

Best Practice Guide

Eco-Driving



Ready, Set, Go Green

Eco-driving is a method of driving which reduces fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. By encouraging drivers to improve their behaviour on the road, eco-driving can also lead to a reduction in crashes.

Eco-driving does not require drivers to make any major changes but to adopt a number of smooth and safe driving techniques.

Avoid Unnecessary Journeys

Determine whether each journey is essential.

Consider:

- A video conference in place of a face-to-face meeting.
- Sharing journeys with friends or colleagues.
- Alternative modes of transport for journeys of less than 3 miles / 5 km. Vehicles are at their least fuel efficient and most polluting at the start of journeys and on short journeys.

Make A Plan

Planning journeys in advance is an important part of eco-driving. Use up-to-date road maps to plan your route, bearing in mind that the most direct route is not always the best.

Consider:

- Avoiding city roads where there are more junctions, traffic lights and more traffic - meaning you are likely to be stopping and starting repeatedly.
- Avoiding peak traffic times when you are likely to face queues.
- Travelling on highways / motorways where possible as you are more likely to be able to stick to a constant speed.
- Where you will park when you arrive at your destination, so you are not driving around searching for a space and wasting fuel.

Watch Your Speed

Over about 60 mph / 96 kph fuel consumption increases significantly. At 70 mph / 112 kph your vehicle uses up to 25% more fuel than it would at 60 mph / 96 kph.

If your vehicle is fitted with cruise control you should use it during highway driving to help you maintain a steady speed. This will help you to save fuel and reduce emissions.

Avoid Harsh Acceleration

Accelerating is the 'thirstiest' work you can ask your vehicle to do. Fast, hard acceleration uses a lot of fuel. It also wears out your tyres and engine much quicker.

Learn The Three S's

Learning the three S's of driving can help you to be more fuel-efficient - these are Slowly, Smoothly & Steadily! The 3 S's apply to acceleration, braking and cornering and can help to reduce engine wear, reduce fuel consumption and prolong the life of your brakes.

Don't Be Idle

Idling (keeping the engine running when you are stopped) increases fuel consumption, can reduce the life of the exhaust system and generates unnecessary greenhouse gas emissions.

Avoid idling:

- If you know you are going to be stopping for more than 30 seconds - except in traffic.
- To warm up your engine, even in cold weather.

Think Weight And Load

Many factors cause your vehicle to use more fuel.

These include:

- Additional parts on the outside of your vehicle, such as a roof rack, which increase air resistance and can increase fuel consumption by as much as 20%.
- Driving with the window open, particularly at higher speeds.
- Carrying more weight. Make sure your vehicle is only carrying the goods it needs to.

Go Green With The Gears

Driving in a gear lower than you need wastes fuel. Likewise struggling up a hill in a high gear also causes the engine to work harder than necessary, again wasting fuel. You should change into a higher gear as soon as the vehicle is comfortable moving up without accelerating harder than necessary. When travelling up a hill, move back down the gears as required.



Take Care Of The Tyres

Correctly inflated tyres will help your vehicle run more efficiently and will also extend the life of the tyres. Disposing of old tyres has an impact on the environment, so any efforts to reduce the number of tyres discarded each year will help to reduce the amount of energy needed to dispose of them or recycle them.

Stick To The Service Schedule

Servicing your vehicle regularly, according to the manufacturer's instructions, will help to keep your vehicle running at its optimum levels and also help to maintain its resale value.

- E** Ensure you plan your journeys in advance.
- C** Consider sharing your journey with others.
- O** Open windows at high speeds can lead to more fuel use.

- D** Don't accelerate harshly.
- R** Remember the three S's.
- I** Idling wastes fuel and can damage the engine.
- V** Vehicles use more fuel if carrying more weight or external loads.
- I** Inflate your tyres properly.
- N** Never speed as this increases fuel consumption.
- G** Get your car serviced regularly.

WARNING

Aggressive driving such as 'jackrabbit' starts from traffic lights can increase fuel consumption by up to 37%.