

Top Questions to Ask When Buying a Tractor

By asking the right questions, you will have set the groundwork to enable your dealer to help you identify the right tractor for your short and long-term needs.

Here are some questions that you should answer to put yourself on the right path to finding the best tractor for your specific needs.

1) How many acres do you own? Do you plan to buy additional acres or a larger property in the future?

Buying the right tractor with the right amount of horsepower and features the first time is often more cost effective than upgrading a short time later. Think about your future needs so that you look at equipment that can grow with you as your needs grow. This will provide you with the greatest long-term value overall.

2) What type of property do you own?

When your property includes pasture, a large lawn, cultivated acres, a long driveway, or horses or livestock the work you need from your tractor will vary. Your dealer will help you match the tractor to your property and its needs.

3) What are the capabilities of the people who will operate the tractor?

Considering the level of experience of the people operating the tractor will help you find the best transmission (gear drive, hydrostat or shuttle), platform height and control configuration. Also consider any physical restrictions of the operators which may influence the need for specific ergonomics like right-hand fender mounted controls.

4) What jobs need to be accomplished?

Jobs such as mowing, moving hay, grading, landscaping, moving materials, etc., or any combination of these jobs will require different attachments and horsepower. Knowing the jobs ahead of time or any future project needs will help ensure your tractor meets your expectations long term.

5) What is your time factor? How much time do you have to complete the jobs?

The number of hours you plan on spending on the tractor combined with the jobs you need to do determine the right tractor and implement combination.

For example, if you have a large number of acres and limited time on the weekends, you might need a tractor with higher horsepower that can pull a larger mower; compared to someone who has more time and can accomplish the same job, with a smaller tractor with a smaller mower.

Tip: Most tractor owners realize they are spending more time on the tractor as they uncover the vast array of jobs their tractor can do. Be sure to consider any future needs (i.e. creating a koi pond) as well as what you plan on doing immediately.

6) Will you do maintenance and minor repairs yourself?

This may be the deciding factor between buying a new tractor with a warranty and greater reliability or buying a more affordable used tractor that will require occasional repairs.

7) What should I expect from my dealer?

Your relationship with your dealer should be a key factor in your purchase, as you'll be working with him or her over a number of years. In many circumstances, the choice of the dealer is the deciding factor between two brands of tractors. Make sure the dealer takes the time to help select the right tractor for you, and supports you after your purchase. Speak with the service manager to ensure that you are comfortable with their knowledge, parts availability and hours of operation.

8) What type of post-sale service is important to you?

If you are a first-time tractor owner, a professional full-service dealer may be a valuable resource. Consider your training needs for tractor operation, ongoing maintenance and service, as well as availability of someone to answer your questions and provide advice on completing jobs on your property.

9) How much are you prepared to spend on a tractor and attachments?

Consider your budget. Investigate your needs. Consider model year, resale value, package pricing, service and spare parts availability, warranty and availability of financing, as low as 0%. Additional options such as leasing or renting may be available as well.