

10 Tips to help you go further on each tank

In the wake of the latest fuel price hike, with both petrol and diesel skyrocketing to an all-time high, there are several things motorists can do to reduce trips to the fuel pumps, whilst simultaneously benefitting the environment.



“Aggressive driving is the biggest culprit for high fuel consumption,” says Derek Kirkby, training director for Ford’s global Driving Skills for Life (DSFL) programme, which aims to promote a safe and economical driving culture in South Africa. “While you can’t control the cost of fuel, you can definitely control the way you drive.”

Ford Motor Company and DSFL offer the following tips to help you go further on each tank:

1. Drive smoothly

Ford studies have shown that motorists can slash both their fuel bill and their emissions by as much as 25 per cent by adopting a less aggressive driving style. This means accelerating smoothly, braking softer and earlier, not constantly changing lanes, and not speeding. Not only do these driving techniques save fuel, but they can also prolong the life of your brakes and tyres.

2. Slow down

By driving at 90km/h instead of 100km/h, you can improve your fuel efficiency. Also, aim for a constant speed. Pumping the accelerator sends more fuel into the engine, emptying the tank faster.

3. No idling

Start the car and gently drive away. Don’t leave your car idling. Prolonged idling increases emissions and wastes fuel. Turn the engine off whenever it is safe to do so, such as when stationary for more than 30 seconds.

4. Remove unnecessary cargo

Reducing the amount of cargo you keep in your boot or back seat can improve your fuel efficiency as less energy is needed for acceleration. Try to travel as light as possible, and keep only the most important items – like an emergency kit, jumper cables, a small toolset, and a small jack – in the vehicle.

5. Reduce aerodynamic drag

Attaching a huge carrier or bike to the roof adds more wind resistance. If you spend lots of time on the highway or are planning a long trip, try to transport extra items inside the vehicle or attached to the rear. Keeping your windows and sunroof closed can lower wind resistance too.

6. Use cruise control

Activating cruise control keeps you from mindlessly driving faster, and by maintaining a constant speed, you won't use additional fuel while accelerating. Try to set the cruise control at your vehicle's most fuel-efficient speed, as long as it's at or below the legal limit. However, for safety reasons, you should never use cruise control when it's raining.

7. Combine trips

Many short trips will use more fuel than a single, longer trip. So when you have to drive for errands, try and group as many of them as possible into one trip.

8. Keep your engine tuned

Fixing a vehicle that is noticeably out of tune can improve fuel economy. For example, replacing a malfunctioning oxygen sensor can improve your mileage by as much as 40 per cent.

9. Keep your tyres properly inflated

The optimum inflation pressure can be found on a sticker, usually located inside the driver's door. Don't exceed the optimum tyre pressure, because over-inflating tyres reduces their performance in terms of both traction and lifespan.

10. Use the recommended grade of motor oil

Following the manufacturer's recommended grade of motor oil in your Owner's Guide will keep your engine's lubrication system working as efficiently as possible.

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