



10 Tips For Getting Your Vehicle Ready for Summer

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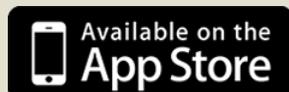
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Summer's heat, dust, and stop-and-go traffic, will take their toll on your vehicle. Add the effects of



last winter, and you could be poised for a breakdown. You can lessen the odds of mechanical failure through periodic maintenance...Your vehicle should last longer and command a higher resale price, too!

Consider these 10 tips for keeping your vehicle in great running condition this summer:

1) Air conditioning

A marginally operating system will fail in hot weather. Have the system examined by a qualified technician. Newer models have cabin air filters that clean the air entering the heating and air conditioning system. Check your owner's manual for location and replacement interval.

2) Cooling system

The greatest cause of summer breakdowns is overheating. The cooling system should be completely flushed and refilled about every 24 months. The level, condition, and concentration of the coolant should be checked periodically. (A 50/50 mix of antifreeze and water is usually recommended.) The tightness and condition of drive belts, clamps, and hoses should be checked by a pro.

3) Oil

Change your oil and oil filter as specified in your manual more often (every 3,000 miles) if you make frequent short jaunts, extended trips with lots of luggage, or tow a trailer.

4) Engine performance

Replace other filters (air, fuel, PCV, etc.) as recommended more often in dusty conditions. Get engine drive-ability problems (hard starts, rough idling, stalling, diminished power, etc.) corrected at a good shop.

5) Windshield wipers

A dirty windshield causes eye fatigue and can pose a safety hazard. Replace worn blades and get plenty of windshield washer solvent.

6) Lights

Inspect all lights and bulbs; replace burned out bulbs; periodically clean dirt and insects from all lenses. To prevent scratching, never use a dry rag.

7) Tires

Have your tires rotated about every 5,000 miles. Check tire pressures once a month (while they're cold before driving for any distance). Don't forget to check your spare as well and be sure the jack is in good condition. Examine tires for tread life, uneven wearing, and cupping; examine the sidewalls for cuts and nicks. An alignment is warranted if there's uneven tread wear or if your vehicle pulls to one side.

8) Brakes

Brakes should be inspected as recommended in your manual, or sooner if you notice pulsations, grabbing, noises, or longer stopping distance. Minor brake problems should be corrected promptly.

9) Battery

Batteries can fail any time of year. The only accurate way to detect a weak battery is with professional equipment. Routine care: Scrape away corrosion from posts and cable connections; clean all surfaces; re-tighten all connections. If battery caps are removable, check the fluid level monthly. Avoid contact with corrosive deposits and battery acid. Wear eye protection and rubber gloves.

10) Emergencies

Carry some basic tools - ask a technician for

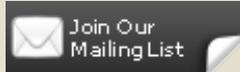
suggestions. Also include a first aid kit, flares, and a flashlight.

Source: www.ase.com

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