

How To Get Greater Mileage From Your Tank

Ever-increasing gas prices have led many people to try just about anything to increase the gas mileage of their vehicles. Print ads and TV infomercials hawking products "guaranteed" to increase your mileage by 20%, 30% or more abound.

Increasing Your Gas Mileage

By Levi Quinn Do these products really work? Is there anything that can be done to increase the gas mileage of your car? Is it really possible to come out ahead at the pump? The first thing to note is that there is no gadget or gas additive that has been proven. The EPA has tested over 100 different items from "mixture enhancers" to fuel line magnets. Most of these items showed no increase in fuel economy. The ones that showed any change at all showed only marginal increases. Popular Science magazine actually found that some of these items decreased fuel efficiency. Your best bet is to keep your money in your pocket when it comes to mileage-enhancing items. The only person seeing a fatter wallet is the manufacturer. There are, however, proven ways that you can increase your fuel efficiency: Drive Carefully - Aggressive driving can decrease your fuel economy by as much as 33%, according to the U.S. government's fuel economy website. Speeding, rapid acceleration and braking are all symptoms of aggressive driving. Drive carefully and sensibly, and you will spend less at the pump. Observe The Posted Speed Limit - Speeding costs you big at the gas station. Gas mileage decreases dramatically at speeds over 60 miles per hour. Generally, you can figure that for each five miles per hour you drive over the speed limit, you are burning enough extra fuel that it equivalent to paying an additional twenty cents per gallon. Lighten Up - Remove excess items from your car and trunk. For each 100 pounds of additional weight in your car, you can expect to lower your gas mileage by as much as 2%. Inflate Your Tires - Properly inflating your tires increases fuel economy by an average of 5%. As an added benefit, your tires will wear more evenly and last longer, too. Change Your Oil and Air Filter - Change your oil and air filter on the schedule recommended by your car's manufacturer (check you manual for this schedule). Keeping your oil clean means your engine doesn't have to work as hard, and less strain on the engine equates to better gas mileage. A dirty air filter is a sure-fire mileage killer. In fact, a dirty air filter can cause you to increase your gas usage by as much as 10%. Tune Up Your Engine - Adhering to the recommended maintenance schedule improves gas mileage anywhere from 4%-10%. In addition, your car will run better and last longer. Easy steps such as the ones outlined above can significantly impact your car's fuel efficiency. Driving properly and taking care of your vehicle will save you more money at the pump than any gadget or additive ever could.

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