be organized by component (e.g., chassis, engine, body, interior) and include photographs for visual reference.

Photographic Documentation is essential for capturing the vehicle's condition at the time of appraisal. High-resolution images should include overall views, close-ups of VIN plates, badges, and any areas of modification. Photographs also serve as evidence for provenance gaps.

Digital Archive refers to the electronic storage of documentation, photographs, and analysis results. Maintaining a digital archive facilitates future verification and helps protect against loss of physical records.

Chain of Custody is the chronological documentation of who has possessed the vehicle and when. A clear chain of custody reduces the risk of theft or illicit alteration. For antique cars, a well-maintained chain often includes photographs taken at each transfer of ownership.

Legal Title is the official ownership document registered with the relevant authority. In Germany, the Kfz-Zulassungsstelle maintains the title records. Verifying the legal title ensures that the appraiser is dealing with the rightful owner.

Insurance Records can provide evidence of a vehicle's existence and condition over time. Claims for damage, repairs, or theft can be cross-checked against the current state of the car. An insurance policy from 1975 for a 1932 Opel 1.5 Liter can support the vehicle's continuous existence.

Historical Registry is a database maintained by automobile clubs or heritage societies that lists historic vehicles. Registration in such a registry often requires verification of authenticity and can add credibility. The Deutscher Automobilclub (ADAC) maintains a historic vehicle register that many collectors consult.

Period-Specific Tooling Marks are the unique imprints left by manufacturing equipment on parts such as casting sprues or rivet heads. Recognizing these marks can help identify the era of a component. A rivet

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head with a "M" stamp may indicate a part produced in a Munich factory in the 1920s.

Foundry Marks are the symbols cast into metal components to indicate the foundry of origin. For example, a "B" inside a circle on an engine block may correspond to the Baumann foundry, which supplied engines to several German manufacturers in the 1930s.

Serial Number Sequence can be analyzed to determine production batch. Early manufacturers often assigned numbers sequentially, and clusters of numbers can indicate a specific production run. A series of chassis numbers 1001-1010 may correspond to a limited edition model.

Original Documentation Language is relevant when evaluating cars from multilingual regions. Documents may be in German, French, or other languages, and translation errors can lead to misinterpretation. Appraisers should verify translations against the original text.

Historical Trade Publications such as Motor-Kraft or Automobilwoche frequently featured advertisements, technical articles, and photographs that can be used to confirm original specifications. An advertisement from 1934 showing a Mercedes-Benz 540K in a specific color provides visual evidence of factory options.

Original Engine Serial Number Plate is often separate from the block and affixed to the crankcase. The plate may include the year of manufacture and the engine series. Matching this plate to the chassis number is a critical step in authenticity verification.

Original Transmission Serial Plate functions similarly, bearing the gearbox number and sometimes the gear ratios. The presence of the correct plate on a 1948 Volkswagen Beetle confirms that the transmission is original.

Paint Layer Analysis involves removing microscopic cross-sections of the paint to examine the number of layers, primer composition, and topcoat. Early automobiles typically used a primer, a color coat, and a clear coat. Additional layers may indicate a repaint.

Original Interior Trim can be identified by the type of wood, metal, or plastic used. Early luxury cars often featured walnut or mahogany dashboards, while later models used Bakelite or early plastics. An authentic walnut dashboard on a 1935 Mercedes-Benz is a strong authenticity marker.

Original Seat Construction includes the frame, springs, and upholstery. Early seats used horsehair stuffing, while later models shifted to foam. Identifying the correct stuffing material helps confirm originality.

Original Steering Column may have a specific shape, material, and finish. For example, a 1929 Rolls-Royce Phantom I has a wooden steering column with a leather-wrapped knob. Replacement columns are often made of metal and lack the original wood grain.

Original Dashboard Layout is a key visual cue. The placement of gauges, switches, and the style of the

instrument panel can be cross-checked with factory photographs. Any deviation, such as an extra gauge, must be noted.

