

MEMORANDUM

To: Customer
From: John D. Bonanno
Date: Month Day, Year
Example: Why the dealer price is \$4,156 to \$5,283 higher than our target prices for the 2026 Forester Sport Hybrid

The short version

Dealer's written quote for the white Forester Sport Hybrid comes to \$43,935.65 out the door. I worked out two target prices for the same car:

- **Realistic target: \$39,779.60.** This uses the same \$2,713 discount Other Dealer is already advertising on the same car. It is \$4,156.05 below Dealer's quote.
- **Stretch goal: \$38,652.78.** This uses a larger \$3,807 discount based on Edmunds' national fairprice estimate. It is \$5,282.87 below Dealer's quote.
- **Actual price: \$38,500 + 100 pounds of pet food** (*which brings the price still below the stretch goal*)

Both targets remove the \$1,322 in extras you do not need and keep Dealer's \$899 admin fee. The rest of the gap is the discount off sticker price, plus a little less sales tax because tax goes down when the price goes down.

Keep in mind that neither target is a price Dealer has offered. Dealer's salesman says there is no discount off sticker price. That is Dealer's policy, but Other Dealers is advertising the same car for about \$39,870 out the door, so the realistic target matches what another Triangle dealer is charging today. **Line by line**

Line item	Dealer quote	Realistic target	Stretch goal	Savings (realistic)	Savings (stretch)
Sticker price (MSRP)	\$40,284.00	\$40,284.00	\$40,284.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Dealer discount	\$0.00	(\$2,713.00)	(\$3,807.00)	\$2,713.00	\$3,807.00
Nitrogen in tires	\$199.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$199.00	\$199.00
Tint, 2 front windows	\$499.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$499.00	\$499.00
Door edge guards	\$299.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$299.00	\$299.00
MySubaru 5-year plan	\$325.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$325.00	\$325.00
Dealer admin fee	\$899.00	\$899.00	\$899.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
NC sales tax (3%)	\$1,275.15	\$1,154.10	\$1,121.28	\$121.05	\$153.87
State title, tag, and fees	\$155.50	\$155.50	\$155.50	\$0.00	\$0.00
Out-the-door total	\$43,935.65	\$39,779.60	\$38,652.78	\$4,156.05	\$5,282.87

What each line means

- **Sticker price: no difference.** All three numbers start from the same \$40,284 sticker price, so the comparison is fair.
- **Dealer discount: \$2,713 realistic, \$3,807 stretch.** This is the biggest piece. Dealer is asking full sticker price, and its salesman says there is no discount. But Other Dealers Subaru in Triangle

Area is taking \$2,713 off sticker on the same car in the same color, so that is the realistic target. The stretch goal comes from Edmunds, a well-known car pricing site, which suggests a fair price about \$3,807 below sticker for this trim. Edmunds is a national average, not a local offer, so treat it as a best case.

- **Time on the lot: 84 days.** Dealer's own website shows this car came into its inventory on Month Day, Year, nearly three months ago. That gives us a fair reason to ask for a discount.
- **Nitrogen: \$199.** Dealer filled the tires with nitrogen instead of regular air. Consumer Reports found the benefit is very small. Tire shops charge about \$5 a tire for this, and Costco does it free. It is not worth \$199.
- **Window tint: \$499.** This covers only the two front windows. Other Vendor does the same job for \$150, with a lifetime warranty. If you want tint, you can have it done there after the purchase.
- **Door edge guards: \$299.** These are thin strips that protect the door edges from chips. Genuine Subaru guards for the Forester list for \$139.95 online and stick on in a few minutes. They are not worth \$299.
- **MySubaru plan: \$325.** The basic MySubaru service, which includes emergency SOS and roadside help, is free for 5 years with a new Subaru. The \$325 charge is for an upgrade called Companion+ that adds remote start and remote lock from a phone. It is optional. Keep it only if you want those features.
- **Dealer admin fee: no difference.** Dealer charges \$899 for paperwork. Triangle dealers charge about the same (\$845 to \$899), and this fee is rarely negotiable, so both targets keep it. Push for a lower car price instead.
- **Sales tax: \$121.05 realistic, \$153.87 stretch.** North Carolina charges 3% tax on the price of the car plus the admin fee. When the price goes down, the tax goes down with it. This saving happens automatically.
- **State fees: no difference.** The title, tag, and transfer fees are set by the state. They are the same at every dealer and cannot be negotiated.

Not included in any of these numbers

Dealer's quote also offers a Subaru 3-Year Maintenance Plan for \$1,342. We will buy it after the car's price is signed, but for less. Another Subaru dealer advertises \$679, so we will offer \$700 and pay no more than \$995, separately from the loan.

