



Advice on car maintenance

Don't know much about car maintenance? Maybe someone else has always looked after your car for you, or maybe you find it hard to keep up with the latest technology in new cars. As part of keeping safe on the roads, it is important to look after your car and know how to maintain it.

Here are a few car care tips from RAA:

How do I clear fog from the windscreen?



1. Switch the heating ventilation control to the internal windscreen demister (it looks like the icon above).
2. Switch on the air-conditioning with the fan on. The temperature control can be on cool or warm. This will clear the windscreen fog quickly.
3. To clear the back window, press the demister button. Turn the button off as soon as the window has cleared.
4. Turn off all functions before turning off your car.

How do I check the tyre pressure?



Most service stations have pressure gauges to pump up tyres. Check your car guide or the metal panel on the inside of the driver's door to find the pressure number for your tyres.

1. Set the correct tyre pressure on the pressure gauge by clicking the up or down arrow.
2. Unscrew one of your tyre's caps and attach the nozzle from the pressure gauge over the valve.
3. You'll hear a few beeps once the air has reached the correct pressure.
4. Screw the cap back on and then repeat for the remaining tyres. Don't forget the spare!

Only check the pressure when you've driven a short distance so that the tyres haven't had a chance to heat up too much. Try and check your tyre pressure once a month.

How do I change a tyre?



Check the spare tyre is inflated and that there isn't anything lodged in the treads.

1. Ensure the car is in a safe position, with the handbrake on. Turn on your hazard lights and use wheel chocks where possible too.
2. Remove the hub cap or wheel nut covers. Fit the wheel wrench socket over each wheel nut and turn anti-clockwise, loosening the wheel nuts but do not remove them.
3. Find the jacking point* and use the jack to raise the vehicle.
4. When the wheel is off the ground, remove it entirely by unscrewing the wheel nuts.
5. Put the new tyre in place, ensuring that it is in line with the car and sitting flat.
6. Screw on the wheel nuts in a clockwise direction and tighten them up.
7. Lower the jack until the new tyre is on the ground. Once this is done, tighten the wheel nuts again. Check the tyre again after driving a few kilometres.
8. Stow away the tools and spare wheel correctly after you've changed the tyre.

Warning: Don't get underneath the car at any stage.

*The jacking point is where the jack engages on the car body to lift the vehicle. For most vehicles the jacking point is located just behind the front wheels or in front of the rear wheels. To be sure about the jacking point locations for your vehicle, check your owner's manual.

However, if you don't feel confident enough to do this safely, and have RAA Road Service, call **13 11 11** and one of our friendly patrols will assist.

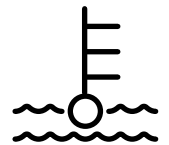
How do I check the oil?



Your car's oil level should be checked monthly. Make sure the car has been off for at least a few minutes before checking the oil.

1. Pull out the dipstick and wipe it clean with a rag.
2. Insert the stick back in and then pull it out again.
3. Check how high it reaches on the gauge. If it is too low then it needs to be filled via the screw cap on top of the engine. Don't add oil into the tiny tube that you pulled the dipstick out of.

How do I check the water/coolant?



1. Let the engine cool down.
2. With expansion tank: Check that the coolant level is between the minimum and maximum level when the engine is cold.
3. Without expansion tank: Check that the water is within about 25mm of the top of the filler neck when the engine is cold. Make sure that the radiator cap is refitted correctly.

Warning: Don't open the cooling system when the engine is hot.

Where are the hazard lights, and when do I use them?



Hazard warning lights are activated using a button usually located in the middle of the dash (it looks like the above image).

Hazard lights are used when:

- Your car is broken down on the side of the road.
- Your car has broken down in a hazardous location that may affect other traffic.
- You are traveling on a motorway or unrestricted dual carriageway and you intend on warning following drivers of a hazard or obstruction ahead.

How do I pop the bonnet?



1. Make sure that the car is off, and preferably cooled down.
2. Pull the interior hood latch, usually located under the steering wheel. Check the car's guide if you can't find it.
3. Prop the hood up solidly. There may be a rod or lever at the front or side that you can lift up and insert into the underside of the hood to hold it up securely. Be careful reaching into your engine if you have been driving as the engine may be hot.

Before driving your car again, close the hood securely and make sure it is latched shut.

How do I know that I'm buying a safe car?



Because of an increased level of frailty, older drivers are more vulnerable to injuries in a crash.

An 80 year old driver is five times more likely to die from the same crash as a 40 year old, so it's important to drive a safe car as you get older.

Read on to find out how to pick a safe car, as well as how to register it and the different insurance options that you can choose from.

The Australian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) crash tests new vehicles to determine how safe they are. Visit ancap.com.au to find out how the car you're thinking of buying is rated.

Before buying a used car, you should have a vehicle inspection undertaken to give you peace of mind that you're buying a reliable car.

To book or to find out more about Vehicle Inspections, call **8202 4688**.

How often should I service my car?



It's important that you have your car regularly serviced to maintain and prolong its engine. Regularly servicing your car also means your vehicle is more reliable and it also helps with its resale value.

For new cars, check your car's guide to see how often it should be serviced. It is recommended that used cars are serviced every 6 to 12 months or when you reach the kilometres on your service sticker – whichever comes first. The service sticker should be on the driver's side of the front windscreen.

It's also recommended that you choose an RAA Approved Repairer in your local area – visit raa.com.au/approved-repairers to find your closest one. It's also important to ask them to add the service into your log book.

How do I register my car?



You register your car through the SA Government, either online at EzyReg or in a Service SA Centre. You can choose to pay your car registration monthly by setting up direct debits. Once you register your car, you will automatically receive Compulsory Third Party insurance (CTP), from a provider of your choice, which is personal injury insurance in the event of a car crash.

What do the different levels of car insurance cover?



When you insure your car, there are three types of car insurance available depending on your needs.

Third Party Property Damage Insurance

Third Party Property Damage Insurance is the basic form of insurance that covers you, if you are at fault in an accident, for loss or damage to other people's property, but not for your car.

Third Party Property, Fire & Theft Insurance

This is the next step up from Third Party Property insurance. It provides cover for your vehicle for loss or damage resulting from fire, theft or attempted theft, and if you are at fault in an accident, loss or damage to other people's property.

Comprehensive Insurance

If you choose to buy Comprehensive Insurance, your car will be covered for damage resulting from a car accident, as well as fire, flood, hail, storm, vandalism or theft. It also covers you for loss or damage to other people's property if you are at fault in an accident.

What if I break down on the roadside?



Although you have these handy car maintenance tips, you should still consider Road Service for peace of mind. If you accidentally lock your keys in your car, get a flat battery or breakdown and you don't know the cause, we're here to help and get you back on the road 24/7.

To buy Road Service or find out more, visit raa.com.au/motor/road-service, call **8202 4610**, or pop into an RAA Shop.

Need Road Service right now?
Call 13 11 11.

We're here to help

If you have any further questions contact Car Advice on **8202 4689**.