

WEDNESDAY,  
NOVEMBER 3, 2022  
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**ROAD**

**Prepare your  
car for winter**

**Five convenient tech  
features you want in  
your vehicle**

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE

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## What to do about headlight glare when driving at night

In recent years, many a motorist has noticed how much more glare they encounter on the road at night than they used to. The headlights that are now standard in many vehicles can be a catch-22. Drivers of vehicles equipped with LED lights often find the road in front of them is much more illuminated than it was in the days when auto manufacturers built cars and trucks with incandescent lights. However, the bright light emitted by LED headlights can increase glare for oncoming motorists, making the roads more dangerous for all.

Headlight glare has long been a problem for many drivers. In fact, as far back as 2001 the Highway Traffic and Safety Administration sought input from the public regarding headlight glare. A subsequent report noted that the issue compelled more responses than any other safety concern, and it's likely that a similar request would generate an even greater response today.

LED lights might be a problem for millions of motorists, but the efficiency and longevity of these lights makes it unlikely that auto manufacturers will shift to an alternative light source anytime soon. Until that time comes, drivers can try these strategies to combat glare when driving at night.

- Avoid looking directly at oncoming headlights. It's important that drivers keep their eyes on the road at all times, but they should be able to do so without staring directly at oncoming lights. In North America, where oncoming traffic is always on the left, drivers can slightly shift their focus to the right as lights are oncoming. Doing so should allow them to keep their eyes on the road without staring directly into oncoming lights.

- Purchase night driving glasses. Drivers can consider night driving glasses if they're having a lot of trouble with glare. Such glasses differ depending on the manufacturer, but they're generally intended to reduce glare and reflections from headlights and street lamps.

- Investigate wiper blades. Glare from oncoming headlights contribute to visibility problems when driving at night, and old

wiper blades can exacerbate those problems. Old wiper blades can be compromised by a buildup of dirt and often wear down over time. When coupled with glare, this can significantly reduce visibility at night. Each manufacturer is different, but Ford recommends replacing wiper blades once every 12 months.

- Clean the interior of your windshield. A dirty windshield interior also can exacerbate glare. Grit and dirt build up inside of a vehicle over time, and they can accumulate on the windshield just as easily as they do in a cup holder, on an armrest or on the dashboard. Various products are designed specifically for cleaning interior windshields, and these could help reduce glare at night.

Glare can make nighttime driving very difficult. Fortunately, drivers can take many steps to reduce glare from oncoming headlights.



## Five convenient tech features you want in your vehicle

Technology has dramatically changed the way people live, and has increasingly changed how they drive as well. While power windows were once coveted as high-tech features, the sophisticated technology available in modern cars and trucks can make earlier tech seem like child's play.

While some vehicle technology is designed to keep you safe, other tech is all about comfort and convenience. The following are five options to consider when purchasing your next vehicle.

### 1. Telematics

Telematics is a system that can remotely monitor many components of a vehicle's diagnostics and driver behavior. While this telecommunications technology already is implemented in delivery, towing and public transportation industries, it can be utilized in the private market to track live weather conditions, traffic, parking lot information, fuel consumption, and battery power.

### 2. Cooled seats:

While most drivers are familiar with heated seats, many vehicles now come equipped with cooled seats as well. These seats can make it more comfortable to drive on hot days and improve air flow in the car as they work in conjunction with vehicle HVAC systems. Cooled seats can be expensive and will add weight to a vehicle, so they may be best for heavy sedans, SUVs and light trucks.

### 3. Wireless phone charging:

Electronic devices have been going wireless for years, and the newest crop of

wireless tech is wireless phone chargers. The online tech resource CNET says wireless charging pads have become ubiquitous in offices and homes, but now they're becoming useful tools inside cars. Portable charging pads can plug into the automobile auxiliary power DC outlet. For example, the X-Doria Defense Helix wireless car charging mount with RoboGrip has powered "robotic" arms that automatically open when you place your phone near the charger and then clamp shut after you dock it. Wireless charging pads are built into vehicles manufactured by Lincoln and Mercedes-Benz, and may soon be standard technology on more cars and trucks.