Original Body Panels are often identified by stamping marks on the inner side of the metal. These marks include the manufacturer's logo, panel type, and sometimes the year. A stamped "BMW" on the inner door panel of a 1934 BMW 303 confirms originality.

Original Glass Tint may be present on early vehicles, especially on the windshield. The tint can be identified by the degree of coloration and the presence of iron oxide in the glass. A tinted windshield on a 1930s car is authentic; a clear replacement may be a later modification.

Original Exhaust Pipe material and shape are indicative of the era. Early exhausts were typically steel and left a distinctive black soot pattern. Modern stainless-steel exhausts are a clear replacement.

Original Fuel Tank may have a specific shape and mounting location. Early cars often used metal tanks placed under the seat or in the rear. A modern plastic fuel tank is a non-original component.

Original Brake Drum can be identified by the casting pattern, bolt holes, and surface finish. The presence of a specific "spider" vent pattern on a 1932 Mercedes-Benz brake drum is a strong authenticity indicator.

Original Suspension Springs are often leaf springs with a particular number of leaves and gauge thickness. Measuring these dimensions and comparing them to factory specifications helps confirm authenticity.

Original Wheel Rims may have a specific number of spokes, width, and hub design. The rim's curvature and flange shape are also diagnostic. A mismatch in rim dimensions can indicate a later swap.

Original Body Paint is confirmed through pigment analysis. Early paints used pigments such as lead chromate for yellow or cobalt blue for blues. Modern pigments differ chemically, and laboratory tests can differentiate them.

Original Engine Mounts are often cast metal brackets that attach the engine to the chassis. Their shape and bolt pattern should match factory drawings. Replacement mounts may be fabricated from modern alloys and lack the original casting marks.

Original Transmission Mounts similarly have distinctive designs. Verifying these components ensures the drivetrain remains original.

Original Exhaust Manifold may be a cast iron piece with specific bolt patterns. Identifying the correct manifold for a given engine model helps confirm originality.

Original Fuel Lines were often made of rubber or canvas. The diameter and routing of these lines can be compared to period diagrams. Modern nylon or steel fuel lines are a replacement.

Original Wiring Insulation material can be identified by its texture and color. Early wiring used cloth insulation, while later vehicles transitioned to rubber. The presence of modern PVC insulation indicates a later modification.

Original Dashboard Instruments may include a speedometer, fuel gauge, and temperature gauge with specific needle designs. The type of needle (magnetic vs. mechanical) and the font used on the gauge face are period-specific details.

Original Body Fasteners such as rivets, bolts, and clips are often stamped with the manufacturer's logo. For instance, a rivet head stamped "BMW" identifies an original fastener on a pre-war model.

Original Door Handles may be made of metal with a specific shape and finish. The design of the handle, including the presence of a "keyhole" or "pull-tab," should be compared to factory drawings.

Original Interior Light Fixtures often used incandescent bulbs with particular socket types. The fixture's metal housing and glass shade can be matched to period photographs.

Original Seat Belts were not fitted on most pre-1970s cars, but if present, they are typically lap belts made of woven fabric. Modern three-point belts are a later addition.

Original Emblem Placement is important for authenticity. The location of the brand badge on the grille, trunk lid, or hood must correspond to factory specifications. A misplaced badge is a clear sign of alteration.

Original Engine Cover often bears a stamped logo or part number. The shape of the cover and the presence of original mounting bolts can be checked against factory examples.

Original Radiator design varies by manufacturer and era. Early radiators often had a honeycomb core, while later models used finned aluminum. The radiator's shape, mounting brackets, and inlet/outlet connections are diagnostic.

Original Cooling System Hoses were typically rubber with specific diameters and lengths. The routing diagram in the service manual can be used to verify correct hose placement.

Original Steering Column Boots protect the steering shaft and are often made of leather or fabric. The pattern and stitching of the boot should match period examples.

Original Gear Shift Lever design, including the shape of the knob and the routing of the linkage, is often unique to a model. A modern lever with a different ergonomic shape indicates a replacement.

Original Handbrake Lever may be a metal rod with a wooden handle. The finish and engraving on the lever can be compared to factory specifications.

