

Fuel Economy

Each day, U.S. drivers consume millions of barrels of petroleum to fuel our more than 250 million vehicles. Improving the fuel economy of U.S. vehicles is imperative, and the benefits are far-reaching. Better fuel economy can:

- reduce petroleum use,
- reduce dependence on foreign oil,
- save drivers money at the pump, and
- limit emissions.

Clean Cities recommends these tips for improving your own fuel economy:

1. Drive Sensibly

Think "steady and smooth" as you drive. Don't mash the gas when you start up and don't brake hard to stop. Up to a 33% improvement in highway fuel economy can be realized by changing aggressive driving habits.

2. Drive the Speed Limit

On the highway, you can assume that with each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph your fuel economy drops by 5%.

3. Selectively Use Cruise Control

Edmonds.com states that you can improve your fuel economy by up to 14% by engaging cruise control when appropriate.

4. Avoid Excessive Idling

When your vehicle's engine is idling it gets 0 mpg, contributes to air pollution, and causes engine wear. It is more efficient to turn the engine off while you wait and restart the car when your wait is over.

5. Follow the Recommended Maintenance

A vehicle that is well maintained operates with greater efficiency and ultimately improves overall vehicle performance and fuel economy.

6. Keep Your Tires Properly Inflated

Under-inflated tires require more energy to roll and, consequently, more fuel is consumed. If you keep your tires inflated properly, you can improve your fuel economy by as much as 2.5%.

7. Remove Excess Weight

Weight requires energy to move, so carrying around excess weight will negatively affect your fuel economy. Remove unnecessary items including the roof rack when you're not using it.

8. Use the Highest Gear Possible

To improve your fuel economy, drive in the highest gear possible when you are cruising at a steady speed.

9. Keep Your Car Clean

Keeping your car washed and waxed may reduce drag and improve aerodynamics.

10. Think Before You Open Your Windows

Driving with your windows rolled down while traveling at a high speed increases drag on the vehicle and may cause more fuel consumption than using the air conditioner. If you need it, roll up the windows and turn on the air conditioning when you're driving on the highway. If you are driving at a slow speed, turn off the air conditioner and roll your windows down.

11. Combine Your Errands into One Efficient Trip

Several short trips, all starting with a cold start, can use twice as much fuel as one trip with several stops and may cause you to travel more miles. Plan your trips efficiently.

12. Consider Replacing Worn Out Tires with Low Rolling Resistance Tires Low rolling resistance tires are designed to improve fuel economy by reducing the amount of fuel it takes to push the tire down the road. For more details on these suggestions, read the full document [Tips for Improving Fuel Economy](#) from the Clean Cities Toolbox.

For additional strategies and benefits of fuel economy explore either the Department of Energy's Fuel Economy Resource Guide or FuelEconomy.gov. Or, explore these tools:

[Department of Energy Vehicle Buyers Guide](#)

[Department of Energy Alternative Fueling Station Locator](#)

[FuelEconomy.gov Gas Mileage Calculator](#)

Fueleconomy.gov “Cars that don’t need gasoline” HybridCars.com Gas Mileage Impact Calculator

Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Alternative Fuels & Advanced Vehicles Data Center (<http://www.eere.energy.gov/afdc/>)