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## Saving Gas and Money

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While gasoline is very expensive these days, there are many ways that you can reduce your fuel expenditure. Depending on your current driving habits, you could save a big chunk of change every year by following some tips.

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To start with, get in the habit of calculating your gas mileage each time you fill up. Just seeing what sort of mileage you are getting is the first step towards driving more efficiently. Some cars have a digital fuel mileage gauge built in, which can show you a real-time mileage figure, as well as an average. If you have an older car, you can reset the trip odometer on the dashboard back to zero each time you have filled the tank and make your calculations about how many miles the gasoline you just bought had taken you.

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More efficient driving techniques like easing off the gas pedal can help save fuel. Don't 'burn rubber' at green lights, and slow down gradually if you anticipate a red light upcoming. Drive no more than the speed limit on roads and highways. Every 5 mph cars travel over 60 mph costs drivers about 5% of their fuel efficiency. With gas prices where they are now, that could mean two or three more dollars more every time they stop for a fill up.

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Drivers should keep their cars clean and free of junk. Extra weight in your car means more work for the engine, which means lower fuel efficiency. An extra 100 pounds in the car can mean up to 2% lower efficiency. Use your cruise control feature on the highway if your car has it. This will help your car keep a steady pace, and will usually save you some gas. Use the highest gear possible when cruising in a manual transmission vehicle, commonly know as a 'stick shift' car. This will save you some gas and some wear on your engine.

338           If you haven't taken your car for a tune-up lately, that is something you should  
354 consider doing. A car that's running out of tune is probably a car that's using more gas  
373 than it should. If the check engine light comes on, take your car to a mechanic as soon as  
391 possible. It may be no big deal, but it's a good idea to check. Replace air filters when  
404 they become clogged. (Your engine needs to breathe.) Keep your tires inflated properly.  
418 Under inflated tires make your engine work harder, and can become unsafe to drive.

434           One of the best things a driver can do is to try and combine trips whenever  
439 possible. All those trips around your town can add up over time. Use smart phone  
453 technology to find the fastest route to your destination. Sitting in bumper-to-bumper  
472 traffic uses a lot of gas and gets you nowhere. Try leaving for work a little earlier and see  
477 if the traffic is better.

491           Consider carpooling. This might be the single simplest way to cut down on your  
505 gas usage! This could help your friends, neighbors, and coworkers save gas and money,  
523 too. You can also ask your boss if you can telecommute. You may be able to work from  
539 home via the Internet a few days each week and avoid driving to work altogether. You  
557 can also try not using your car for certain trips. Perhaps riding a bike, if the distance is  
577 not too great, will work for you. You can also look into taking a train or bus to get to  
594 work. Compared to driving in traffic, it's often just as fast, and may be a whole lot  
612 cheaper. You can also read or text, or play a game while traveling, and do it legally.

627           Remember, every dollar you don't have to spend on gas, is a dollar you don't  
632 have to work to earn!