### 4. Apple CarPlay:

Mobile phone users tend to fall into two distinct camps: those who prefer iPhones and those who rave about Android offerings. Many car manufacturers have realized consumers want CarPlay (and Android Auto) built standard into their vehicles. These apps allow drivers to access their most-used apps conveniently without an extra learning curve for manufacturer-specific driver assist apps.

### 5. Second- and third-row USB ports:

USB ports for second- and third-row passengers is essential when moving an SUV full of kids or taking a road trip with the family.

Various vehicle tech features can improve comfort and convenience in modern cars and trucks.

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## What to do before trading in your car

**T**rade-ins are a vital component of many automobile transactions. A recent report from the National Automobile Dealers Association revealed that 22 percent of all pre-owned vehicle sales included a trade-in.

Drivers want to get the most value they can for their trade-ins. Though some factors, like the age of the vehicle, are beyond drivers' control, there are many steps drivers can take before trading in a car to maximize its value.

- **Do your homework.** It's never been easier to determine the value of a car prior to trading it in. Resources like NADA, Black Book and Kelley Blue Book can give drivers a good idea of what they will get for a given vehicle when trading it in. According to Kelley Blue Book, roughly 54 percent of trade-in vehicles qualify as "good condition," so drivers should be realistic as they determine the value of their trade-in. A trade-in value that is designated for vehicles that qualify as "excellent" is likely unrealistic, though not impossible.

- **Hone your negotiation skills.** Dealers may initially offer less than drivers expect, as they, too, will try to make the transaction as beneficial as possible to their bottom lines. In such situations, drivers who want to get a better trade-in value should be prepared to negotiate. Some dealerships may not budge on their initial trade-in values, but some might, and drivers prepared to negotiate a better value are in the best position to get a good deal.

- **Shop around for a deal.** Trade-in values may not fluctuate wildly between dealerships, but they likely won't be exactly the same, either. Patiently shopping around



for the best deal for your trade-in can ensure you get the best deal possible. Request all trade-in offers be made in writing, and don't hesitate to take one offer to other dealers to see if they will match or exceed a competitor's offer. Don't discount working with less traditional sellers, such as online dealerships like CarMax.

- **Give the vehicle a thorough inspection.** No matter what resources like Kelley Blue Book or NADA suggest, no car is going to get top dollar at trade-in if it doesn't look good or run smoothly. Address any dings or dents, clean the interior and exterior of the vehicle and take the car to

a mechanic to determine if there are any issues that should be addressed to improve trade-in value. Dealerships may want to examine the car prior to making a trade-in offer, so the car should be tended to prior to visiting a dealership. In addition, drivers who conduct their own inspections are in better position to negotiate should dealerships point to certain issues with the car.

Trade-ins are a big part of buying and selling cars. Drivers can look to various strategies to ensure they get a great deal on their trade-in.

## What to know when buying from a private seller

**I**n recent years, more and more car buyers are considering pre-owned vehicles as the world continues to confront supply shortages related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Certified pre-owned dealerships may be the first place used car buyers go when looking to replace their current vehicles, but they might be able to find even better deals if they look at the private seller market.

Buying vehicles from private sellers was once relatively common but has fallen out of favor over the last few decades. In fact, the insurance comparison site The Zebra reports that roughly 61 percent of car buyers prefer to buy from a dealership. But that doesn't mean buyers can't still find great cars on the private seller market, especially if they keep a few strategies in mind as they begin their vehicle search.

- **Get as much paperwork as possible.** Many vehicle owners prioritize record-keeping, saving maintenance receipts for everything from standard oil changes to more significant repairs. When buying from private sellers, buyers should not hesitate to request a vehicle history report as well as all documentation of maintenance that has been performed on the car since sellers have owned it. Consider it a red flag if sellers do not have any paperwork or refuse to provide it.

- **Be patient.** Patience is a buyer's ally when shopping for a pre-owned vehicle. Certified pre-owned vehicles at a local dealership have already been vetted and met certain standards

to earn that designation, but buyers must do their own vetting when buying from private sellers. That requires patience as buyers peruse vehicle history reports provided by the seller (or gather them on their own) and don't rush to buy cars that could ultimately prove to be lemons if they're not vetted properly.

