



21 tips for reduced gasoline consumption and enhanced fuel economy

You can reduce your fuel consumption up to 50% 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	FUEL-WISE TIP	SAVINGS
<p>1 <u>Keep your car well-tuned.</u></p> <p>■ 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.</p>	3-20%	<p>7 <u>Use air conditioning economically.</u></p> <p>■ Air conditioning can dramatically reduce fuel economy. Use air conditioners only when needed. Utilize the economy setting that allows circulation of unchilled air or the maximum or re-circulation setting that reduces the amount of hot outside air that must be chilled.</p>	N/A
<p>2 <u>Change your oil frequently.</u></p> <p>■ Change the motor oil frequently and keep fuel filters changed and clean. Use brand-name products and the correct oil weight. Check for oil leaks.</p>	4-5%	<p>8 <u>Check & clean radiator & air conditioner.</u></p> <p>■ N/A Clean heating and cooling systems prevent overheating and energy loss. Remove foreign matter from radiators and air conditioners to keep them operating efficiently. Also check your thermostat — a defective radiator thermostat can waste gas by extending the car's warm-up time or decreasing the engine's operating temperature.</p>	
<p>3 <u>Maintain proper tire inflation.</u></p> <p>■ 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-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.</p>	5%	<p>9 <u>Check your brakes.</u></p> <p>■ A stuck brake caliper can create drag, which 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.</p>	N/A
<p>4 <u>Switch to radial tires.</u></p> <p>■ Radial tires reduce friction, and they can reduce gas consumption by as much as 5% in town, by 7% on the highway and by 10% after the tires have warmed up for about 20 minutes.</p>	5-10%	<p>10 <u>Choose the right octane.</u></p> <p>■ 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.</p>	N/A
<p>5 <u>Check the idle setting.</u></p> <p>■ An excessively fast idle wastes gasoline. Have it adjusted and optimized.</p>	N/A		
<p>6 <u>Clean the air filter.</u></p> <p>■ A dirty air filter increases fuel consumption and can cause poor performance. Check the air filter twice a year, or more often in dusty conditions.</p>	N/A		

FUEL-WISE TIP**SAVINGS**

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

11 Regularly tune up your car. N/A
 ■ Small problems can waste gas. Make sure a replacement gas cap is the right one for your car. A poorly fitting cap can cause engine problems. Check your battery every month to see if it needs water. Keep the connections fairly clean and free of corrosion. Get an emissions test or tune-up where key emission control parts can be inspected, adjusted or replaced. If your automatic choke sticks, have it repaired. It is wasting gasoline.

12 Avoid 'cold starts.' 10%
 ■ An engine that has been warmed up uses less gas. Plan your driving and combine several errands into one car trip.

13 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.

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

15 Drive with a "soft foot." up to 100%
 ■ 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 sudden starts and stops. Make smooth, gradual lane changes. Build up speed in anticipation of approaching a hill. It takes 3 times more fuel to get up to cruising speed than to maintain it.

FUEL-WISE TIP**SAVINGS**

16 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 in traffic, at a stop light, in a construction work zone or elsewhere for more than one minute, turn it off.

17 Drive the speed limit. N/A
 ■ Vehicles are most efficient at 50-55 miles per hour. If you are driving above 60 mph, you can save 21 cents per gallon for every 5 mph you slow down. (www.fueleconomy.gov estimates that for each 5 mph above 60 mph, fuel economy is decreased by 7-23%, or 21 to 69 cents per gallon, respectively.)

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 Remove unnecessary weight. 1-5%
 ■ Remove any unnecessary weight from your car trunk. An extra 100 pounds in the car trunk can decrease your fuel economy by more than 1 percent.

20 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.

21 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.

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.