

Survey Shows 72 Percent of Car Owners Perform Maintenance on Their Own

As the weather heats up, Autotrader offers simple S.U.M.M.E.R. car care must-dos

ATLANTA, July 1, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- As nearly 42 million Americans prepare to hit the road this weekend for the Fourth of July holiday¹, many are taking it upon themselves to ensure their car is ready to handle the journey. Seventy-two percent of Autotrader visitors polled perform work on their car themselves instead of bringing the car to a dealership or shop, according to a recent survey.² Autotrader urges all owners, car-care-savvy or not, to give their vehicles a simple at-home summer check-up before they hit the road.

"Although winter car care typically gets more attention, summer maintenance is just as important," says Brian Moody, site editor for Autotrader. "Simple upkeep during the hotter months can go a long way in not only preserving the value of your vehicle, but also saving money and keeping you and your family safe on the road. The good news is that everyone can do these things themselves."

Autotrader's editorial team offers the following **S.U.M.M.E.R.** tune-up tips:

- **Scrub the Battery.**
Car battery drain is a common problem. Help keep your battery healthy and clean by sprinkling baking soda onto battery terminals and lightly spraying with water. Let the baking soda mixture sit for an hour before wiping it off with a wet sponge. Many auto parts stores also have cleaner specifically for car batteries. You can also ask them about a corrosion preventing kit, which sells for about \$10.
- **Use a Sunshade.**
Summer heat can cause cosmetic damage to your car's paint and interior, especially if you repeatedly park in direct sunlight. Be sure to preserve your vehicle's paint job with a UV-protectant wax, always try to park in a shady spot, and consider purchasing an inexpensive sunshade to help protect the car's interior.
- **Maintain Proper Fluid Levels.**
Coolant, or antifreeze, is the number one fluid you should check in your car during the summer months, as it helps protect your cooling system from corrosion and overheating. Add more if your level is below the minimum line – but DO NOT open the coolant tank lid while your engine is hot.
- **Make Sure Tire Pressure is Correct.**
Properly inflated tires are safer, last longer and can even improve fuel economy. In fact, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates that proper tire pressure can improve gas mileage by up to 3.3 percent, saving you money at the pump this summer.³ Be sure to check your spare tire, too.
- **Expect an Emergency.**
Pack an emergency kit in your car with the essentials, such as jumper cables, a flashlight, paper towels, roadside flares, a first-aid kit, bottled water, and even snacks like granola bars.
- **Replace Your Wiper Blades.**
While it may seem obvious, summer storms can often roll in unexpectedly. Autotrader experts recommend replacing the blades every six months, or as soon as you notice decreased visibility or unusual squeaky noises.

For more information about how to protect your car this summer, visit:

<http://www.autotrader.com/research/article/car-news/240454/10-simple-summer-car-care-tips.jsp>

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¹ Source: AAA: <http://newsroom.aaa.com/2015/06/aaa-projects-41-9-million-americans-will-celebrate-independence-day-holiday-getaway/>

² Source: Autotrader Quick Poll [Sept. 3-24, 2014 (n=3770)]

³ Source: U.S. Department of Energy:
<https://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/maintain.jsp>

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