

What Type Of Antifreeze Is Right For My Vehicle?

(NAPSA)—Do you feel overwhelmed by all the antifreeze/coolant products available? To help you better understand your vehicle's cooling system needs, Richard Courtney, Director of Research & Development and Technical Services/Consumer Relations for Prestone Products answers common questions about major antifreeze/coolant products on the market today.

Q: Does the color of anti-freeze matter?

Color often serves as an indicator of fluid type, but doesn't relate to the quality of a product. Most conventional American antifreeze/coolant is green; however, Prestone® Antifreeze/Coolant is yellow with a green tint. The majority of American extended life antifreeze/coolant is orange, including Prestone® Extended Life 5/150 Antifreeze/Coolant. But many automobile manufacturers use specific colors of antifreeze/coolant.

Q: What is "conventional coolant?"

Conventional engine coolant is typically a 50/50 blend of water and concentrated antifreeze/coolant—made up of ethylene glycol (EG) and corrosion protection chemicals. Motorists should use a brand that has high-quality inhibitors for better protection of the variety of metals found in the cooling system.

Q: How often should engine coolant be changed?

It should be checked every six months and changed every one to two years, depending on the vehicle's recommended change intervals and on driving conditions. For new vehicles under warranty, you should always follow your owner's manual recommendations.

Q: What is extended life coolant?

Extended life antifreeze/coolants use organic acid technology (OAT) to improve long-term corrosion protection. They don't contain silicates, borate, phosphate, nitrates and amines, and they generally carry a five-year or 150,000 mile cooling system warranty depending on the auto manufacturer. If a vehicle comes with extended life antifreeze/coolant, continue using it to maintain the extended life protection.

Q: Can I switch to an extended life coolant if my vehicle came with a conventional coolant?



Do you know what type of antifreeze/coolant you should use in your vehicle?

A vehicle that was originally filled with a conventional antifreeze/coolant should not be "upgraded" to an extended life antifreeze/coolant unless the cooling system has been completely drained and flushed of all traces of conventional antifreeze/coolant. Mixing a conventional antifreeze/coolant with an extended life antifreeze/coolant will degrade the service interval from five years/150,000 miles to two years/30,000 miles. Check the owner's manual or consult a certified mechanic.

Q: What is environmentally safer antifreeze and is it really safe?

No antifreeze/coolant product is completely harmless. But using a propylene glycol-based (PG) antifreeze/coolant does provide an added margin of safety for pets and wildlife in the event of accidental ingestion. It's less toxic—not non-toxic—than conventional antifreeze/coolant made from EG. Prestone® Low Tox™ Antifreeze/Coolant is a leading brand of PG antifreeze/coolant, as well as the only antifreeze/coolant to have the official Seal of Approval from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).

No matter what type of antifreeze/coolant you use, motorists should exercise the utmost caution when changing it. Never remove a radiator cap when the engine is still hot, tighten the child-resistant cap when finished, store it out of the reach of children and animals and clean up any spills immediately.