

In The Driver's Seat

Tips To Put You On The Road To Fuel Economy

by Liz Allison

(NAPSA)—Small changes in the way you drive can have a big effect on the fuel economy of just about any car.

Here are a few tips for making trips to the pump more efficient:

- **Pressure Check:** Government studies show that keeping your tires inflated to the recommended pressure can improve fuel economy by up to 3 percent. And you can bump those savings up to around 5 percent simply by using the proper grade of motor oil.

- **Shape Up With a Tune-Up:**



Fixing a car that's noticeably out of tune can improve gas mileage by 4 percent. You can often save money on car maintenance by joining a car club such as AutoVantage.

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- **Filter Maintenance:** Something as simple as a healthy air filter can improve your car's gas mileage by as much as 10 percent.

- **Slow Down:** Each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional 20 cents per gallon of gas.

- **Don't Be Aggressive:** Accelerating and braking abruptly can lower your gas mileage by as much as 33 percent on the highway and 5 percent in the city.

- **Cruise, Don't Lose:** Each time you accelerate, your car expends more energy. Constant braking and accelerating causes less fuel efficiency and a faster trip to the pump. Use cruise control whenever possible.

- **Combine Trips:** Make a plan before you head out for errands and combine trips in your car. Making multiple short



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trips from a cold start can use twice as much fuel as one long multipurpose trip.

- **Consider a Hybrid:** If you are in the market for a new car, hybrid-electric vehicles combine the best features of the internal combustion engine with an electric motor. Another money-saving factor: the Energy Policy Act of 2005 established a federal tax credit for certain hybrids.

- **Shop Around:** If hybrids aren't for you, there are still plenty of conventional automobiles that can save you big bucks at the pump. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the difference between a car that gets 20 mpg and one that gets 30 mpg amounts to about \$744 per year.

Liz Allison, a spokesperson for AutoVantage, is a NASCAR TV personality, radio host and best-selling author. She has served as a racing analyst for TNT, CNN/SI, TNN, CNN, ESPN and ESPN2.

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