- **Insist that a mechanic be allowed to examine the car.** One of the biggest risks of buying from private sellers is that such vehicles are rarely under warranty when put up for sale, and sellers likely won't guarantee parts. That underscores the importance of having a vehicle thoroughly examined by a certified mechanic before buying it. Private sellers should have no issue allowing this, especially when buyers pay for the inspections. If sellers are unwilling to let mechanics inspect the car, look elsewhere for your next car or truck.

- **Confirm the number of owners.** There's no magic number of owners a vehicle can have before it's considered too risky to buy, but the more owners a car has had, the less likely buyers will learn its full history. In addition, if sellers were not the first owners, they won't know how the car was treated or driven prior to them buying it. That's another potential red flag to consider before buying a car that has had more than one owner.

The private seller market can be a great place to find a reliable pre-owned vehicle. But caution and patience is of the utmost importance when buying vehicles from private sellers.

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# Performance issues that can affect older cars

**M**odern cars have much longer life spans than one may expect. Not too long ago, drivers often commemorated the milestone of their vehicles reaching the 100,000-mile mark. However, data from Car and Driver indicates the average vehicle now lasts around 12 years or roughly 200,000 miles. More advanced electric or hybrid vehicles may be able to go even further, with some capable of reaching as much as 300,000 miles.

According to a 2006 report from Consumer Reports, vehicles made in Japan and Korea have fewer problems per 100 vehicles than those made by American and European manufacturers, making them tops in vehicle longevity.

Thanks to advancements in technology, cars are more durable than ever, but that doesn't make them impervious to breakdowns or the need for repairs. A recent report from AAA found that more than two-thirds of service calls were for vehicles a decade or older. Here's a look at some of the problems that can affect older vehicles.

## Battery

The average car battery lasts between three and five years, according to Auto Zone. Batteries tend to show signs of wear at the four-year mark on average.

Corrosion or dirt on battery terminals also can affect battery performance.

## Electrical system

Electrical system issues can be caused by anything from burnt out car fuses to bad or faulty electrical connections and contacts. Corroded or loose screws, nuts and wires can cause electrical issues, which may be more common in older vehicles that have significant mileage on them.

## Suspension

The suspension system is comprised of springs, tires, shock absorbers, struts, anti-sway bars, and other parts that connect the vehicle to the wheels. Suspension systems regulate the amount of bouncing in the vehicle while on the road and make it manageable. Eventually, all suspension systems can and will wear out, and parts will need to be serviced or replaced.

## Evaporative emissions

The evaporative system consists of a network of hoses, canisters and valves. It helps vent pressure in the gas tank. An older vehicle may end up with a cracked hose that can cause a fuel leak. Hoses also may be compromised elsewhere in vehicles, so these points should be checked during routine maintenance.



## Braking system

As with other moving parts on a car, the brake system wears down over time and parts will need to be replaced. Squealing, squeaking or a soft brake pedal are indicative of braking system issues and should be looked at by a mechanic promptly.

## Obsolete components

Modern vehicles are increasingly being controlled by computers. These computers

handle a variety of features, including navigation and pairing to mobile phones, among others. Over time, systems may no longer work if there are no computer updates available. That means Bluetooth pairing may no longer function, or maps may not be current for GPS systems.

Cars and trucks have longer life spans due to technological advancements. However, age is still a factor in the deterioration of different vehicle systems.

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# The effects of infrequent driving on vehicle performance

Driving puts a certain measure of wear and tear on a vehicle. Whether a vehicle is used primarily for commuting or as a vessel to take travelers to parts unknown, wear and tear is inevitable.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, individuals may not realize that failing to drive their vehicles regularly also can affect performance. Here's a closer look at what can happen when vehicles sit idle for lengthy periods of time.

• Battery loses its charge. The battery in a vehicle is still being used even if the car isn't running. Batteries power various components in a car, such as the vehicle computer, phone chargers and more. If the engine does not turn over and help to recharge the battery, the battery will eventually die. People who drive infrequently may want to consider a trickle charger that's plugged in during periods of non-use.

• Tire rot can set in. Dry tire rot is deterioration that sets into the rubber. The material dries out and becomes brittle, causing splits and cracks to form. Driving with tire rot can cause tires to deflate.