What to do next

1. Call Other Dealer at XXX-XXX-XXXX. Confirm that stock number YYXXXX is on the lot and unsold, and ask for a written out-the-door price with no add-ons.
2. Ask Dealer to remove the nitrogen, tint, door guards, and MySubaru upgrade, and to beat Other Dealers' written price. Mention the Month Day inventory date.
3. Compare written out-the-door totals only. Monthly payments can hide extra costs.

Dealer add-ons vs. third-party prices

If you want any of these extras, you can usually get them for much less outside the dealer. Here is how Dealer's prices compare.

Add-on	Dealer	Third-party option	Third-party price	You save
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Nitrogen in tires	\$199.00	Tire shop fill (about \$5 per tire). Free at Costco for members.	\$20.00 (\$0 at Costco)	\$179.00
Tint, 2 front windows	\$499.00	Top Edge Window Tinting, Cary (XPEL XR film)	\$150.00	\$349.00
Door edge guards	\$299.00	Genuine Subaru set of 4, Crystal White Pearl (part SOA801P100W6), bought online; sticks on	\$139.95	\$159.05
MySubaru Companion+, 5 years	\$325.00	Subaru's listed 5-year price when paid by credit card (sold only through Subaru)	\$275.00	\$50.00
Total	\$1,322.00		\$584.95	\$737.05

Note: Removing all four add-ons from the deal saves the full \$1,322. The table shows what you would spend if you still want them. Prices checked October 2, 2026.

About the 5-year MySubaru charge

What it is. Every new Subaru comes with MySubaru Companion free for 5 years. That free plan covers the safety features that matter most: the SOS emergency button, automatic crash notification, stolen vehicle tracking, roadside help, and maintenance alerts. The \$325 line on Dealer's quote is for an upgrade called MySubaru Companion+. It adds convenience features run from your phone: remote engine start, remote lock and unlock, remote climate and seat controls, speed and curfew alerts, valet mode, trip logs, and a personal assistant service.

Why it is not worth \$325 for most people. You already get the important safety features free. The upgrade only adds conveniences, and the car's key fob already locks and unlocks the doors. Also, \$325 is the price Subaru sets for buyers who finance. Subaru lists the same 5-year upgrade for \$275, or 3 years for \$199, when you pay by credit card. So even if you want remote start, you may not need to buy it from Dealer at \$325. You can enroll within 180 days of buying the car by calling MySubaru at 1-855-753-2495; ask for the \$275 credit-card price. Subaru's pricing sheet says these new-car prices are only available during those first 180 days, so decide within that window.

Can it be removed? Yes. This is a subscription, not a part installed on the car, so there is nothing to physically take off. It is simply a line on the contract. Before you sign, ask Dealer to delete the \$325 line. Your free basic MySubaru plan stays in place either way. If Dealer says it cannot come off, ask for \$325 off the price of the car instead. If they still refuse, that is a good reason to buy from Other Dealers. Do not sign until the final contract shows the charge removed or the price lowered. I could not find Subaru's refund policy for canceling the upgrade after the sale, so do not count on getting the money back later.

If this is your last car

You plan to keep this car for many years, and that makes the \$325 upgrade an even weaker buy. Here is why.

- **It runs out after 5 years.** The \$325 covers only the first 5 years. If you keep the car 10 or 15 years, it does nothing for the years after that.
- **Everything costs money after year 5.** When the free 5-year period ends, even the basic safety plan becomes a paid service. A Subaru dealer's price sheet lists the basic plan at \$45 a year, and the basic plan plus the upgrade at \$119.99 a year. Over 15 years, keeping the upgrade the whole time would cost about \$1,525 (\$325 now plus about \$1,200 later). Keeping only the basic safety plan would cost about \$450, all of it after year 5. Prices may change.
- **The safety features are the part worth paying for.** For a long-term owner, the SOS button and automatic crash notification matter most, because they can bring help when you cannot call. Those come free for 5 years. After that, the money is better spent renewing the basic safety plan, not on remote start.

- **The technology can stop working.** These services run over the cell phone network. When the 3G network shut down in 2022, many 2016 to 2018 Subaru lost their connected services, including crash notification, SOS, and remote lock and unlock. Paying years ahead for a service tied to changing technology carries that risk.
- **You can add it later if you want it.** If you find you really want remote start, you can add the upgrade later on a monthly plan, about \$7.50 a month. There is no need to commit \$325 at signing.

Bottom line: Say no to the \$325 upgrade. Keep the free basic plan, and plan to renew just the safety features after year 5 if you still want them.