


**From:** autoadvisorai@outlook.com  
**Subject:** Your Personalized AutoAdvisorAI Vehicle Test Plan

Hi there! Here is the personalized vehicle test plan you requested:

 **Pro Tip:** Print this and take it to the lot. Use the notes sections below to document your findings. You can upload a photo of these notes to our Acquisition Strategy generator later!

**Vehicle Context:** The 2023 Subaru Forester Sport utilizes the 2.5L FB25 Direct-Injection engine paired with a Lineartronic CVT. At 33,165 miles, this vehicle is approaching the expiration of its 3-year/36,000-mile bumper-to-bumper warranty, making this inspection critical for identifying "warranty-able" repairs before you take ownership. While generally reliable, this mileage interval is the primary pivot point for cooling system integrity and drivetrain fluid health.

## 1. The "Watch Out" Briefing

- **Thermal Control Valve (TCV) Integrity:** This model year is prone to TCV failures which can lead to engine overheating or a "no heat" condition in the cabin. Inspect the area below the intake manifold for crusty blue/green coolant residue.  
**Notes: Was not able to inspect this area.**
- **CVT Chain Slip & Shudder:** While the Lineartronic CVT is refined, at 33k miles, any "hunting" for ratios or a rhythmic "chirp" during low-speed deceleration indicates premature wear. Ensure the transmission is stone-cold for the start of your test drive.  
**Notes: No noise heard.**
- **EyeSight Camera Obstruction:** The dual-camera system is sensitive to windshield clarity. Check for any "star" chips or non-OEM glass replacements, as aftermarket glass often lacks the optical grade required for the Pre-Collision Braking to function.  
**Notes: Windshield looks fine.**
- **Battery Sulfation:** Subaru OE batteries are frequently undersized for the "Auto Start-Stop" load. Look for white acid flowering on the terminals or a sluggish crank that takes more than 1.5 seconds.  
**Notes: There was a sluggish crank.**

## 2. Dealer Risk Flags

- **The "AWD Tire Cheat":** Subaru's Symmetrical AWD requires all four tires to be within 2/32" of each other in tread depth. If you see one or two brand-new tires mixed with the originals, the dealer is risking your center differential to save on reconditioning costs.  
**Notes: Tires look a worn all around. Look like the original tires.**
- **Engine Bay "Silicone Masking":** Dealers often spray heavy silicone dressing over the engine to hide weeping oil from the cam carrier covers. Feel the underside of the engine block—if your fingers come back with fresh oil, walk away.  
**Notes: Did not see any silicone spray.**

- **Cabin Filter "Tell-Tale":** Pull the glovebox and check the cabin air filter. If it's clogged with debris at 33k miles, it's a high-probability indicator that the "1-owner" neglected the more expensive 30,000-mile major service interval.

Notes: No debris noted.

#### 4. The Lot Walkaround (Pre-Drive)

- **Underbody Heat Shield Rattle:** Use a gloved hand to gently shake the exhaust heat shields. These are notorious for rusting at the mounting points even at low mileage, leading to a metallic "buzz" at 2,500 RPM.

Notes: Did not perform this step.

- **Rotor Lip & Pad Life:** At 33k miles, the original brake pads are likely at 30-40% life. Check for a significant "lip" on the outer edge of the front rotors; if the lip is sharp, you'll be looking at a \$600 brake job within six months.

Notes: Could not tell if the lip is sharp.

- **Sport Trim Orange Accents & Trim Fading:** Inspect the orange exterior accents and the roof rail tie-down points for UV fading or "chalking." On the Sport trim, these are prone to discoloration if the vehicle was parked outside in high-UV climates.

Notes: There is a little bit of fading.

- **Rear Gate Strut Speed:** Open the power liftgate. It should operate smoothly without a "groan" or "pop" at the top of its arc. Slow operation here often precedes a total motor failure, a common Forester grievance.

Notes: Opens and closes fine.

#### 5. Power-On & Startup Evaluation

- **Starlink Infotainment "Ghosting":** Upon startup, immediately cycle through the radio presets and navigation. Look for "ghost touches" or a lag of more than 3 seconds. These head units are prone to internal delamination which requires a full (and expensive) replacement of the 8-inch display.

Notes: No lags noted.

- **EPS Motor "Pop":** With the engine running and the vehicle in Park, turn the steering wheel rapidly 90 degrees left and right. Listen for a metallic "pop" or "clunk" from the steering column, which indicates play in the Electric Power Steering (EPS) rack or a worn intermediate shaft.

