



# Car Care News

SUMMER 2010

Phone:  
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Hours of operation:  
Mon-Fri 8:00am-6:00pm  
Sat 8:00am-3:00pm  
Sun 9:00am-2:00pm

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Joppa, MD 21085

## It's Travel Time!

One of the best things about summer is being able to travel while the weather is great. There are so many places to go and things to do during the summer time. But before you go, there are a few things you should check or get checked to help make sure your trip is trouble free.

**Fluids**  
Oil, coolant, transmission fluid, brake fluid, power steering and even washer fluid are important for having a safe and trouble free trip. Oil and coolant help keep your engine running smooth and at the proper temperature. Transmission fluid is essential for your transmission, and it is especially important if you are going to tow a trailer or be driving up and down in the mountains or hills. Brake fluid is critical for stopping, and washer fluid comes in handy in dusty areas or even if you drive through a swarm of bugs.

**Rubber**  
Speaking of swarms of bugs, if the wiper blades on your vehicle didn't make it through the winter

very well, it's a good idea to get new ones before you hit the summer road. Summer storms are a reality, and they can catch you off guard. Beyond the wipers, one of the most important things to have checked before you travel is the condition of the tires. Make sure there is enough tread to be safe. Generally, 2/32s of an inch is the minimum tread allowed (different states have different rules so it depends where you plan to drive), but even though it's legal, that's not very much tread, especially if you get caught in a summer storm. If you aren't sure if you have enough tread, if you are going to be loaded up with lots of luggage or camping gear, or if you tow a trailer, let us inspect your tires – we will also be happy to set the pressure to accommodate a heavier load.

**Lights**  
Long trips often include long days of driving, and sometimes long nights. It's hard enough to drive in places you rarely or have never seen, so don't try to do it in the dark. And you really don't want a fix-it ticket from some far away place for something like a burnt out brake lamp or headlight when we could have easily fixed it for you before you left.

**Brakes and Steering**  
A good trip is a safe one. Making sure the steering, suspension and the brakes are in proper working order is one of the best ways to make sure your trip is trouble free. A visit to our shop for a brake and front end inspection won't take you a great deal of time, and it can save you a lot of problems down the road.

So there you have it, a few good ideas to help you have a trouble free trip. Summer is vacation time, but before you go, come on in and let us inspect your vehicle so you don't have to worry about it while you're gone. And don't forget to let us check the air conditioner while you are here. It gets mighty hot out there on the road!



## Buying a Used Car: Advice for You or Your Recent Grad

Summer is a season that sees a new class of graduates heading off to the next stage of life. Many of them will be buying their first vehicle (or be getting one as a gift), and many of those purchases will be used vehicles. If that's the case, here's a list of tips to help make that purchase easier, whether it's for a graduate or for you.

- Examine the car carefully, check it for obvious damage or signs of neglect – be sure that anything you find is the kind of thing you are willing to deal with once you buy the car.
- Test-drive the vehicle in conditions that are similar to how you will use it every day. If you can find hills, stop and go traffic, highways, all the better. If it doesn't feel right to you, keep looking; there are lots of used vehicles out there.
- Ask for the vehicle's maintenance and repair history – if the owner doesn't have the documents, ask where it has been serviced and see if the shop will share the records with you.
- Do your homework – you can learn about different vehicle makes and models and see consumer reviews of them online. A little time spent looking around, or even a trip to the library, will get you lots of information about what consumer groups and government agencies have to say about the reliability, economy, value and safety of the model or models you are looking for. (Depending on how meticulous you are, there are also websites like carfax.com and autocheck.com that sell reports based on vehicle VIN numbers that provide information about certain insurance claims, emissions and registration records and various other things.)

Bring it to our shop and let us inspect it for you – let us be the experts working on your behalf to help you find the best vehicle you can. We can evaluate the condition of the vehicle you are looking at and give advice on the types of service or repairs it may require.

## Games for the Road

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

### The Alphabet Game

This is a classic car game, and it's very easy to play. The object of the game is to get to the end of the alphabet before anyone else in the car does. Here's how it works: Looking around outside the car, find objects that start with the first letter of the alphabet. Not signs with words, you want actual objects. For example, an "apple tree" would work for the letter "A." But so would an "avenue" if someone decided to call a street by that term. An Audi sedan would count too. The point of the game is to challenge your kids, and yourself, to be creative with language. It can be fun making a case for terms they choose, and helps develop their language processing skills. Each person has to work through the alphabet on their own, moving to the next letter once they've found one for the letter they are on. Solve any real disputes with a simple vote and move on.

The letter "X" can be tricky, so you might consider either agreeing to skip it, or allowing for it to be on a license plate or even just as part of a word.

### Bug Hunt

This is a less violent variant on the old slug Bug game. As much fun as it can be to slug one another every time someone sees a Volkswagen "Beetle," sometimes that isn't conducive to a peaceful trip. Here's a gentler variant: Players look around for "bugs," calling them out by color when they spot one. The first one to call one out (saying, for example, "Beetle Blue!") gets a point. If you want to spice it up, pick a color that will have extra value, like black or gold, and make those worth three points or five. Decide how many points will be the end of the game (15 or 20 is a nice sized game), and get to hunting bugs!



## Stretch Your Fuel Dollars

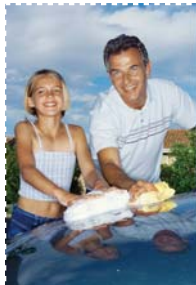
Gasoline is a big part of road trip expense. In order to get the most out of your fuel dollars, here are a few things you can do to make sure your money – and you – go as far as possible:

**Take It Easy** – Driving aggressively, rapid hard starts and stops, and even speeding all eat up expensive gasoline. According to government quoted statistics, driving like that can lower your vehicle's gas mileage by as much as 33% on the highway and 5% in town.

**Watch Your Speed** – Besides being unsafe, speeding is a major cause of fuel usage. Beyond the impact mentioned in the statistic above, every 5 MPH you travel over 60 MPH is costing you an extra \$0.24 per gallon of gas. Basically, you're using more gas than you need to travel each mile.

**Don't Overload** – When you're packing for the trip, don't bring anything you don't need for the trip or for safety along the way. Extra weight means extra work for your vehicle, and it will use more fuel to move the extra pounds. In fact, on average every 100 pounds of extra weight reduces your mileage per gallon by roughly 2% (based on percentages relative to vehicle size, weight and design, etc.). So if you don't need it, take it out.

**Idling Engines Eat Gas** – It might seem beyond obvious, but if your car is idling and not moving, it's using gas and yet not going anywhere. This translates to ZERO miles per gallon. Consider shutting it off if you're going to be sitting for a while.



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- \*Check Brakes
- \*Vehicle Maintenance Inspection
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- \*Free A/C Check

**OR... \$99 Complete Auto Detail Inside and Out!**

\*Not valid with other offers. \*Offer Expires 07/24/10. Valid with most vehicles. \*Must present coupon at the time of service.