

Simple Tips to Save Gas

To most people, the most obvious way to save gas is buying a new car that gets better gas mileage. But before you head to the dealer to make your trade-in, you should know that there are easier ways to save money on gasoline.

Do you stop short at traffic lights and then make a jack-rabbit start? Do you weave in and out of traffic? Driving more sensibly can save you 5%-33% on your gasoline costs. Driving the speed limit can save you another 7%-23%. It is estimated that every 5 miles you drive above 60 miles per hour is comparable to spending an additional \$0.20 on gas. Using your cruise control can also save gas since it regulates your speed. Additionally, using your overdrive gears when climbing hills can help. Excessive idling wastes fuel as well so you might want to consider turning off your car if you need to wait for someone or are completely stopped in traffic.

If you're carrying around a lot of junk in your trunk, now is the time to clean out your car. Every extra pound you carry in your vehicle reduces your gas mileage. This formula applies more accurately to small vehicles rather than larger ones, but the total savings of reducing the weight in your car by 100 pounds is 1-2%.

Keeping your car properly maintained can improve your gas mileage as much as 19%. Visit your mechanic to check if your car is properly in tune and that there are no major mechanical problems detracting from your gas mileage. Discuss a schedule for changing your air filter, as this can improve mileage by up to 10%. Perhaps the simplest mileage savings comes from keeping your tires properly inflated. Purchase a tire gauge at your automotive supply store and learn to use it!

Many employers are now offering their employees the ability to telecommute and work from their home offices. Telecommuting just one day out of ten will obviously save you 10% on your gas costs. Carpooling, ride-sharing and public transportation are also ways to save gas, but these things may not be an option for you due to scheduling conflicts. You can still save gas by avoiding rush hour commuting, combining errands into one trip and arranging your route to avoid backtracking.

Many families are unwilling or unable to give up their annual driving vacation, but can save money by making sure their car is properly maintained as described above and by driving the speed limit. Additionally, using a top carrier causes drag and can reduce efficiency by as much as 5% in addition to the reductions caused by carrying extra weight.

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