

When A Penny Is Worth \$150: Money Saving Gas Tips

Small savings resulting from the way you drive can add up to hundreds at the end of the year. Here are 10 tips to reduce your gasoline consumption.

([PRWEB](#)) July 17, 2004 -- Ben Franklin had it wrong when it comes to reducing the costs of operating your car. That penny saved is not merely a penny earned, but can result in a whopping \$150 earned or more depending on how much you drive.

With gas prices at near record levels, the cost of driving continues to increase. There is hope, however, for those who are looking to cut their driving expenses.

"A small change in your driving habits can pay off in significant savings for you over time," says Jeffrey Strain, owner of the website <http://www.SavingAdvice.com> "If you can save a single penny on your vehicle's operating costs, that penny saved will result in well over \$100 in savings for most drivers at the end of the year."

The numbers don't lie. If you drive your car 15,000 miles a year, a penny per mile savings equates to a \$150 saving for the year. According to The American Automobile Association (AAA), the average cost to operate a car in 2003 was 51.7 cents per mile.

"For most people, they can easily find a way to reduce their vehicle's operating cost by a penny, and usually quite a bit more," says Jeffrey. He recommends that you take the time to implement as many of the following 10 gasoline saving tips as you can which his website has compiled:

1. Keep your driving speed on the highway down since the amount of gas needed significantly increases when you drive above 60 mph. For every 5 mph increase of speed above 60 miles an hour you drive is approximately the same as paying an extra \$0.10 a gallon.
2. Remove all excess weight from your car. Many people use their car trunk as a storage space adding unneeded pounds to the car's weight. This unnecessary weight reduces the car's fuel efficiency.
3. Shop around for a lower price, but don't go miles out of your way to get the best price. When traveling a long distance to save a few pennies, you end up spending more on car driving expenses (at 51.7 cents a mile) than you end up saving with the lower gas price. To find the least expensive gas in your local area, don't drive around looking. Hit the Internet. Sites like <http://www.gasbuddy.com> will let you find the lowest gas price without leaving your driveway.
4. Skip the higher octane gas since it is a waste of money. Regular unleaded (approx. 87 octane or so) is the least expensive gasoline and what you should purchase. It's important to remember that octane is a measurement of how hard it is to ignite the gas, not the quality of the gas. You should only purchase mid or high octane gas if your engine pings, knocks or rattles when using regular unleaded fuel.
5. Drive to work an hour early, return home an hour later. Stop and go traffic wastes much more gas than driving at a constant speed. Changing the time you commute to miss the rush hour traffic will decrease the time you spend behind the wheel as well and increase the overall fuel efficiency of your commute.

6. It's best to purchase gas from a station that is busy. Gas that sits in tanks for long periods can get contaminated and lower its effectiveness. Fresh gas is less likely to be contaminated ensuring you get the most power for your dollar. Don't, however, purchase gas from a station that has just had a truck fill the station's underground tanks. Filling up the station tanks will stir up particles from the bottom of the tank which can clog your fuel filter and make your car run less efficiently.
7. Purchase your gasoline in the early morning or at night when it is cold outside. Gas becomes denser in cooler temperatures. Since gas pumps only measure the volume of fuel - not the density - you'll get better overall gas mileage for your money by purchasing fuel when it's cool outside rather than in the heat of the day.
8. Take the time to check your car's tire pressure each month (purchase a good-quality dial-type gauge for yourself -- pencil-style gauges and the ones mounted on the air hose are unreliable according to federal surveys). Under inflated tires reduce fuel efficiency by 2% for every pound they are under inflated. Under inflation also causes premature tire wear giving your tires a shorter use life. Be sure to use your owner's manual for the correct tire pressure. The pressure printed on the sidewall of the tire indicates how much the tire will safely hold and should not be used since it has no connection to how much air should be in the tire for routine use. You also want to check your tire pressure when it is cool outside. A good time is in the morning after the car has rested overnight. Driving only a few miles to a gas station will build heat in the tire and can increase the pressure enough to give a false reading.
9. Avoid using air conditioning whenever possible. Air conditioning reduces fuel economy by 10% to 20%. Try not to open windows when traveling at high speeds to compensate for turning of the air conditioner. Open windows on the highway can reduce fuel efficiency by 10%. It is much better to use the ventilation system.
10. You don't need to warm up your car before hitting the road. Even on cold mornings, there's no need to let your car idle for more than 30 seconds. Newer cars are designed to be driven almost immediately and letting your car idle longer is a waste of gas. It's also good to know that it is more efficient to turn off your car and turn it on again than to let it idle for more than 45 seconds while waiting.

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