

Remember the 4 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Repair.

Conversation these days is often generated around the rising cost of gasoline. We may not have much influence about the rise in gas costs but we can do a few things to lower the amount that we purchase.

Check Prices - Before you actually buy gas, check on the lowest prices in your neighborhood. Go to <http://autos.msn.com> and look for gas prices. Type in your zip code and you might be surprised at the difference in prices at local stations.

Drive Sensibly - Aggressive driving, speeding and braking, wastes gas. It can lower your gas mileage by 33 percent at highway speeds and by 5 percent around town. Observe the speed limit.

Use Cruise Control - Using cruise control on the highway helps you maintain a constant speed and, in most cases, will save gas. Cruise in the Slow Lane. Gas mileage drops considerably when you go over 60 mph.

Remove Excess Weight - Avoid keeping unnecessary items in your vehicle, especially heavy ones. An extra 100 pounds in your vehicle could reduce your MPG by up to 2% the equivalent of 8 cents per gallon.

Keep Your Engine Properly Tuned - Tune up your car according to your owner's-manual schedule (usually every 30,000 miles) and raise your car's fuel efficiency anywhere from 4 to 40 percent. Use the right motor oil. If the oil is too thick, your engine will have to work harder—burning more fuel. If it's too thin, you won't get the needed protection. Stick with the type recommended by your owner's manual for maximum fuel efficiency.

Check & Replace Air Filters Regularly - Replacing a clogged air filter can improve your car's gas mileage by as much as 10 percent. Your car's air filter keeps impurities from damaging the inside of your engine. Not only will replacing a dirty air filter save gas, it will protect your engine.

Keep Tires Properly Inflated - You can improve your gas mileage by around 3.3 percent by keeping your tires inflated to the proper pressure. Properly inflated tires are safer and last longer.

Fuel Cap - Around 17 percent of the cars on the road have gas caps that need attention, and the evaporation from the tanks of those autos accounts for 147 million gallons of wasted gas a year. If the gas cap on your car is damaged, loose or missing, take time to visit the auto parts store and fix it. Evaporation wastes gas and adds to air pollution.

Planning and Combining Errands - A painless way to reduce your driving (and the fuel consumption, pollution, and greenhouse gas generation that it entails) is to think about all the errands you need to take care of before you get behind the wheel and plan accordingly. Try to shop in one location you will find that one ride covering half-dozen stops can cut out five additional trips. You'll not only save fuel, but also reduce wear and tear on your car.

Commuting - Consider telecommuting (working from home) if your employer permits it. Many employers are now offering 4 day work weeks (10 hours per day) in an effort to cut down fuel consumption. Why not ask?

If possible, take advantage of carpools and ride-share programs. You can cut your weekly fuel costs in half if you take turns driving with other commuters. Public transportation could also save money by not paying for parking fees.

Think about how your fuel conservation efforts benefit the Earth and future generations.

Don't forget, together we can make a difference.

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