

Driving More Efficiently



Drive Sensibly

Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration and braking) wastes gas - It can lower your gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds and by 5 percent around town.

Observe the Speed Limit

While each vehicle reaches its optimal fuel economy at a different speed (or range of speeds), gas mileage usually decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 mph. You can assume that each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional \$0.30 per gallon for gas at \$4 per gallon.

Remove Excess Weight

Avoid keeping unnecessary items in your vehicle, especially heavy ones. An extra 100 pounds in your vehicle could reduce your MPG by up to 2%. The reduction is based on the percentage of extra weight relative to the vehicle's weight and affects smaller vehicles more than larger ones.

Avoid Excessive Idling

The worst mileage a vehicle can get is 0 mpg, which occurs when it idles. Idling for long periods of time consumes gas that could be saved by simply turning off the engine; restarting an engine uses about the same amount of gas as idling for 30 seconds. When idling for longer periods of time, shut off the engine.

However, turning off the engine may disable vehicle functions, including safety.

Drivers should be certain to only utilize this strategy in situations where there is no possibility of collision.

Avoid left turns at intersections this reduces idling which in turn lowers fuel consumption. At stop lights, making a right turn at an intersection tends to be faster than at a left turn. You also have the option of "right on red" unless otherwise indicated by traffic signs. It is hard to believe but going around the block has been shown to save fuel and time, as demonstrated by a 2006 UPS report.

Use Cruise Control

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

Keep Your Engine Properly Tuned

Fixing a car that is noticeably out of tune or has failed an emissions test can improve its gas mileage by an average of 4 percent, though results vary based on the kind of repair and how well it is done. Fixing a serious maintenance problem, such as a faulty oxygen sensor, can improve your mileage by *as much as 40 percent*.

Check & Replace Air Filters Regularly

Replacing a clogged air filter can improve your car's gas mileage by as much as 10 percent. Your car's air filter keeps impurities from damaging the inside of your engine. Not only will replacing a dirty air filter save gas, it will protect your engine.

Keep Tires Properly Inflated

You can improve your gas mileage by around 3.3 percent by keeping your tires inflated to the proper pressure. Under-inflated tires can lower gas mileage by 0.4 percent for every 1 psi drop in pressure of all four tires. Properly inflated tires are safer and last longer.

Use the Recommended Grade of Motor Oil

You can improve your gas mileage by 1-2 percent by using the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil.

Planning & Combining Trips

Combining errands into one trip saves you time and money. Several short trips can use twice as much fuel as a longer multipurpose trip covering the same distance. With a little planning, you can avoid retracing your route and reduce the distance you travel as well. You'll not only save fuel, but also reduce wear and tear on your car.

Commuting

If possible, take advantage of carpools and ride-share programs. You can cut your weekly fuel costs in half and save wear on your car if you take turns driving with other commuters. Many urban areas allow vehicles with multiple passengers to use special High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes.

Traveling

A roof rack or carrier provides additional cargo space and may allow you to meet your needs with a smaller car. However, a loaded roof rack can decrease your fuel economy by 5 percent. Reduce aerodynamic drag and improve your fuel economy by placing items inside the trunk whenever possible.

Avoid carrying unneeded items, especially heavy ones. An extra 100 lbs in the trunk reduces a typical car's fuel economy by 1-2 percent.