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Car maintenance can be expensive, and the rising cost of gasoline in the United States can really drain, so to speak, the funds available for car maintenance and related costs.

According to Rich White, executive director of the Car Care Council, Loose or missing gas caps, under-inflated tires, worn spark plugs, and dirty air filters all contribute to poor fuel economy.

Here are some tips, courtesy of the Car Care Council, to help you save money on gasoline, even as the prices continue to climb.

Donâ€™t drive aggressively. This can actually lower gas mileage by up to 33 percent on the highway and five percent on city streets, resulting in a cost of 7 to 49 cents per gallon.

Take care of your tires. A smart care maintenance tip in general, since driving with an under inflated tire is the equivalent of driving your car with the parking break on, and can cost you a mile for each gallon.

Watch out for worn spark plugs. Vehicles have four, six, or eight spark plugs, and these fire as much as three million times every on thousand miles, which creates heat, electrical, and chemical erosion. Replace your spark plug regularly for proper care maintenance, and gas conservation as well.

Change your dirty air filter. Air filters clogged with dust, dirt, and bugs cuts off the air and results in more gas than necessary being burned. This wastes gas, and causes the engine to lose power as well.

Watch those gas caps. Approximately 17 percent of vehicles, according to the CCC, have gas caps that are damaged, loose or missing, and this causes 147 million gallons of gas to vaporize each year.

Donâ€™t idle excessively. Idling gets you zero miles to the gallon, and you really only need to warm up your vehicle for about one to two minutes.

Watch that speed. As your carâ€™s speed increases, gas mileage decreases, and each mph over sixty results in an additional ten cents per gallon cost.

Lose some weight. By simply removing unnecessary items from your vehicle, you could reduce the weight by 100 pounds, which in turn will reduce your MPG by up to 2%, based on the percentage of extra weight relative to the weight of the vehicle.

Proper car maintenance is the best way to get the most out of your car, and to make sure that it remains fuel efficient. Donâ€™t skip regular visits to the auto mechanicâ€”the health of your car depends o them.

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