

Are your motoring costs going up?

Money-saving tips

A car is expensive to run but there are a number of easy ways that you can cut the cost of your motoring, no matter what type of vehicle you drive.

The average driver spends around £1,200 a year on fuel. Following the simple tips in this leaflet could save you more than £7 a week on fuel. Even if you only follow some of them, you could easily save £4 a week.

The most common ways drivers waste money are shown below:

Tips which also

- **Improve the local air quality**
- **Reduce the climate change emissions you are causing**

The most important factor in how much your car costs to run is YOU!

- **How YOU drive it!**
- **The way YOU look after it!**
- **When and why YOU drive it!**
- **The car YOU choose to drive!**

How you waste money	Fuel consumption penalty	What it could cost you extra each year*	What you can do to cut your fuel costs
Typical driving style	15%	£180	Follow the nine smarter driving tips in this leaflet.
Very aggressive/fast driving	40% or more	£480	Take it easy and slow down. It's safer and less stressful.
Roof bars (nothing on them)	up to 15%	£25+	Remove roof bars when you're not using them.
Loaded roof rack/bike rack	up to 30%	£50+	Use an aerodynamic roof box if you can (remove it when not needed). Consider a rear mounted bike rack or put bikes in your car if they'll fit.
Under-inflated tyres	3-4%	£40	Keep your tyres properly inflated. Check your tyres at least once a month (check before you've driven anywhere and the tyres are cold).
Air conditioning	around 5%	£60	Use air conditioning as little as possible – it can increase fuel consumption by up to 20%. Use the air vents at higher speeds.
Extra weight	6% per 100kg	£10	Take everything out of your car that doesn't need to be there, especially any heavy items.
Poorly maintained car	around 20%	£240	Service your car regularly. Many faults can be fixed by a simple engine tune. Even just replacing a clogged air filter can increase your mileage per litre by 10%.

* **Based on average sized car driven 9,000 miles per year, petrol at 95p per litre**
+ **More if high average speed**

Nine smarter driving tips

See how many of these you already do and try out others. You'll save money and be a safer driver as well as helping to reduce your impact on your environment.

Change to higher gear as soon as possible

Drive smoothly and economically by avoiding high engine revs. For petrol/LPG cars change up a gear before 2500 RPM, for diesel cars before 2000 RPM. Depress the accelerator gently to drive away and change to a higher gear as soon as you can. Be prepared to skip gears to suit your speed and the terrain.



Maintain a steady speed when you can, using the highest gear possible

Don't speed up just to slow down. Instead, go lightly on the accelerator.

Anticipate traffic flow

Look ahead and keep sufficient distance from the vehicle in front to avoid sudden braking. Don't approach traffic lights at speed. If it is clear that you will have to stop, slow down gently. Abrupt starts and stops waste fuel. Accelerate smoothly and brake gently – heavy braking and pulling away too fast can use 60% more fuel.

Don't drive aggressively

Driving aggressively causes more pollution, increases your risk of having an accident and will cost more in fuel. Give yourself extra time to get to your destination and think "steady and smooth" as you drive.

Try to avoid using the accelerator when starting your vehicle

Most vehicles do not need this.

Don't sit and wait for the car to warm up

Drive off as soon as possible after starting the engine. A car warms up faster when it is moving and idling when cold can cause rapid engine wear.

Switch off the engine when you're parked, stuck in a traffic jam or waiting at slow lights

Sitting with the engine running burns fuel and wastes money. But only switch off when it is safe to do so and don't coast with the engine switched off – most cars need the engine running for the brakes to work properly.

Slow down

Driving at higher speeds significantly increases fuel consumption and pollution: it also increases your risk of having an accident. On faster roads, travelling at 50mph can use 25% less fuel than 70mph, and driving at 85mph can use 25% more fuel than travelling at 70mph. You often gain little time when overtaking – but use up lots of fuel in doing so.

Use cruise control

Using cruise control reduces fuel consumption.

Drive less

One of the best ways of saving money is to use your car less.

Before you use your car ask yourself:

Do I really need to make this journey? Could I combine several trips rather than make lots of short trips?

Short journeys (less than two miles when the engine is cold) use more fuel and pollute up to 60% more per mile than when the engine is hot. Several short "cold start" trips can use twice as much fuel as a single, longer trip that covers the same distance.

Could I share the journey with others?

Sharing a trip with a friend, neighbour or colleague can be a good way of helping you cut your travel costs. If you don't know anyone who is making a similar journey to yours, try the free car share scheme provided on www.carsharebirmingham.org.uk.

Could I walk or cycle or take the bus or train instead of the car?

For ideas and help see www.birmingham.gov.uk/transportation or call the TravelWise Team on **0121 303 7249**. For public transport options see www.networkwestmidlands.com or call **0871 200 2233**.

Plan a car journey in advance to avoid congestion, roadworks and getting lost. Websites such as www.help2travel.co.uk can help in this.

In Birmingham 62,000 people have journeys to work which are less than 2km: 23,000 of these people drive. This short journey might be ideal for walking. 280,000 people live within 10km of their workplace, many people could readily cycle these distances.



Around 70% of the population are not active enough to stay fit. 30 minutes of moderate activity five days per week is enough to cut the risk of heart disease and diabetes, and reduce levels of blood pressure and stress. A simple way of doing this is to walk or cycle for short journeys. For a copy of Birmingham's Cycling and Walking Map call **0121 303 7485** or email cycling@birmingham.gov.uk.