

Top 10 Tips for Fuel Efficient Driving



1. Avoid Idling

Idling your engine for more than 10 seconds uses more fuel than it takes to restart the engine. Excessive idling can damage engine components. Every 10 minutes of idling wastes ¼ to ½ litre of fuel, emits 600 to 1200 g of CO₂, and a variety of air pollutants. Turn off your engine if stopped for more than a minute, except in traffic.

2. Avoid Aggressive Driving

Aggressive driving, including speeding, quick starts and hard stops can burn up to 39% more fuel. Increasing highway driving speed from 100 km/h to 120 km/h burns 20% more fuel. Accelerate and decelerate smoothly and use cruise control to maintain speeds for highway driving.

3. Plan Your Trips

Spend more time planning and less time driving. Combine several errands into one trip to save time, fuel and emissions. Consider carpooling, walking, cycling or taking public transit.

4. Drive to Warm up the Engine in the Winter

Modern vehicles do not have to be warmed up by idling. The best way to warm up an engine is to drive the vehicle.

5. Use a Block Heater

Block heaters can improve fuel efficiency by 10% or more. Use an automatic timer. Two hours is sufficient to warm the engine block and lubricants.

6. Check Tire Pressure

Operating a vehicle with one tire under-inflated by 8 psi can reduce the life of the tire by 15,000 km and increase fuel consumption by 4%. Check tire pressure monthly and more frequently in cold weather because cold temperatures decrease tire pressure. Use a good quality tire gauge and measure when the vehicle hasn't been driven for at least 3 hours.

7. Reduce Use of Air Conditioning

Air conditioning can increase fuel consumption by over 20%. For city driving, it is more fuel efficient to open windows than to operate the air conditioner. At highway speeds, use air conditioning sparingly, alternating with fresh air vents.

8. Maintain your Vehicle

A poorly maintained vehicle can increase fuel consumption by up to 50% and can increase air pollutant emissions by more than 50%. Dirty engine oil and clogged air filters can reduce fuel efficiency by up to 10%. Follow the manufacturer's recommended service schedule.

9. Remove Excess Weight

Remove the junk from your trunk and clean off snow and ice. Every extra 100 pounds of cargo reduces fuel efficiency by 2%.

10. Track your Fuel Consumption

Track your baseline fuel consumption. Implement these fuel efficient driving tips and track your progress. Consider purchasing a fuel consumption gauge to track your fuel efficiency while you drive. Download tracking forms at www.cleanairsudbury.ca.