

\$\$ Fuel-Saving Tips \$\$

Regular Service & Maintenance

One of the most important tips to help improve your gas mileage is by keeping your vehicle well-maintained, which includes regular servicing.

Engine Maintenance

A vehicle with an inefficient engine or certain other parts will not make optimal use of fuel. Regular services can spot many problems that all reduce gas mileage – low fluids, dirty air filters, etc. Even having a new oxygen sensor can improve gas mileage by as much as 15 percent. Keeping up on your vehicle's maintenance also includes regular oil changes and using the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil.

Tire Maintenance

Keep an eye on your tires as well. Under-inflated tires are one of the most commonly ignored causes of poor gas mileage. Having your tires inflated to the manufacturer's recommended pressure can help you save up to 9 cents per gallon. Periodic wheel alignments can also improve gas mileage up to 10 percent.

Change Your Driving Style & Slow Down

If you tend to be more of an "aggressive" driver, you may want to consider changing your style. Speeding, rapid acceleration, and abrupt braking all make your engine work harder, which consequently wastes a lot of gas. You can anticipate stops to avoid sudden braking and coast to the next light if possible. Also, try to keep an eye down the road for potential slowdowns. By accelerating gradually and driving smoothly, you could see as much as a 20 percent increase in gas mileage.

Also try slowing down. As speed increases, gas mileage decreases. A vehicle moving at 55 mph can get about 15 percent better gas mileage than the same vehicle going 65 mph. Every 5 mph you drive over 60 mph, you are paying an additional 21 cents per gallon of gas.

Turn Off the AC

If you don't need to run the air conditioner, don't. Air conditioning uses more fuel, so if it's comfortable for you and your passengers, roll down the windows and open the air vents. Caution - this is usually only helpful when you are moving at lower speeds. At higher speeds, the air conditioner may actually be more efficient than the wind resistance from open windows.

Don't Sit, Plan Ahead

Don't waste fuel by sitting in your car and being idle for too long. This is why your gas mileage usually decreases in the city – you have more stops, more time to wait at lights, and more traffic. If you are going through a busy drive-thru, park and go inside instead. If you are parked and waiting for someone, turn off your engine. Idling uses more fuel than turning the engine off. This also goes for warming up your vehicle. Unless it's below freezing, cars don't actually need to be warmed up.

Another way to save gas is to combine all your errands into one trip and organizing all of your stops so you don't retrace your path. You can also plan your trips so you are driving at less congested times of the day. When there's less traffic, you are more likely to drive smoothly, which we already know helps save on gas.

Clean Out Your Car

The more weight that is in your car, the more gas it needs to do the work. Clean out your trunk, backseat, or pickup bed and remove anything that is unnecessary. It doesn't take much to acquire an extra 40-50 lbs. of stuff and removing this can increase your gas mileage by 1-2 percent.

Weather Conditions

Although the following is mostly out of your control, it is noteworthy to mention that the weather does have an impact on your gas mileage. Driving into a 20 mph headwind can lower your gas mileage by as much as 6 percent, while driving up a mountain road can reduce it as much as 25 percent. Driving on gravel or in slush and snow also requires more gas.

Transport Alternatives

By finding alternatives to driving your car, you will not only save on gas, but you'll also prevent wear and tear on your vehicle. If possible, try to carpool or use public transportation. Even better, you could try walking or biking. Not only will you save money, but it's also good for your health. Even by using a different mode of transportation only a couple of days a week, you will save a significant amount of money on gas.

Courtesy of: http://www.continentalwarranty.com/resource_center/tips_and_ideas/

Cruise Control

Using cruise control on the highway helps you maintain a constant speed and, in most cases, will save gas.

Courtesy of: <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/driveHabits.shtml>

Turn Right!

And, did you know that in 2004, UPS announced that its drivers would avoid making left turns? The time spent idling while waiting to turn against oncoming traffic burns fuel and costs millions each year. A software program maps a customized route for every driver to minimize lefts.

Courtesy of:

http://www.time.com/time/specials/2007/environment/article/0,28804,1602354_1603074_1603741,00.html

These tips brought to you as part of National Air Quality Awareness Week.