

Car Care Corner

Tips On Checking Transmission Fluid

(NAPSA)—Keeping an eye on your transmission fluid levels can help keep your car running smoothly—and help you avoid costly repairs down the road.

Unfortunately, not all cars have transmissions that can be easily checked by the owner. Newer models are frequently made without fluid dipsticks. Called sealed units, these transmissions require an involved process to check fluid levels. The process often involves electronic testing devices, such as a computer scan tool, and needs to be performed by a technician.

If your car has a sealed transmission or needs transmission work, it's a good idea to bring it to a certified repair shop to avoid being taken for a ride. Shops displaying the Automatic Transmission Rebuilders Association (ATRA) seal adhere to a strict code of quality and ethics—and their "Golden Rule" warranty is honored at nearly 2,000 shops throughout the U.S.

However, there are still plenty of cars out there with transmissions that owners can check themselves. ATRA offers these tips:

1. Make sure the car is on level ground.
2. Start the engine.
3. Bring the engine to normal driving temperature. The easiest way to do this is by checking the fluid level right after driving the car for a while.
4. Hold your foot on the brake



Experts suggest checking transmission fluid twice for every one oil change.

and work the shifter slowly through the gears. Give the transmission a second or two in each gear.

5. Put the shifter back into park.
6. Set the parking brake.
7. Carefully open the hood.
8. Find the dipstick. (Your owner's manual will tell you where it's located.)
9. Remove the dipstick and wipe it off with a clean rag or paper towel.
10. Slide the dipstick all the way back down into the transmission fill tube.
11. Pull the dipstick back out, and check the fluid level against the markings on the end of the dipstick.
12. Add fluid as necessary.

For more information or to locate an area ATRA member, visit www.ATRA.com.