



## Tire Maintenance: Save Money and Protect Your Environment!

Your tires achieve optimal fuel performance and longevity with the right amount of air pressure. This means if you keep your tires properly inflated, you will:

- [Spend less on fuel.](#)
- [Avoid accidents caused by premature tire failure.](#)
- [Buy fewer tires.](#)

### Inflation Tips

Visually inspect your tires every time you get in your vehicle. [Check your tire pressure](#) at least once a month and before every long trip. Be sure to check your tires when they're cold (i.e., before they have been driven a mile).

The correct air pressure is shown on the tire placard (or sticker) attached to the vehicle door edge, doorpost, glove box door, or fuel door. If your vehicle doesn't have a placard, check the owner's manual or consult with the vehicle manufacturer, tire manufacturer, or your local tire dealer for the proper inflation.

### Spend Less on Fuel

Maintaining the correct tire pressure improves vehicle fuel economy and gives you more miles per gallon (mpg). This means gas money that stays in your pocket. Think of it this way. For every 2.96 pounds per square inch (psi) your tires are underinflated, you lose 1 percent in the number of miles you get per gallon. Furthermore, the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) found in a nationwide survey that vehicle tires were, on the average, underinflated by 10-11 psi, reducing miles per gallon by as much as 3.72 percent!

As an added bonus, maintaining proper inflation on your tires conserves precious resources and reduces the amount of pollutants emitted to our environment since less fuel is burned.

### Avoid Accidents

Underinflation or overloading of tires may result in rapid or uneven tread wear. This could cause excessive heat buildup and possible tire failure, which may result in an accident causing vehicle damage and/or injury or even death.

### Buy Fewer Tires

Well maintained tires last longer, which saves you money and sends fewer tires into the waste stream. The following tips can help you maximize the life of your tires.

**Maintain Proper Pressure.** In its nationwide survey, the NHTSA also found that tires lose about 1.78 percent of their tread life for each psi the tire is underinflated. Therefore tires underinflated by 10 psi lose about 17.8 percent of their life miles potential.

**Balance Your Tires.** An unbalanced wheel and tire assembly may create an annoying vibration when you drive on a smooth road and may result in irregular tread wear.

**Keep Your Tires Aligned.** Misalignment of wheels in the front or rear, bent wheels, worn bushings, and other mechanical problems cause uneven and rapid tread wear and should be corrected by a qualified mechanic. These systems should be checked periodically as specified by the vehicle owner's manual or whenever you have an indication of trouble.

**Rotate Your Tires Regularly.** The purpose of regularly rotating tires is to achieve more uniform wear for all tires on a vehicle. Tires should be rotated approximately every 6,000 miles, or sooner if signs of irregular or uneven tire wear appear. If your tires show uneven wear, ask your tire dealer to check for and correct any misalignment, imbalance or other mechanical problem involved before rotation.

See the following web sites for more information:

- [Flex Your Power at the Pump](#)
- [National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration](#)
- [Rubber Manufacturers Association](#)

### How to Check and Adjust Your Tire's Pressure

- After you remove the valve cap, firmly press a tire gauge onto the valve.
- Add air to achieve the recommended air pressure.
- If your tire is above the recommended tire pressure or you accidentally overfill it, release air by pushing on the metal stem in the center of the valve with the tire gauge tool, a fingernail, or the tip of a pen. Recheck the pressure until it's right.

- Replace the valve cap when you're done.
  - Repeat with each tire, and don't forget the spare. You'll be glad you checked the spare if you get a flat tire in the "middle of nowhere"!
  - While you're checking the pressure, take a moment to give your tires a good inspection. Listen for leaks, check tread wear, check for nails or other objects embedded in the tires, look for cuts or gouges, uneven wear, bulges, tread separation, and other irregularities.
- 

Last updated: May 26, 2004

California Integrated Waste Management Board, <http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov>

Public Affairs Office, [opa@ciwmb.ca.gov](mailto:opa@ciwmb.ca.gov) (916) 341-6300

[Conditions of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

©1995, 2008 California Integrated Waste Management Board. All rights reserved.