



Ten Car Care Tips

Consistent car care is the health insurance for your car. To help keep your car on the road and running in top condition, review these 10 maintenance tips:

1. **Review your owner's manual**, which explains how the car works. The manual is the first step to becoming a maintenance savvy car owner.
2. **Change the motor oil and filter regularly**. Engine oil is the most vital fluid your vehicle needs to operate. Most car manufacturers recommend changing the oil every three months or 3,000 miles.
3. **Protect the fuel system and be cautious at the pump**. Always use the type of gas recommended for your vehicle. If you see a fuel tanker refilling a gas pump, try a different gas station for your fill-up. When the gasoline from the tanker is poured into the in-ground tanks, water and settled debris is stirred up. This debris could enter your vehicle's gas tank and cause problems.
4. **Keep the battery running and the case clean**. The battery and charging system should be checked at a service facility at least once a year. Clean the battery case by wiping it with moist paper towels and a mild detergent. Dirt and residue on the case can cause a current drain on the battery.
5. **Conduct a basic belt inspection once a month** to prevent premature engine wear and extend your vehicle's life. Carefully inspect the belts including edges and undersides for any signs of wear.
6. **Don't ignore brake noises**. Brakes should be inspected every 6,000 miles
7. **Keep a close eye on tire inflation and tread wear**. Rotate tires every 6,000 miles or every other oil change. Before a long trip, always inspect your tires for signs of wear or road debris that may have penetrated the tire.
8. **Change the air filter once a year or after 12,000 miles**. Change the filter more frequently if you live in an area with a lot of dust, dirt or smog.
9. **Schedule an appointment at a service facility for a vehicle engine inspection every 30,000 miles**. The inspection allows a service technician to check the engine functions.
10. **Maintain the cooling system**. The coolant level should be within one inch of the top of the radiator filler neck, and the coolant should be free of contaminants. Flush or refill the cooling system at 40,000 to 100,000 miles.

With the complexity of today's vehicles, it is important to be careful if you decide to work on your vehicle. Before beginning any service or repair, review your owner's manual. Be sure you understand the maintenance procedure, have the proper tools and follow the safety precautions, including the handling instructions for chemicals. If you're not sure about the repair, consult a professional technician.