

BUY BY TYPE

How to buy a gas station

By Ayodele Olasiji, Optimax Commercial · Updated October 18, 2026 · 2 min read · Online at [optimaxdeals.com/guides/how-to-buy-a-gas-station](https://www.optimaxdeals.com/guides/how-to-buy-a-gas-station)

SHORT ANSWER

To buy a gas station, start with the fuel supply agreement, the underground storage tanks and the environmental record, then look at inside store sales, which usually carry more margin than fuel. Ask for monthly gallons, fuel margin, inside sales by category and tank compliance records. Lenders will want an environmental site assessment, and most buyers finance with an SBA loan.

How to, at a glance

1. Read the fuel supply agreement and its transfer terms
2. Check tank ages, compliance tests and leak history
3. Order an environmental site assessment
4. Verify fuel gallons and inside sales against tax returns
5. Confirm whether the land is included

Questions buyers ask

Do gas stations make money on gas?

Fuel margins are usually thin, and the store often earns more. Look at both, and at how much the business depends on one or the other.

What is the biggest risk buying a gas station?

Environmental problems under the ground. Old tanks and past leaks can be costly, which is why lenders require environmental reports.

Can I buy a gas station without industry experience?

Yes, but lenders will look harder at your management background and may want an experienced manager in place.

1. The fuel supply agreement

- Branded or unbranded, who the supplier is, and how many years remain.
- Whether the agreement transfers to you and on what terms.
- Any money the supplier advanced that must be repaid if the agreement ends early.

2. Tanks and the environmental record

- Age and material of each underground storage tank and its lines.

- State registration and recent compliance tests.
- Any history of leaks and whether cleanup was closed out by the state.
- An environmental site assessment. Lenders usually require a Phase I, and sometimes a Phase II with soil testing.

3. Inside sales and the numbers

- Monthly fuel gallons and margin per gallon, for at least two years.
- Inside sales by category: grocery, tobacco, beer and wine, lottery, food service.
- Point of sale reports matched to tax returns and bank deposits.
- Licenses that must transfer or be reissued: tobacco, alcohol, lottery.

4. Land or lease

Owning the land and building gives you control and a real estate asset. Leasing lowers the price but adds rent and lease risk. Ask which one the deal includes before you go further.

5. Financing

Gas stations are commonly financed with SBA 7(a) loans, with real estate terms up to 25 years when the land is included. See [SBA loans to buy a business](#).

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