

How to Get Better Fuel Economy

by Mark Salem

(NAPSA)—Poor fuel economy can put a costly damper on any summer vacation taken in the family vehicle. But there are a few simple things you can do to enhance your fuel economy no matter what type of vehicle you drive, which means you'll buy less gas and have more money to enjoy the summer.

Let's go through a few ideas that are proven to improve your fuel economy.

Get the junk out of the trunk. I own an auto-repair facility, and you'd be amazed at the amount of stuff I find in trunks of cars these days. I've seen junk in the trunk of cars equivalent to a full-size man. Why haul the dead weight? Remove unnecessary winter supplies such as bags of salt and tire chains from the trunk of your vehicle. Get that bag of old newspapers to the recycling bin. Your vehicle will require less energy to move without the dead weight. So ask yourself if you really need to be transporting around that card table, set of golf clubs or storage container, and unload any unnecessary items from your trunk.

Keep air in your tires. Remember what it was like riding your bike as a child with half-flat tires? It was hard to get the bike moving. Once you inflated the tires, your bike was like a new sports car; it went faster with far less effort. Your car feels the same pain when the tires are at, say, 28 psi instead of the recommended 35 psi. (Just to be clear: Not every tire should be inflated to 35 psi. Look for the recommended psi rating on a label on your driver's door or in the glove box.)

Use the right motor oil for your vehicle. I can't overstate the importance of using good motor oil. To illustrate what I mean, try a little exercise. Take



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your hands and place them together with palms touching. Then rub the palms against each other quickly. Feel that warmth generated by friction? That's exactly what is happening inside your engine. If you rubbed your hands together like that for an hour, you'd probably do some damage to your hands (which means you can stop rubbing your palms together now). And you'd also have to work much harder to rub your hands together.

Now you know why motor oil is so important to the efficient performance of your engine. If you put motor oil between those two sliding surfaces, a lot of that friction goes away, and the engine doesn't have to work as hard. As a result, your engine is more fuel efficient.

But not every motor oil is created equal. Some last longer than others. While certain motor oils may lose their effectiveness after a few thousand miles, others are designed to last for a very long time. ExxonMobil makes an oil, Mobil 1 Extended Performance, that is actually guaranteed to protect and perform for up to 15,000 miles.

Keep your vehicle clean. Believe it or not, that layer of dirt on your exterior creates drag that, over long distances, hurts your miles-per-gallon count. Keeping your vehicle washed and waxed will improve your vehicle's aerodynamics, improving your fuel economy. And you'll feel good about driving around in a clean vehicle.

Consider the best option for ventilation. Conventional wisdom says that cars are always more fuel-efficient when the air conditioner is off. On long trips or highway driving, however, using the air conditioner is actually more fuel efficient than rolling down the windows. When driving fast, open windows create a drag that forces the engine to work harder to maintain speed. If you're driving on short trips or in city traffic, roll down the windows and enjoy the breeze, but on the highway, turn on the air.

For more information about car care, visit www.mobiloil.com.

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