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# Prepare Your Car for **SUMMER**

**FAMILY FEATURES**

Summer is a time for sunshine and road trips. No matter the length of the trip, you'll want your car safe and functional, especially with your family and friends in the passenger seats.

With summer weather approaching, it can be a great time to inspect your vehicle and make sure everything is up to par. No matter if you're worried about safety or showing off your ride in style, there are specific steps you can take to prep your car for warmer temperatures:

**Inspect your brakes and tires**

Tires and brakes can suffer a lot of damage through normal driving. You should check your tires and brakes for wear at least once a month and before and after long trips. Look for debris embedded in tires and for excessive wear, scuffs or bubbles. Also try removing your brake pads to look for wear or cracking, and make sure the edges aren't discolored. If you see any signs of damage, consider consulting a professional.

**Check your oil level**

If your oil level is low or the oil is discolored, it might be time to replace it. There should be a line on your oil dipstick to show how much oil should be in your car. For the most accurate reading, clean your dipstick with a rag or paper towel then reinsert it into the reservoir before removing again to check the level.

**Wash your ride**

There is hardly anything better than rolling down the road with the windows down and a freshly washed car. Try to rinse off and scrub the outside windows, sides and lower parts of the car to remove seasonal residue. Vacuum out the inside including the seats, floors and trunk. Wax can also be helpful to make your car shine in the summer sun.

**Check your fluids**

There are several fluids under the hood to check, including brake fluid, transmission fluid and power steering fluid. Check to ensure you have the appropriate amount of each fluid and if not, fill them appropriately.

**Test the air conditioning**

Summer can be hot and no one likes a sticky, overheated car that's been sitting in the sun. You and your passengers can be set and ready to roll with a working air conditioner. Try to test it out before the summer heats up and make sure it is working properly.

**Add safety essentials**

Long trips to explore new places are a hallmark of summer fun. However, you need to be prepared for anything, even worst-case situations. You can buy a premade emergency kit or simply create your own. Some necessary safety measures include jumper cables, a small tool set, a portable floor jack and a spare tire that's in good condition.

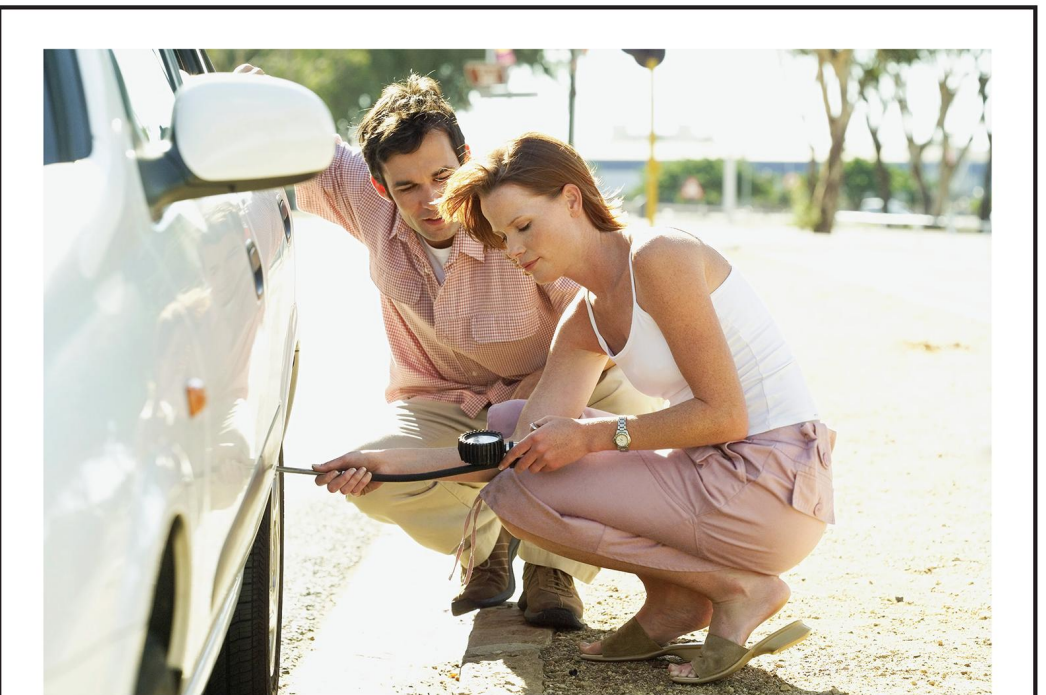
**Install new windshield wipers**

Your windshield wipers work hard throughout the year. They can easily become dull and worn out. Before a summer rain shower strikes, it might be time to replace your windshield wipers with a fresh set.

**Look at the coolant**

Summer can be a prime time for cars to overheat with rising temperatures. Check your coolant and flush and refill it, if necessary, to help ensure your car doesn't get too hot during hours of travel.

For more tips to prepare for summer fun, visit [eLivingToday.com](http://eLivingToday.com).



## 5 Tips for Summer Road Trips

For many people, summer means setting out on a road trip in search of bucket-list-worthy excitement or a relaxing vacation.

Whether you're going down the road to visit family or across the country to see a national monument, it is important to prepare your vehicle – and its tires – before you pull out of the driveway.

These five safety tips can help get your family ready to hit the road this summer:

**1. Check Your Tread** – A tire's tread depth can determine a vehicle's safe stopping distance. You can check your tread depth by sticking a penny upside-down in a tread groove. If you can see President Lincoln's head, it's time to replace your tires.

**2. Ensure Proper Tire Pressure** – Low tire pressure can lead to poor handling and gas mileage, excessive wear and overloading. Drivers should check their tire pressure at least once a month, and especially before any long trip. Use a dependable air gauge or stop by an automotive store like Discount Tire or America's Tire to take advantage of complimentary air checks.

**3. Rotate Often** – Tires should be rotated at least every 6,000 miles or earlier if irregular or uneven wear develops.

**4. Inspect Your Trunk** – Some new vehicles no longer come equipped with a spare tire, opting instead for tire inflation kits that feature puncture coating sealants and air compressors, or even run-flat tires. Check your trunk to see what your vehicle contains and make sure you have a roadside assistance plan should the need arise.

**5. Don't Overload** – The combination of heat and overloading a vehicle, which can be common during summer travel, is one of the most dangerous conditions for a vehicle's tires as overloaded tires can overheat and possibly fail.

When it comes to summer driving safety, it can be imperative to check your tires early and often. Knowing the condition of your tires can keep your family safe and your vehicle in quality condition.

"It is important that drivers know how to check and maintain their tires and recognize the warning signs of when to replace them, especially during the hotter months," said Tom Williams, senior vice president at Discount Tire. "Keeping customers and their families safe is our No. 1 priority each summer."

To learn more about tire safety before a summer road trip, or to schedule an appointment for a tire safety check, visit [tires.com](http://tires.com).