

Self Maintenance Service Tips

Your motor vehicle is probably the second most expensive purchase you will make. It is very important to perform regular maintenance to extend its life, and keep you safe on the highway.

Here are some maintenance tips that you should perform regularly yourself:

1. **Check all lights** including turn signals and brake lights.
2. **Check wipers** - do they miss the windshield or streak? Avoid cheap replacement blades. Use manufacturers blades, or quality replacements like "TRICO Direct Fit" they are better quality and last longer.
3. **Check horn**
4. **Check emergency brake operation.** Because owners of automatic transmission vehicles can put their vehicle in 'PARK', it is easy for them not to use the emergency brake. But, you should always use the emergency brake as well. The use of the emergency brake maintains the adjustment of the vehicles rear brakes. Also, regular use of the emergency brake will prolong the life of your front brakes, and reduce the chance of corrosion effecting the operation of your rear brakes.
5. **Check that your spare tire is inflated to its proper pressure** and that it is in good condition. Check that all the tools used to change the spare (jack, lug wrench, wheel key etc.) are in place. Nothing is worse than getting a flat and then finding out your spare is also flat!
6. **Regularly check the condition of your tires**, including their pressure (The correct pressure is usually listed on a label on the door panel, otherwise your handbook will tell you the correct pressure). NOTE: Do NOT use any pressure marked on the tire!

7. **Check for leaks.** Where you regularly park your vehicle can give you important clues to any possible leaks. The color and location of any fluids on the ground can tell you what is leaking.

Engine oil is brown/black.

Reddish fluid comes from your automatic transmission or power steering unit.

Green/yellow fluid is antifreeze from the cooling system.

Clear water is probably just condensation from the air conditioner.

Lighter/clear brown fluid is from axles.

8. **Check the engine oil level.** Here's the correct way:
 1. Park the vehicle on level ground.
 2. Turn the engine off.
 3. Open up the hood.
 4. Pull out the engine dipstick (your handbook will show you its location) clean it off and dip it back in.
 5. Pull it out again and read the marks. The oil should fall between the maximum and minimum marks on the dipstick.

