



21 tips for reduced gasoline consumption and enhanced fuel economy

You can reduce your fuel consumption significantly by following these simple tips. For every gallon of gas that you don't have to buy, you save money. You also reduce pollution significantly — every gallon of gas you burn generates 20 pounds of carbon dioxide, the primary contributor to global warming.

FUEL-WISE TIP	SAVINGS
1. Drive with a "soft foot." Smooth acceleration and deceleration saves gas. When you start your car, wait a few seconds for the oil to circulate and then drive off gently. Avoid jack rabbit starts and stops. Make smooth, gradual lane changes. Build up speed in anticipation of approaching a hill. It takes three times more fuel to get up to cruising speed than to maintain it.	up to 100%
2. Obey the speed limit. Vehicles are most efficient at 50-55 miles per hour. If you are driving above 60 mph, you can save 7 percent for every 5 mph you slow down.	7-23%
3. Keep your car well-tuned. A well-tuned car uses less fuel. Give your car a tune-up twice a year, preferably in the spring and fall, and always get a tune-up before embarking on a long trip.	3-20%
4. Maintain proper tire inflation. Low tire pressures can cause drag, which wastes gas. Check every two weeks and prior to a long trip to make sure tires are not under-inflated. Under or over-inflated tires are a safety hazard and can cause premature tire failure. Maintaining tires properly will also extend their life. Rotate your tires every 5,000 miles and have the wheels balanced.	5%
5. Remove unnecessary weight from your car trunk. An extra 100 pounds can decrease your fuel economy by more than 1 percent.	1%

FUEL-WISE TIP	SAVINGS
6. Remove roof racks & carriers. Reducing your vehicle's wind resistance is one of the most important elements in getting good gas mileage, especially at high speeds. Roof-top racks and carriers disrupt air flow. Take them off when not in use and carry items inside the vehicle if possible.	N/A
7. Use air conditioning sparingly. On average, a car uses about 20 percent more fuel if the air conditioning is on. If you are driving less than 40 mph and can be comfortable without the A/C, open your windows instead. Above 40 mph, A/C is preferable because open windows increase wind resistance. Try to keep the A/C at 75 degrees.	up to 20%
8. Avoid "cold starts." Plan your driving and combine several errands into one car trip. The best way to warm up the engine is at low speeds: accelerate gradually. Warming up a car in the driveway wastes gas.	10%
9. Change your oil frequently. Change the motor oil according to manufacturer specifications and keep fuel filters changed and clean. Use brand-name products and the correct oil weight. Check for oil leaks.	4-5%
10. Keep your car well maintained. Exhaust leaks, clogged catalytic converters and plugged mufflers can cause poor fuel economy. Clean your heating and cooling systems	N/A

FUEL-WISE TIP**SAVINGS**

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to prevent energy losses. If your check engine light comes on, have your car serviced.

11 Change air filter regularly. N/A
A dirty air filter increases fuel consumption and can cause poor performance. Replace the air filter according to manufacturer specifications, or even more often in dusty conditions.

12 Remove snow & ice from vehicle. N/A
Snow and ice left on the vehicle decreases gas mileage by disrupting air flow and increasing vehicle weight. It is also dangerous for those driving behind you. Maine snow and ice is for skiers, snowmobilers, and for kids, not for driving with on your vehicle.

13 Check your brakes. N/A
A stuck brake caliper can create drag, and that wastes fuel. Check brake and transmission fluids each month. Tighten belts and have frayed or cracked ones changed. Look for cracks, swelling or soft spots on hoses. Every 2,000 miles, or twice a year, have your brakes checked.

14 Choose the right octane. N/A
Purchase less expensive regular gasoline, if your vehicle does not require premium or mid-grade fuel. Experiment to find the gasoline octane rating with which your car motor will not knock. Try a 50-50 mixture of higher octane gasoline mixed with a portion of lower octane gasoline.

15 Use cruise control & overdrive gears. N/A
Using cruise control on the highway (unless very hilly) helps maintain a constant speed and saves gas in most cases. Overdrive gears reduce engine speed and that saves gas and reduces engine wear.

16 Use alternate transportation modes. N/A
For short trips, consider walking, biking or taking public transportation when available. Joining a car pool or vanpool will cut driving expenses and fuel consumption, especially for commuters. Telecommute if and when possible.

FUEL-WISE TIP**SAVINGS**

17 Avoid unnecessary idling. N/A
Unnecessary idling wastes more gas than turning off and restarting the engine. Idling consumes 1/2 to 1 gallon of gas per hour. If your car is going to sit idle for more than one minute, turn it off.

18 Don't top off your tank. N/A
Do not top off your gas tank. In warm weather, fuel expansion can cause an overflow.

19 Avoid traffic congestion. N/A
Being stuck in traffic wastes fuel. Start trips early in the day while traffic is light. Plan meal stops to coincide with likely periods of traffic congestion.

20 Track your mileage. N/A
To see if your efforts are paying off, keep a record of car maintenance and track gas mileage on a monthly basis. Reset your trip meter each time you fill up the tank to allow precise observations. Poor mileage may indicate your vehicle is not operating at peak performance and should be inspected. You can save on fuel by catching problems early.

21 Consider vehicle fuel economy. 4-20%
When in the market for a new vehicle, consider its fuel economy. Today's vehicle fuel economy ranges from 10 miles per gallon to 70. When gasoline is \$3 per gallon, this difference translates into paying as much as \$0.30 or as little as \$0.04 per mile for your gas. Four-wheel drive vehicles may use more gasoline than other vehicles, especially when this function is engaged during routine driving. A vehicle with an automatic transmission may use more gasoline than one with a manual transmission. The choice of a smaller engine usually results in better gas mileage. Cruise control may be another fuel-saving option, if you drive on open roads.

These tips have been provided by the Maine Office of Energy Independence & Security and the Maine Department of Transportation. For more ways to reduce your fuel consumption and save money, please visit exploremaine.org.