• Rust and corrosion can occur. There is still plenty of metal in modern vehicles. A vehicle that has been exposed to salt or rain or one that is stored in a moist climate can be susceptible to undercarriage or engine rust. This may cause damage that's not easily repaired.

• Damage from sap or droppings. A vehicle parked in one location for a long time could be a target for bird droppings, fallen berries, sap, and other substances that are potentially harmful to the paint job. Leaving the car or truck out in the sun also means UV rays can cause clear coat over the paint to oxidize and begin to fail, which can produce blotchy or peeling spots.

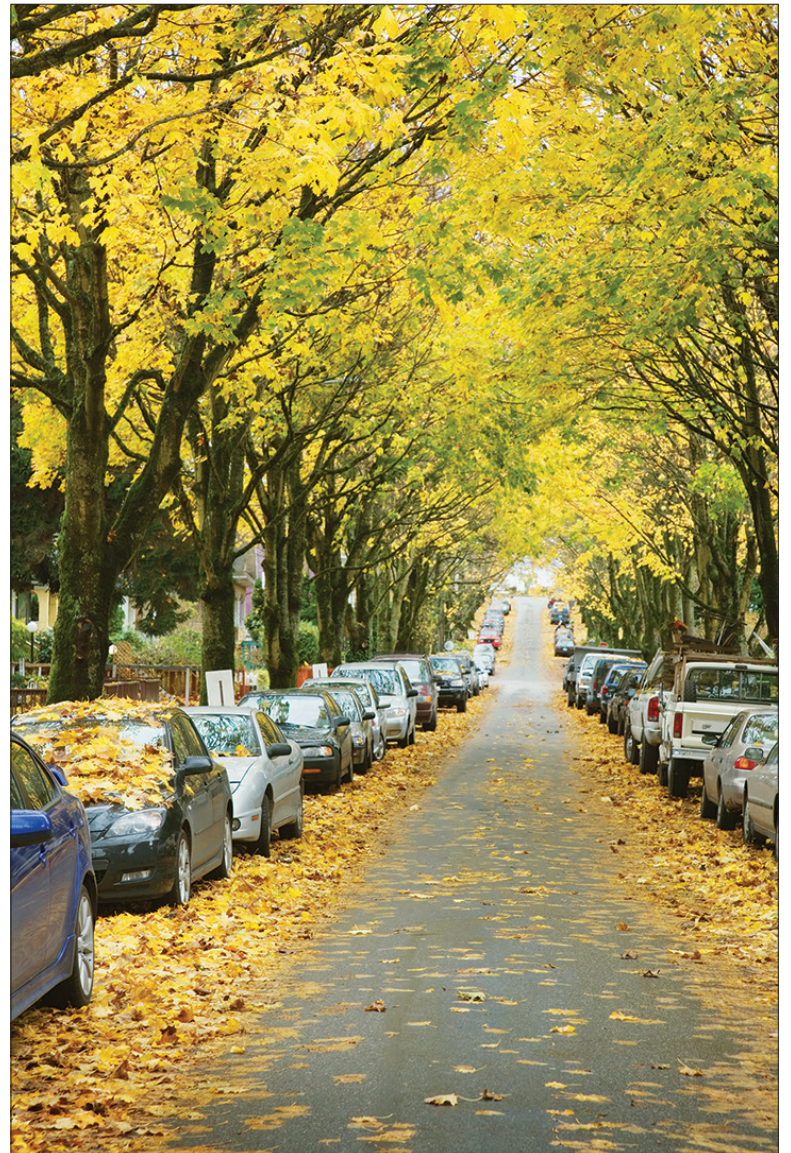
• Poor brake performance. When vehicles are left to sit,

corrosion could build up on the rotors and the brake pads may become less flexible. Moisture also may seep into brake lines, causing issues with pressurization of brake fluid. Each of these factors adds up to brakes that do not work properly — which is a big safety hazard.


• Formation of tire flat spots. When tires are not used frequently, the weight of the car can continually put pressure on the same parts of the tires, leading to flat spots. Tires also can lose pressure if they sit too long.

