

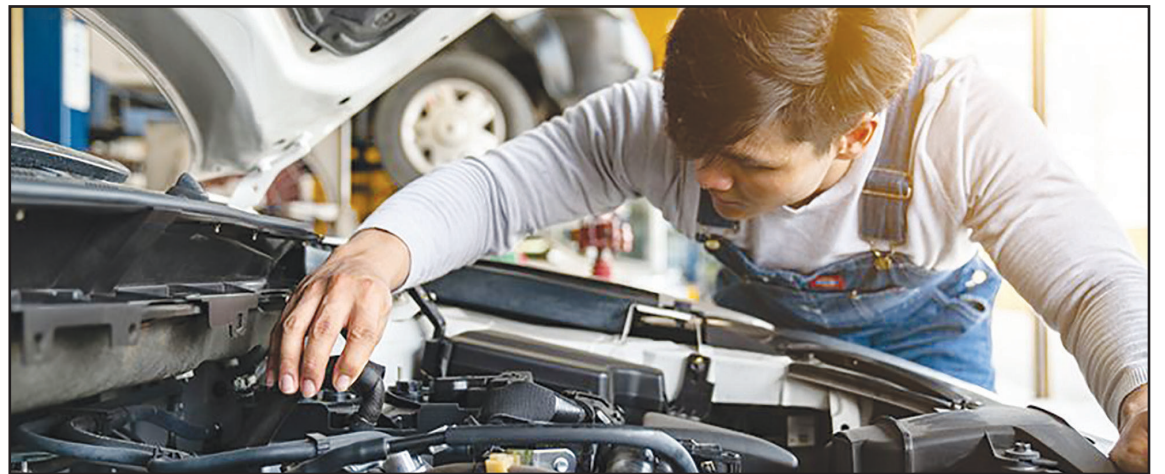
How to reduce vehicle maintenance costs

Major repairs to a vehicle can be expensive. When unanticipated repairs are necessary, drivers' budgets can be thrown out of whack, potentially causing a domino effect that compromises their ability to pay their bills on time.

Whether your vehicle is brand new, a few years old or reaching milestones on its odometer with every mile driven, there are ways to care for the vehicle so you aren't caught off guard by costly repairs down the road.

- Read your owner's manual. A vehicle owner's manual is a great resource that can help drivers keep their cars and trucks running strong for years. Every vehicle, whether it's purchased brand new from

a dealership or preowned from a preowned dealer or private citizen, should come with an owner's manual. Don't worry if you purchased a preowned vehicle from a private citizen who lost the manual, as many manufacturers have manuals available for free on their websites. Print manuals may cost some money. Drivers may be able to find their manuals elsewhere online on a site such as Justgivemethedamnmanual.com, which has thousands of manuals from various automakers available. Once you have the manual in hand or on your computer, visit the maintenance section to familiarize yourself with the manufacturer's recommended maintenance guidelines. Adhering



to those guidelines is a great way to keep your car running strong for years on end, and it might just save you from the hassle of sudden expensive repairs.

- Protect the engine. The engine is arguably the most expensive part of your vehicle to

replace, so protecting it should be a priority. Routine oil changes and oil filter replacements is a great way to protect the engine. Manufacturer guidelines vary in regard to oil change and oil filter replacement intervals, but such recommendations can be found in your manual.

- Hone your DIY skills. Drivers also can save money on maintenance by doing some of their own minor vehicle repairs. YouTube is home to many DIY tutorials that can teach drivers how to change their own oil and replace the filters on their vehicles. Routine repairs are relatively easy, and many tutorials can walk you through them step-by-step. Depending on how much you drive, learning to do your own minor vehicle repairs

may save you hundreds of dollars per year.

- Perform routine inspections. Older vehicles may or may not alert drivers via noises or leaks that they're in need of repair. Routine inspections of hoses, brakes and tires, which should always be properly inflated, can let drivers know if their vehicles are experiencing problems before those problems grow and become something costly.

Vehicle maintenance costs tend to be most expensive when drivers ignore routine maintenance or miss signs that their cars and trucks might be struggling. By adhering to manufacturer maintenance guidelines and paying attention to their vehicles, drivers can reduce the cost of keeping their cars on the road.

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