

MAXIMIZING THE EFFICIENCY OF THE CAR YOU HAVE

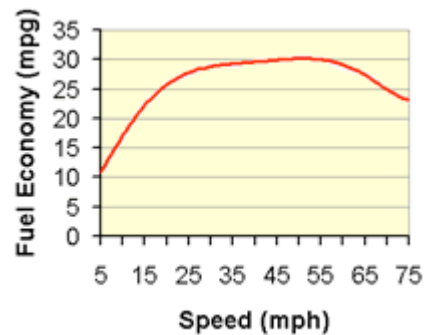
1. DRIVE EFFICIENTLY

Drive Sensibly

Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration and braking) wastes gas. It can lower your gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds and by 5 percent around town. Think ahead. Try to anticipate stops and let your vehicle coast down as much as possible. Avoid the increased pollution, wasted gas, and wear on your brakes created by accelerating hard and braking hard. Sensible driving is also safer for you and others. **Fuel Economy Benefit: 5-33%.**

Observe the Speed Limit

While each vehicle reaches its optimal fuel economy at a different speed (or range of speeds), gas mileage usually decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 mph. **Fuel Economy Benefit: 7-23%.** Observing the speed limit is also safer.



Remove Excess Weight

Avoid keeping unnecessary items in your vehicle, especially heavy ones. An extra 100 pounds in your vehicle could reduce your MPG by up to 2%. The reduction is based on the percentage of extra weight relative to the vehicle's weight and affects smaller vehicles more than larger ones. **Fuel Economy Benefit: 1-2%/100 lbs**

Avoid Excessive Idling

Idling gets 0 miles per gallon. Cars with larger engines typically waste more gas at idle than do cars with smaller engines.

Use Cruise Control & Overdrive Gears

Using cruise control on the highway helps you maintain a constant speed and, in most cases, will save gas. When you use overdrive gearing, your car's engine speed goes down. This saves gas and reduces engine wear.

Minimize the use of car air conditioning

Air conditioners can increase your fuel use by up to 10-12% in stop-and-go traffic and 3-4% at highway speeds. They also release ozone-depleting CFCs into the atmosphere. An alternative in stop-and-go traffic is to open windows or the sunroof, although this increases aerodynamic drag and fuel consumption. At higher speeds, open up your flow-through vents.

2. KEEP YOUR CAR IN SHAPE

Keep Your Engine Properly Tuned

Fixing a car that is noticeably out of tune or has failed an emissions test can improve its gas mileage by an average of **4 percent**, though results vary based on the kind of repair and how well it is done.

Fixing a serious maintenance problem, such as a faulty oxygen sensor, can improve your mileage by *as much as 40 percent*.

Check & Replace Air Filters Regularly

Replacing a clogged air filter can improve your car's gas mileage by as much as **10 percent**. Your car's air filter keeps impurities from damaging the inside of your engine. Not only will replacing a dirty air filter save gas, it will protect your engine.

Keep Tires Properly Inflated

You can improve your gas mileage by around 3.3 percent by keeping your tires inflated to the proper pressure. Under-inflated tires can lower gas mileage by 0.4 percent for every 1 psi drop in pressure of all four tires. Properly inflated tires are safer and last longer.

Use the Recommended Grade of Motor Oil

You can improve your gas mileage by 1-2 percent by using the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil. For example, using 10W-30 motor oil in an engine designed to use 5W-30 can lower your gas mileage by 1-2 percent. Using 5W-30 in an engine designed for 5W-20 can lower your gas mileage by 1-1.5 percent. Also, look for motor oil that says "Energy Conserving" on the API performance symbol to be sure it contains friction-reducing additives.

3. PLAN & COMBINE TRIPS

Combining errands into one trip saves you time and money. Several short trips taken from a cold start can use twice as much fuel as a longer multipurpose trip covering the same distance when the engine is warm. Trip planning ensures that traveling is done when the engine is warmed-up and efficient.

With a little planning, you can avoid retracing your route and reduce the distance you travel as well. You'll not only save fuel, but also reduce wear and tear on your car.

Commuting

If you can stagger your work hours to avoid peak rush hours, you'll spend less time sitting in traffic and consume less fuel.

If you own more than one vehicle, drive the one that gets the best gas mileage whenever possible.

Consider telecommuting (working from home) if your employer permits it.

If possible, take advantage of carpools and ride-share programs. You can cut your weekly fuel costs in half and save wear on your car if you take turns driving with other commuters. Many urban areas allow vehicles with multiple passengers to use special High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes.

Consider using public transit if it is available and convenient for you.

Compiled from (and more information available at) EPA's www.fueleconomy.gov (see "Gas Mileage Tips") and ACEEE's <http://www.greencars.com/drivinggreen.html>.