

DRIVING HOLIDAY TRAVEL CHECKLIST

Having a relaxing and memorable family holiday is something most of us look forward to all year.

To make sure you and your family remain safe on your next driving holiday there are a number of routine checks you should make inside and outside your car.

We have developed a few checklists for you to use to make preparing for your trip easy. These preparation tips are for all stages of your trip, and include:

Outside your car Under the bonnet Prepare a spare part pack

You can also pop into your local Supercheap Auto and one of our friendly team members will help you with any queries you may have. And remember to jump on to yourcarma.com.au and check out all the great free road safety tips.

The old fashioned road trip is enjoying a return to popularity with many families. Not only is it cost-effective, but it's also a great way to see much of the country you and kids wouldn't normally.

While planning the route to get there is really important, there are a number of other factors you should take into account:

- Stop every two hours: If you're travelling a long distance, regular stops are really important. Not only do they give the driver a chance to refresh and swap with the co-driver, but it also allows the kids to get out and stretch their legs. It's one of the best cures to 'Are we there yet?'
- Unexpected delays and traffic: Often when you're taking your family holiday, a lot of others are doing the same! Allow extra time for unpredicted delays.
- Keep the kids entertained: Have plenty of music on hand for those long trips. Also remember the tried-and-true games like I-Spy, and if your budget allows for it even the portable DVD players.

Outside your car

- Check your tyres: On each of your tyres you should have at least 2mm of tread. This is about the depth of a match head. If any one of your tyres is close to this measurement, and you are planning to travel long distances, check with your local mechanic or tyre dealer to consider replacing the tyre before setting off.
- Pump-up your tyres: Check your tyres are inflated to the recommended pressure, which you will find in the owner's manual or the inside of the car door. If you're still not sure, check with your local mechanic or tyre dealer. Remember to also check the spare tyre.
- Check the wiper blades: Make sure the windscreen wipers are operating and the blades are not split or perished. If your wipers are leaving smears across the windscreen, you should replace them
- Fill the windscreen bottle: Having plenty of water and the right amount of additive in the washer bottle is really important for long trips. The build-up of bugs on the windscreen can really reduce your visibility, particularly at dawn and dusk. Make sure the reservoir bottle is filled to the correct level and the washer jets are aimed correctly.
- Check all lights: While a lot of people regularly check their headlights, most of us forget the other lights. Remember to check the front and rear indicators, parking lights, reverse lights and the rear brake lights. If you do not have someone who can help you check, back your car up to a suitable surface (like a window or a white wall) and use the reflection to check them yourself

Under the bonnet

Usually the domain of your mechanic, there are a few simple checks you can complete yourself to save some time and money while to get you to your destination safely.

- Engine warning gauges: Make sure the warning lights that should be on, are on, by turning on the ignition (but do not start the engine). Then start your engine on and make sure the correct lights switch off. Any lights which stay on after the engine is started may indicate a problem.
- Check your battery: Make sure your battery is held securely in place and all the battery terminals are secure and kept clean and dry at all times.
- Inspect drive belts: Drive belts are really important for your car – they power the fan in your car, and do a number of other important tasks. Check them for correct tension (they shouldn't be too tight or too loose), cracks or excessive wear.
- Check your oil levels: While the engine is cold, park your car on an even surface and turn the ignition off to check the engine's oil level and check for oil leaks. If the level is low, top it up to the line on the dipstick. Ensure you do not overfill as this will damage the engine.
- Check coolant levels: While the engine is cold, check the coolant level in both the radiator and expansion tank. Inspect hoses for signs of wear and tighten hose clamps where required with a screw driver.

Prepare spare parts pack

No matter how well prepared you are, things can still go wrong. If you do run into some unexpected trouble, make sure you have a set of parts in the boot so you can make some running repairs and keep driving.

Here is a checklist of common parts you should have:

- Hoses and belts
- Water, for you and the car
- Fuses
- Electrical tape
- Small amount of electrical wire
- A good quality torch
- A tow rope
- Basic tools including a shifter spanner, straight blade and Philips head screwdrivers, and a pair of pliers
- A first aid kit

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