



## Green Driving Tips

### **Plan Ahead**

It seems obvious – but planning ahead is one of the biggest changes you can make to driving. Make as few trips as possible. Combine multiple trips into one or two a week. If possible, avoid main centres in the rush hour or at least try to minimise the time you spend in heavy traffic. Sitting in a jam wastes fuel. Try to avoid major road works when planning your route. If you have satellite navigation use it if you are unsure of how to reach your final destination, if you don't have 'Sat Nav' plan your route in advance and take a map with you. Ensure your vehicle is well serviced. In addition to the obvious, have the wheel alignment and engine tuning (including air filter and spark plugs) checked.

### **Pump up to cut down**

Under inflated tyres create more resistance when your vehicle is moving, which means your engine has to work harder, so more fuel is used and more CO2 emissions are produced. Use the simplest vehicle-maintenance trick: keeping tyres pumped to manufacturers recommended pressures can give you significant fuel savings and aids safety.

### **Removing excess load in your vehicle means less CO2**

Clutter in your vehicle is extra weight your engine has to lug around. By removing it, you could reduce your engine's workload. Every 25kg of weight increases fuel consumption by one percent and cut your CO2 emissions so unload any items you won't need for your journey before you set out. Fill the tank to the first automatic cut-off click. Not only is it important to keep space for expansion at the top of the tank – but overflow wastes your money and causes unnecessary pollution to water courses and the air around us.

### **Idling is wasting fuel**

When the engine is idling you're wasting fuel and adding to CO2 emissions. If you're likely to be at a standstill for more than 3 minutes, simply switch off the engine.

### **Drive smoothly**

Accelerate steadily and smoothly, changing gears early but not labouring the engine at any time. For automatics select "economy" or "overdrive". Research shows that it is more efficient to reach 'cruising speed' and stay there, than to plod around in the lower gears. Look ahead three or more cars. If they're turning or slowing, ease off early rather than waiting and braking. Anticipation adds to efficiency. Ease through the corners. Take a smooth line and minimise movement of the steering wheel. Don't accelerate on short straights - you'll only have to slow again, saving little time and wasting fuel. When climbing hills don't add pressure to the accelerator to maintain the same speed. Allow the speed to bleed-off and ease off the accelerator when approaching the top, and use gravity to help you regain cruising speed on the other side. But don't hold up the following traffic.

### **Driving at an appropriate speed reduces CO2**

Speed limits are the maximum lawful speeds which may be driven in ideal circumstances. Drivers should never exceed the speed limit. Staying at or within the speed limit increases driver safety. It also reduces CO2 emissions and saves money on your fuel costs. At 70mph you could be using up to 9% more fuel than at 60mph and up to 15% more fuel than at 50mph.

### **Less stopping and starting means less CO2**

Every time you stop then start again in a traffic queue, the engine uses more fuel and therefore produces more CO2. Keep an eye on the traffic ahead and slow down early by gently lifting your foot off the accelerator while keeping the vehicle in gear. In this way, the traffic may have started moving again by the time you approach the vehicle in front, so you can then change gear and be on your way.





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### **Reduce idling time**

If you're going to be idling for more than 30 seconds, switch the engine off - provided it's safe to do so. Reducing idle time also applies from a cold start. Move off as soon as possible after starting the engine, but keep light on the accelerator until the engine has warmed up. If you drive an auto - pop it into neutral while waiting at the lights.

### **Over revving accelerates emissions**

Modern vehicle engines are designed to be efficient from the moment they are switched on, so revving up like a Formula 1 car in pole position only wastes fuel and increases engine wear. Using your gears wisely by changing up a gear a little earlier can also reduce revs. If you drive a diesel vehicle try changing up a gear when the rev counter reaches 2000rpm. For a petrol vehicle change up at 2500rpm. Treat the accelerator as if it has a nail poking up into your bare foot. You'll be fine with gentle, steady pressure, but any sudden acceleration is really going to hurt!

### **Turn off the air-conditioning**

Have you noticed how our southern European neighbours always try to park in the shade during the summer? It's a good idea because cooling the vehicle down uses energy. So open all the windows as soon as you return to the vehicle and don't whack the temperature down to 'LOW', leave it on 20 degrees and close the windows as soon as the hot air has been moved out of the vehicle. Above all though - staying cool on summer trips keeps you alert - and alert drivers are safer drivers. And remember - don't think that opening the windows at motorway speeds is such a great idea - this causes drag, which will cost more than using the air conditioning!

