



Car Care Articles

Stress Management Works for Holidays and Automobiles

In domino fashion, failing to plan for maintenance can turn small problems into larger ones, putting a serious dent in your automotive budget. The penalties of procrastinating on vehicle maintenance range from a heater that runs cold to a battery that won't start the car.



Take care of your car's seasonal services immediately and make plans to get ahead of the game next year. An early visit to your repair facility provides the opportunity to budget for unanticipated repairs.

Car Care Canada offers the following checklist:

Engine performance

A poorly maintained engine is hard to start in cold weather, if it starts at all. It may run rough and lose power. Have fuel, ignition and emission control systems checked, necessary components replaced and adjustments made.

Battery and electrical system

How old is your battery? If it's three or more years old, it should be tested and replaced if necessary. Even a strong battery that can deliver full power at 27 degrees celsius. will have dropped to 65 percent of its output at freezing temperature and less than that with below zero temperatures.

Clean and tighten battery terminals, as loose or corroded connections can cause symptoms of a weak or dead battery.



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Oil and filter

Change both as recommended in the owner's manual, generally at 5,000 km intervals for severe conditions and cold weather operation, especially when most driving is stop-and-go traffic. Check the owner's manual for more information on severe service or refer to Car Care Canada's Service Interval Schedule.

Visibility

Replace old wiper blades and be sure your washers are working. Carry spare washer solvent in your vehicle.

Cooling system

A vehicle's antifreeze should be changed annually, or as recommended in the owner's manual. Flush the cooling system every 24 months. The recommended mixture is 50/50 antifreeze and distilled water. Have the system pressure tested for leaks and check hoses and drive belt(s) for tension and condition.

Tires

Inspect, balance, check inflation and rotate tires. Check inflation on the spare and make sure the jack is in place.

Lights

Check all lights and replace burned out bulbs

Exhaust System

Have the vehicle put on a lift for an inspection of the exhaust system. Leaking exhaust fumes can be deadly.