

Best Practice Guide

Pumping Petrol



Get To Grips With The Petrol Pump

The price of fuel is constantly on the increase and drivers are continually looking for more and more ways of improving the efficiency of their driving. There are a number of useful steps drivers can take such as carrying less weight in their vehicle; ensuring tyres are correctly inflated and avoiding harsh acceleration.

However, drivers can also start the process of saving money AT THE PUMP. Although each step individually may not save a driver a huge amount of money, following these money-saving tips can add up to worthwhile savings over a number of years.

Additionally, although you may think that filling up your petrol tank is a simple task there are a number of potential hazards associated with refuelling.

Following the tips below can help to make the refuelling process safer as well as more cost effective.

Fill Up In The Early Morning

Petrol stations have their storage tanks buried below ground. The colder the ground, the denser the petrol - and the ground temperature will be at its coldest in the early morning. When it gets warmer petrol expands so you might get slightly less for your money if you buy it in the afternoon or evening.

Pump On Low Mode

When filling up the tank do not apply too much pressure to the trigger of the nozzle. If you squeeze too hard some of the liquid that goes in your tank becomes vapor - which is sucked back up and into the underground storage, so again, you get less for your money. If the trigger has different stages (such as low, medium and high) you should always use the lowest mode.

Top Up At Halfway

Don't let your tank run to empty before filling it up - try to top it up when it reaches halfway. This is because petrol evaporates but, the fuller the tank, the less space there is in which it can evaporate.

Look For Petrol Tankers

Do not fill up if there is a petrol tanker filling up the storage tanks at the petrol station. As petrol is poured into the underground storage tanks it disturbs the petrol that is already there, including dirt particles that are usually settled on the bottom. Filling up your vehicle while the storage tanks are being filled means you are likely to pump some of this dirt into your vehicle.

Stop At The Clunk

Petrol nozzles make a 'clunking' noise once your tank is full. Stop as soon as you hear this sound otherwise you are overfilling and are likely to lose some fuel through spillage. Not only does this waste money but petrol spillages are also hazardous.

Check The Cap

Petrol evaporates slightly each time you open the fuel cap. For this reason always make sure it is screwed back on properly each time you fill up.

Read Your Manual

Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for the right octane level in your vehicle. For most vehicles the recommended petrol is regular octane. Stick to what is recommended as using a higher octane petrol does not have any benefits - but will cost you more.

Turn Off While Topping Up

Always turn off your vehicle engine while refueling to prevent the possibility of your vehicle catching fire.

Don't Talk And Pump

Never use a mobile phone or other electronic device while pumping petrol. This is because mobile phones and electronic devices have the potential to emit electrical charges and could possibly ignite fuel or fumes simply by ringing or lighting up. Leave your mobile phone in your vehicle when refueling.

Do Not Smoke

Never smoke, light matches or use lighters when refueling. A spark combined with petrol vapors can easily cause a fatal explosion. You should also avoid smoking when in the vicinity of a petrol station.

Avoid Static

After getting out of your vehicle you should touch a metal part of the exterior before handling the fuel nozzle. This is to discharge any static electricity that has built up. For the same reason you should never get back into your vehicle during the refueling process as the friction between your clothes and the interior of your vehicle could cause static electricity. If you must get back in your vehicle while refueling always touch something metal away from the filling point before picking the nozzle back up.

Stay Close By

Never leave your vehicle unattended while refueling. Even though petrol nozzles have an automatic hold-open latch you should never use this to enable you to leave the pump operating while you walk away.



Use The Facilities

You should check the condition of your tyres regularly (at least once a month) so while filling up you could take the opportunity once a month to check the pressures (many petrol stations have an air station) and look them over for damage. Keeping tyres correctly inflated helps to reduce fuel consumption - so in turn this can result in fewer trips to top up!

Drive Slowly

After you have filled up and paid you should take care when driving out of the petrol station. Adults and children could step out from behind their vehicle when walking to the petrol station and might not pay attention to the other vehicles around them. Check your mirrors before pulling away and drive very slowly.

- P** Pump on low mode.
- U** Using mobile phones when refuelling can be dangerous.
- M** Morning is the best time to fill up.
- P** Put the fuel cap back on properly.
- I** It is advisable to top up your tank when it is half empty.
- N** Never smoke in petrol stations.
- G** Go slow as you drive out.

- P** Pay attention driving out of the petrol station.
- E** Ensure there is no spillage of petrol as this is hazardous.
- T** Take time to check the tyre pressures while at the petrol station.
- R** Resist getting back in your vehicle while refuelling.
- O** Once the petrol nozzle clunks, stop pumping petrol.
- L** Leave your electronic devices in your vehicle when refuelling.

WARNING

Thieves are often on the lookout for drivers leaving their vehicles unlocked at petrol stations while they go inside to pay. Always lock your vehicle and take your keys with you.