Notes: No pop or clunk.

- **PZEV Cold-Start Harmonic:** Listen for an excessive metallic vibration from the engine bay during the first 30 seconds of high-idle. While Subarus are naturally "clattery," a rhythmic buzzing often points to a loose heat shield on the exhaust manifold or a failing A/C compressor clutch bearing.

Notes: Can't tell if there is excessive metallic vibration.

- **SRH & RAB Diagnostic Check:** Watch the instrument cluster for the "SRH OFF" (Steering Responsive Headlights) or "RAB" (Reverse Automatic Braking) warning lights. If these stay illuminated for more than 5 seconds after startup, there is a communication error in the CAN bus system.

Notes: No warning lights.

#### 6. The Test Drive (In Motion)

- **Rear Wheel Bearing "Drone":** Accelerate to 50 MPH and gently veer the car left and right within your lane. If you hear a low-frequency "wuh-wuh-wuh" drone that changes pitch with steering input, the rear wheel bearings are failing—a common premature wear item on the SK-platform Forester.  
**Notes: No noise heard.**
- **Front Control Arm "Squawk":** Drive over a speed bump or a driveway entrance at an angle. Listen for a rubbery "squawk" or "crunch" from the front suspension. This indicates the large fluid-filled rear bushings on the front lower control arms are torn or leaking.  
**Notes: No rubbery sounds heard.**
- **SI-Drive Mode Transition:** Toggle between "I" (Intelligent) and "S" (Sport) modes while maintaining a steady 35 MPH. The transition should be a crisp change in RPM. Any "stumble" or "hunting" during this electronic throttle recalibration suggests a dirty throttle body or a pending software update.  
**Notes: There was a slight stumble.**
- **Lane Keep Assist (LKA) Smoothness:** Engage the EyeSight cruise control on a highway. The steering wheel should provide subtle, smooth centering. If the wheel "jerks" or "pings" between the lines, the steering angle sensor may be out of calibration.  
**Notes: Seems fine.**

## 7. The Tech & Interior Audit

- **Panoramic Moonroof "Stutter":** Open the massive glass sunroof fully. If it moves slowly or "stutters" during the last 3 inches of travel, the tracks are likely contaminated or misaligned, which will eventually burn out the drive motor.  
**Notes: Opens fine.**
- **DriverFocus Infrared Camera:** Ensure the "DriverFocus" distraction mitigation system (the black sensor bar above the clock) recognizes your face. If it displays a "System Off" or "Camera Obstructed" message despite a clear view, the infrared module is faulty.  
**Notes: No Issues.**
- **Sport Trim StarTex Bolster Wear:** Inspect the driver's left-side seat bolster. The Sport trim uses a synthetic "StarTex" material; look for "spider-web" cracking or peeling where the material meets the cloth insert, which occurs from frequent entry/exit.  
**Notes: None observed.**
- **USB Port Data Integrity:** Plug a phone into the front USB ports to test Apple CarPlay/Android Auto. These ports are known to become physically loose on the circuit board, causing the connection to drop whenever you hit a bump.  
**Notes: Seems fine.**

## 8. Post-Drive Check

- **Rear Differential "Sulfur" Smell:** Immediately after the test drive, walk to the rear of the vehicle. A strong smell of "rotten eggs" or burnt gear oil indicates the rear differential is running hot or has a weeping pinion seal dripping onto the exhaust.  
**Notes: No smell noted.**
- **Radiator Fan "After-Run":** If the cooling fans continue to run at high speed for more than 60 seconds after the engine is shut off (in normal weather), it is a sign the engine is struggling with heat soak, often a precursor to TCV or thermostat issues.  
**Notes: Shut off before 60 seconds.**

## 9. Questions for the Salesperson

**Service Verification:** Ask for the internal manufacturer service history (not CarFax) to verify open recalls/TSBs are closed.

*Notes:* Asked for it and promised to provide it.

**Vehicle-Specific Question:** Since this vehicle is at 33,165 miles, can you provide the itemized invoice showing the 30,000-mile major service—specifically the brake fluid flush and front/rear differential oil changes—was performed to maintain the factory powertrain warranty?

*Notes:* Did not have access to the invoice showing the major service. Did not if it was done.

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### Ready to Negotiate with Confidence?

Once you've verified the vehicle condition and filled out this checklist, don't walk into the finance office blind. Run this exact car through our Negotiation Plan generator to get your target out-the-door price and word-for-word negotiation scripts.

**Build Your Negotiation Plan**

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