

Tip sheet

Conducting vehicle inspections

Regular inspections help ensure vehicles are mechanically sound, safe, and suitable for work. Use these tips and our [Vehicle Inspections and Maintenance Tool Kit](#) to identify potential problems and fix them before using the vehicle.

Item	What to do	Tips
Engine oil	Before starting the engine, check the oil level daily. Top up as necessary.	Consult your owner’s manual to confirm the oil you use is the right viscosity if operating in extreme heat or cold.
Transmission	Check automatic transmission fluid level.	
Coolant	Check coolant in reservoir is within operating range.	
Brake fluid	Check reservoir fluid level is within correct operating range.	If you’re not sure, have your technician check.
Power steering fluid	Check reservoir fluid level is within correct operating range.	If you’re not sure, have your technician check.
Battery	Confirm battery is securely mounted.	Ensure battery terminal connections are tight and check for signs of corrosion.
Engine belts and hoses	With the engine off and cool, visually inspect belts and hoses. Gently tug them to confirm they are secure. If you see evidence of leaks, kinks, splits, cracks, or abrasion, have a technician check it.	
Windshield washer	Check there is enough washer fluid.	Use winter washer fluid in winter. Have an extra container with you for longer road trips in dirty conditions.
Tire air pressure	Each day, check to see if the tires look properly inflated. If you’re not sure they are, check with a tire pressure gauge. Check for signs of tire damage or unusual wear.	Find correct tire inflation pressures on the driver side door jamb or in the glove box and listed in your owner's manual. Don’t forget to check the spare tire.

Tire tread depth	Use a tread depth gauge to keep track of tire tread depth.	The <i>Motor Vehicle Act</i> requires that tires be replaced when tread depth is 1.5 mm or less. Winter tires must have at least 3.5 mm of tread depth. We recommend planning to replace your tires when they are down to 4 mm of tread.
Headlights	Confirm high beams, low beams, and fog lights work.	
Tail lights, brake lights	Check that tail lights and brake lights work.	
Turn signals, emergency flashers	Confirm both front and rear signal lights, and emergency flashers, work.	
Windshield	Clean the windshield. Check for rock chips.	Use a clean cloth and automotive windshield cleaner to clean the inside of your windshield.
Wipers	Confirm wiper controls work, and that wiper blades clear the windshield.	Replace wiper blades when you see streaks or gaps when you use them. Switch to winter wiper blades in October.
Leak check	As you walk around your vehicle, look underneath for oil, coolant, or other fluids on the ground. If you see evidence, have a closer look.	
Body damage	Look for door dings, scrape, and scratches.	Watch for loose hubcaps, body stripping, rock chips. Note and report them immediately.
Instrument panel gauges, warning lights	Confirm no warning lights are flashing. If there are, have a mechanic address them immediately.	If your vehicle has gauges (e.g., oil pressure, coolant temperature), confirm they are within normal range.
Heat / defroster	Check fan controls are working well.	
Horn	Confirm that the horn works.	
Seating position	Adjust your seat position, steering column, and headrest location for your optimal driving position	Keep the vehicle free of clutter. Ensure items in the cab are secured or stowed.
Rear-view mirrors	Confirm mirrors are clean, damage-free, and adjusted for your driving position.	Adjust your mirrors for optimal rear visibility.

Seatbelts	Make sure seatbelts work properly.	Most vehicles have adjustable shoulder belts. Adjust them so that the shoulder belt rests on the middle of your collar bone rather than on your neck or shoulder.
Parking brake	Test parking brake for operation and holding capacity.	Whether you have a manual or automatic transmission, best practice is to set the parking brake whenever you park.
Brakes	Before you enter traffic, gently apply your brakes to confirm they are operating as they should.	Periodically check that the ABS is working. Find a quiet parking lot with no traffic, get your vehicle up to 60 kmh, grip the steering wheel, and firmly apply your brakes.
Vehicle documents	Take your driver's licence with you. Have a copy of the vehicle registration on board.	Check insurance expiry dates. Renew before expiry.
Licence plate	Confirm licence plate remains firmly attached and visible.	Ensure licence plate lights work.
Steering	Assess the "free play" in your steering system to confirm it remains tight.	If you're not sure, ask your technician to check.
Engine noises	Listen for any unusual sounds (tics, pings, rattles, knocks).	
Roadside emergency / first aid kit	Check to make sure your emergency kit is in the vehicle and has what you need.	Check expiry dates and replace items as they expire.

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