• Oil and other fluids may lose efficacy. Various fluids can go stale in a vehicle if it isn't regularly driven. Gasoline also may develop condensation, which can reduce efficiency and performance. Taking short trips helps avoid this issue.

Infrequent driving can cause damage to a car or truck. But many potential issues can be avoided by driving vehicles more often.



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## How older drivers can increase their comfort levels behind the wheel



It's not uncommon for aging individuals to feel less comfortable driving as they approach their golden years. Whether it's glare from LED lights, aches and pains that often accompany aging or age-related vision issues, older drivers' comfort behind the wheel can be compromised by a host of variables.

Though older drivers cannot reverse the aging process, they can try various strategies to make themselves more comfortable behind the wheel.

- Share driving duties on long trips. The National Institute on Aging notes that stiffening joints and weakened muscles are a common byproduct of aging. In addition, the Arthritis Foundation® notes that more than one in two men and two in three women over age 65 have arthritis, which also can make driving less comfortable. Age-related aches and pains and arthritis can make it very uncomfortable to drive for lengthy periods of time when drivers are sitting in roughly the same position for the duration of their trip. In such instances, drivers can share driving duties to make long trips more manageable.

- Upgrade to a vehicle with modern amenities. Various

amenities in modern vehicles make driving more comfortable for everyone, especially individuals with age-related aches and pains. Heated seats and in-car climate control can help reduce the discomfort caused by aches and pains and ensure drivers and passengers can tailor the temperature in the vehicle to their own preferences.

- Protect your eyesight. Much of the discomfort older drivers experience behind the wheel has to do with eyesight. The NIA urges individuals 65 and older to see their eye doctor every year. Such visits can ensure prescriptions are current and that can make drivers more confident in their ability to see everything on the road. Drivers also can speak to their eye doctors about night driving glasses, which are designed to help nighttime drivers overcome

glare from headlights and street lamps.

- Drive more defensively. A greater emphasis on defensive driving also can help aging drivers feel more comfortable behind the wheel. The NIA notes that reflexes naturally slow down as a person ages, which adversely affects older drivers' reaction times. Drivers can counter this by leaving more space between their vehicles and the one in front of them. Braking earlier and avoiding driving during times marked by heavy traffic, such as rush hour, also can help drivers feel more comfortable.

It's natural for aging drivers to feel less comfortable behind the wheel than they did when they were young. But drivers can take various steps to increase their comfort levels so they can stay on the road.

## Find a car that fits your budget

Drivers in the market for a new or pre-owned vehicle over the last couple of years likely discovered that the process of buying a car or truck is as difficult as ever. Prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic, factory closures, supply chain issues, semiconductor chip shortages, and a bevy of other complications led to fewer vehicles on lots and much higher sticker prices on cars that were on the lot. That has caused people who are on strict budgets to reevaluate priorities and timelines.

According to Ivan Drury, Edmunds' senior manager of insights, consumers can't expect to walk into the dealership thinking they're going to find incentives or bargains right now. Plus, they may not even be able to see or test drive a vehicle they want. That reality makes now a great time for car shoppers to rethink their buying strategies.

### Choose a different vehicle class

Tyson Jominy, Vice President of Data and Analytics at J.D. Power, says vehicle inventory in November 2021 reached record lows. Although there has been some improvement in 2022, consumers may still have to make some concessions if they need a vehicle promptly. SUVs and pick-up trucks have been some of the hardest inventory to find. Considering a sedan or even a compact car may be the only way to get a new car quickly.

### Wait it out

Those with the luxury of time may continue to wait for inventory to increase and prices to decrease. Tech experts, including Intel CEO Pat Gelsinger, expect chip shortages to persist into 2024. If a person's vehicle is in good condition, it may be more economical

to hold on to it a little longer and do the maintenance required.

### Seek out no-markup dealerships

It may take some investigation, but there are certain dealerships that are not adding astronomical markups, also called "market adjustments," to the costs of their vehicles. These dealers may advertise online, and car buyers can always call ahead to ask about markups.

### Take what you can get

Lots filled with a variety of makes, models, colors, and features are no longer the norm. Shoppers will be afforded more flexibility in price if they're willing to take what's available.

