



Car Maintenance Part 2: Tips that Save Money & the Environment

Following these tips can help you save money, increase your safety, and help reduce your car's environmental impact.

Driving Tips to Save Gas & Money

Don't drive if you don't have to

Condense your errands into fewer trips, and if possible, walk, ride a bike, use public transportation, or carpool. Remember a few summers back when gas prices rose? Did your driving behavior change? Think of the money and gas you would save if those were everyday habits.

Minimize idling your car

Idling gets you zero miles per gallon. The **new rule of thumb** is it's better to turn off your engine if you need to idle for more than 10 seconds. It's also a **myth** that cars need to be warmed up before driving under normal temperature conditions.

Avoid aggressive driving and high speeds

Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration, and hard braking) wastes gas and, on average, **lowers your highway gas mileage 33% and city mileage 5%**. Gas mileage also tends to decrease rapidly at speeds above 60 mph. Each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional **\$0.24 per gallon** for gas.

Regular Maintenance Tips

If you do not have the tools or knowledge, seek professional help

Tire Maintenance

Underinflated tires wear down more quickly and reduce your car's gas mileage by two to four percent. That may not seem like much but if every driver in the United States improved their vehicle's gas mileage by 2%, we would save nearly **3 billion gallons** of gasoline each year. Be sure to **check your tire pressure** regularly (including the spare tire), uneven tire wear, and have your tires rotated and balanced every 6,000 miles to conserve fuel and improve safety.

Air Filter replacement and Tune Ups

Air filter replacements and **tune ups** are often performed at the same time and both are extremely important to keep your car running smoothly and saving fuel. When your air filter gets clogged, your engine works harder and your car becomes less fuel efficient.

Check fluid levels

Check **fluid levels** regularly (more than just engine oil) to keep your car performing at a high level. Antifreeze/coolant should be changed ever two years and if you spill, clean it up. Animals (and kids too) are attracted to the sweet smell and taste – it is toxic and will harm them if consumed! Cleaning up afterwards also prevents chemicals from getting into the sewer system.

Other regular maintenance should include:

- Inspect belts and hoses for fraying and cracking
- Check all lights and your horn
- Wash and/or replace windshield wipers

Tools for Keeping Good Records

- [eCarLog](#)
- [Microsoft Office Vehicle Maintenance Log](#)



More Resources

- [The City's Idle Reduction Policy](#)
- [10 Simple Behavioral Changes That Save Gas](#)
- [The Top 10 Ways to Reduce Your Gasoline Consumption](#)