Original Interior Trim Panels such as door panels, rear seatbacks, and quarter panels often feature stamped

metal or painted wood. The presence of original metal stamping indicates authenticity.

Original Exterior Trim includes chrome strips, mudguards, and fender flares. Matching the design and finish to period photographs confirms originality.

Original Window Seals are often made of rubber or leather. The shape and thickness of the seal can be compared to factory diagrams.

Original Door Hinges are typically stamped metal with a specific hinge pin size. The hinge's shape and mounting holes should be checked against original parts catalogs.

Original Engine Valve Train components such as pushrods, rocker arms, and valve springs are often stamped with the OEM logo. The configuration of the valve train (e.g., overhead cam vs. side valve) must match the model's specifications.

Original Clutch Assembly includes the clutch disc, pressure plate, and release bearing. The clutch's friction material and design are period-specific. A modern ceramic clutch indicates a performance upgrade.

Original Flywheel may carry a stamped number and have a specific weight and size. The flywheel's tooth count should correspond to the engine's design.

Original Exhaust System can be traced from the manifold to the muffler. Each component's shape, material, and mounting method must align with factory drawings.

Original Ignition Coil is often stamped with the manufacturer's name and part number. The coil's design (e.g., "magneto" vs. "coil-and-breaker") should be consistent with the engine's era.

Original Carburetor is a critical component for engine performance. Early carburetors were often single-choke, while later models introduced dual-choke designs. The carburetor's casting marks and part numbers can be verified against OEM parts lists.

Original Fuel Pump may be mechanical and driven by the engine, or a later electric pump. The pump's mounting location and drive method are diagnostic.

Original Cooling Fan design varies; early fans were wood or steel, later models used aluminum. The fan's blade shape and mounting brackets should be checked.

Original Starter Motor (if applicable) often bears a serial number that can be cross-referenced with the engine's build sheet. Early vehicles may lack an electric starter entirely.

Original Battery technology changed from lead-acid to nickel-cadmium and beyond. The physical dimensions and terminal configuration can indicate the period.

Original Electrical Switches such as the ignition switch, headlamp switch, and horn button are often stamped with the OEM logo. The switch's tactile feel and design are clues to originality.

Original Wiring Harness Connectors were often simple metal terminals with screw clamps. Modern connectors with plastic housings are a later addition.

Original Interior Lighting includes the dome light, map light, and instrument panel illumination. The bulb type (e.g., 6-volt vs. 12-volt) and fixture design must match the vehicle's electrical system.

Original Gauges may have specific needle types (magnetic, mechanical) and face designs. The presence of original glass lenses and metal bezels is an authenticity factor.

Original Engine Oil Cooler (if equipped) is often a small radiator attached to the engine. Its design and mounting location should be verified.

Original Exhaust Heat Shield protects the body from heat. The shield's material (metal or fabric) and mounting brackets are period-specific.

Original Transmission Fluid Reservoir may be a metal canister with a vent. The shape and mounting method should be compared to factory specifications.

Original Fuel Tank Breather is a small vent that allows fuel vapors to escape. The vent's design and material can be checked against period diagrams.

Original Brake Pedal shape and travel distance are specific to the vehicle's braking system. The pedal's mounting brackets and linkages should be verified.

Original Clutch Pedal may have a specific throw length and feel. The pedal's lever arm and pivot point are diagnostic.

Original Gear Lever Linkage includes rods and bushings that connect the shift lever to the transmission. The length and routing of the linkage must match factory drawings.

Original Handbrake Linkage is often a steel cable connected to the rear brakes. The cable's routing and attachment points can be checked.

Original Body Panel Alignment is assessed by measuring gaps between doors, fenders, and the hood. Consistent gaps indicate original panel fit; uneven gaps may suggest panel replacement.

Original Paint Thickness can be measured with a dry-film gauge. Early paints typically have a thickness of 20–30 µm; modern paints may be thicker.

Original Interior Finish includes the type of varnish or lacquer applied to