



CAR CARE CORNER

10 Tips For Getting Your Car Ready For Warm Weather Driving

(NAPSA)—The first warm weekend of the season traditionally triggers a symphony of cleaning products, vacuums and garden hoses. But while you might be in a hurry to put a shine on your vehicle, it's equally important to make sure it's ready for the warm weather on the inside as well as the outside.

"The most critical areas to check after the harsh winter months are engine fluids, radiator hoses, belts, tires and brakes," says Pat Goss, host of PBS' "MotorWeek" and Washington Post automotive columnist. "Adequately preparing these key areas of the car before the weather warms up will not only keep you safe while driving, they'll help prevent costly repairs."

After battling months of snow, sleet and icy roads, your vehicle is undoubtedly in need of some serious care. To make your spring trouble-free, follow this 10-point checklist for safety, dependability and fuel economy.

1. Remove your winter tires and rotate all-season radials—If you have winter tires, it's time to store them away. If you don't have winter tires, it's equally important to have all-season tires rotated or switched out for new ones.

2. Brake check—After a blistering winter, be sure to check your brakes. Warning signs include excessive grinding, squealing, screeching or chatter.

3. Wiper blades check—



BRAKE CHECK—warning signs include excessive grinding, squealing, screeching or chatter.

Wipers work hard over the winter months, wiping away dirt and debris on your windshield. Replace them in the spring before a shower makes it difficult to see.

4. Clean the underbody—In addition to washing the exterior, be sure to spray the underbody of your vehicle and underneath the rear and front bumpers to rinse away any salt build-up, which can lead to erosion and rusting. Use a high-pressure sprayer or garden hose for best results.

5. Apply a protectant—Any vinyl surface, such as the seats and the steering wheel, is susceptible to cracking, sun damage, and fading—so be sure to apply a protectant at the beginning of the season and touch-up regularly.

6. Change your oil—Give some thought to the kind of motor oil you have in your engine. Fully synthetic oils, such as Mobil 1, are

specifically designed to protect your engine in hot weather, while optimizing your engine's efficiency and reducing oil consumption. (For more information about Mobil 1, go to www.mobiloil.com.)

7. Check all fluids—In the winter months, fluids are easily depleted as your engine works harder in the colder weather. Make sure to check, top off or replace all fluids, including brake, transmission, coolant, power steering and windshield washer fluid.

8. Pressure test—Assess the pressure of the cooling system, and examine belts and hoses for wear or deterioration.

9. Interior clean-up—Vacuum and be sure to throw away any unwanted garbage that has hibernated under your seats over the winter. Now is also the time to store your winter car mats in the garage.

10. Wash your car—All vehicles regardless of the finish (clear coat, acrylic, enamel, etc.) require regular washing throughout the year. To preserve your car's shine and protect the surface, wax your vehicle once it has dried completely.

"The warm weather is here—so be sure to follow these simple tips to ensure vehicle dependability in the warm months ahead," says Goss. "By taking care of your vehicle, it will more likely take care of you. And it will do it for a lot less money."

For more information on vehicle maintenance, visit www.mobiloil.com.