### Check with different lenders

The Federal Reserve increased interest rates in the middle of 2022 and it initially planned to increase rates a few more times throughout the year. People, particularly those who do not have the best credit, can

do themselves a favor and shop around at different banks for the best loan rates — the loan may be less costly than what's offered through the dealership. Also, certified pre-owned vehicles tend to come with promotional interest rates that are lower than the average APR, which makes them a viable alternative.

Vehicles are still expensive and in short supply, necessitating changes to how people buy their cars or trucks.



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## Conserve fuel with vehicle maintenance and other tips

**M**otorists know that 2022 has been a record-breaking year for fuel prices. Data from AAA indicates gas prices jumped 55 percent between June 2021 and June 2022. All 50 states now have an average fuel price that exceeds \$4 per gallon, with many even surpassing the \$5 mark. The fuel cost comparison resource Global Petrol Prices reports that, as of May 2022, gas in Canada was on average \$2.17 CAD per liter, which comes to roughly \$8.22 CAD a gallon, or \$6.52 USD per gallon.

The pinch at the pump is being felt by commuters, casual drivers and weekend warriors alike. People across North America are taking whatever steps necessary to conserve fuel. One of the considerations they may have overlooked is vehicle maintenance. Poor vehicle performance adversely affects fuel economy, so here's how to maintain a vehicle with an eye toward conserving fuel.

### Proper tire inflation

The U.S. Department of Energy says each decrease in tire pressure by 1 pound per square inch for four tires can decrease fuel economy by 0.2 percent. By keeping tires properly inflated, the average driver can improve gas mileage by as much as 3 percent. Drivers can consult their tire manufacturer's specifications for proper tire pressure.

### Use recommended motor oil

Engines require the right blend of products to work efficiently. The DOE says drivers can improve gas mileage by 1 to 2 percent simply by using the recommended grade of motor oil. In addition, look for motor oils that list "Energy Conserving" on the label.

### Change the air filter

According to Auto Zone, an engine's ability to produce power is directly related to its ability to draw air in. A clean air filter assists with that function, whereas a dirty filter will reduce engine power and fuel efficiency.

### Get a tune-up

Additional mechanical issues may affect vehicle performance and lead to excessive fuel consumption. A mechanic can run diagnostics on the vehicle and make recommendations on things to repair or replace, such as spark plugs, ignition coils or faulty oxygen sensors.

### Treat fuel occasionally

Debris and moisture in the fuel tank can compromise combustion and impact performance. A fuel treatment product can clean out debris and dry up moisture to restore function and improve miles per gallon.

### Use the air conditioning sparingly

The air conditioning unit in a vehicle uses power directly from the motor of the car. This means the vehicle consumes extra gas to keep the AC unit running, thereby reducing fuel efficiency.

### Remove excess cargo

Clear the trunk or cargo area of extra items that can weigh down the vehicle, requiring more power to move it. Any heavy load will negatively affect mileage.

Keeping a vehicle in top form can improve fuel economy, which can be especially beneficial in a time marked by soaring fuel costs.

## Four basic vehicle maintenance jobs many DIY novices can perform at home

**T**he cost of owning a vehicle has risen dramatically in recent years. Though prices at the gas pump have done much to stretch drivers' budgets, supply shortages related to the COVID-19 pandemic hit motorists' bottom lines even before the average gallon of gas reached unimaginable levels in mid-2022. Though it's certainly not an inexpensive time to own a vehicle, drivers can take solace knowing that these four basic vehicle maintenance tasks can be performed at home and save them money.

1. Change air filter: Among the simplest DIY vehicle maintenance tasks, changing the air filter on a car or truck requires no special tools. Changing an air filter can be done in as little as 10 minutes, though novices might need more time until they get a feel for what's under the hood. Vehicle owners' manuals can indicate where the air filter is and how frequently it should be replaced.

2. Change wiper blades: Changing wiper blades is another simple DIY task that doesn't require any special tools. Streaking is a telltale sign blades should be replaced, and some blades even start to come apart after excessive wear and tear. The time it takes to perform this task could depend on how long it takes to remove the old blades,

which can take time until DIYers get a handle on how to quickly remove them.

3. Oil change: According to Bankrate.com, the average cost of a top service oil change at six nationwide franchises exceeded \$75 in May 2022. But this relatively simple task can be performed at home rather easily. Drivers will need to invest in a ratchet, oil filter wrench, oil pan, and funnel, but that's all they need to change their own vehicle oil. A jack will be necessary as well, but most new vehicles already come with a jack.

4. Tire inflation: Drivers can save on that costly fuel by keeping their tires properly inflated at all times. Poorly inflated tires make the engine work harder to get the vehicle down the road, and that extra work wastes fuel. A portable tire inflator can read the pressure in each tire and drivers can then inflate the tires to the PSI recommended in their owner's manual. A quality tire inflator can be purchased for less than \$100.

Novices may be overcome by nerves when attempting these jobs for the first time, but online tutorials can help them get a handle on any task that stretches their abilities to the limit. If the task seems too tall to tackle at home, take the car to a trusted mechanic or dealership.

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# How to prepare your car for winter



Summer and fall can stake their claim as road trip season, and even devoted drivers may admit that winter is generally a less desirable time to take to the open road. The elements factor heavily into that reputation, as fewer hours of daylight, snow and ice are just some of the variables that can make it less enjoyable, and potentially more dangerous, to drive in winter.

In anticipation of adverse driving conditions, vehicle owners can take various steps to prepare their cars and trucks for winter.

- Upgrade your wiper blades. Perhaps nothing is compromised more than visibility when driving in winter compared to other times of year. Snow makes it hard to see when driving, but fewer hours of daylight also can affect visibility. In fact, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that approximately half of all fatal crashes occur between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., even though the number of drivers on the road during those hours is considerably lower than it is during the daytime. The difficulty of driving

at night is even more significant when wiper blades are not up to the task of keeping rain and snow off drivers' windshields. Prior to winter, inspect wiper blades and upgrade them, if necessary. Streaks left on a windshield are a telltale sign that blades need to be replaced.

- Purchase winter tires. Winter tires may not be necessary in regions with relatively mild winters. However, drivers accustomed to winters marked by heavy snowfall and/or icy roads should consider replacing their

existing tires with winter tires. Many newer vehicles are now equipped with all-season tires, which the tire experts at Bridgestone note provide great performance but are not designed to handle extreme winter conditions like snow and ice. Winter tires are specially designed to handle such conditions, making them a worthy investment for drivers who live in regions where it's not unusual to encounter snow and ice throughout the winter.

- Study up on your engine oil. Some vehicle manufacturers recommend different grades of oil depending on the range of temperatures a car or truck will be driven in. The owner's manual will likely indicate if the manufacturer recommends using a different type of engine oil in especially cold temperatures. Even if the manual does not include such a suggestion, drivers can seek the advice of a local mechanic.

- Schedule a pre-winter tuneup. Even if a vehicle is not due for a tuneup, it can be wise to have it looked over by a local mechanic before the arrival of harsh winter weather. A mechanic can check the radiator, hoses and other components that could be affected by especially cold weather in the months to come. If any issues are found, address them immediately. After all, it's better to be proactive than leave yourself vulnerable to breakdowns or other issues once the mercury drops.

As fall gives way to winter, drivers can take steps to keep their cars running strong and safe in the months ahead.

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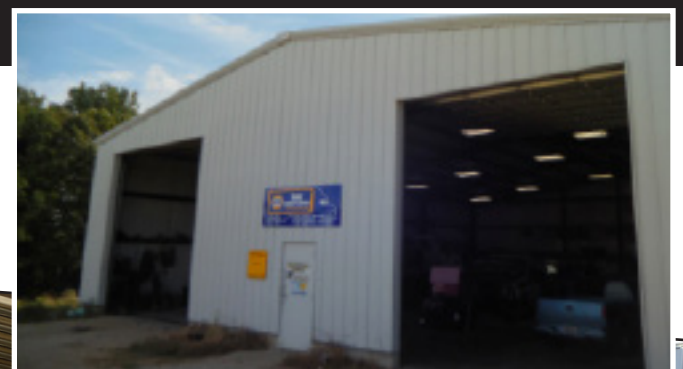
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