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**Car Care And The Environment**

**By MalaMaal.com**

Car Care And The Environment

Car care is definitely a win-win situation. Besides helping the environment, a properly maintained and operated vehicle will run more efficiently, will be safer, and will last longer—up to 50% longer, according to a survey of ASE-certified Master Auto Technicians. The following tips should put you on the road to environmentally conscious car care.

\* Keep your engine tuned up. A misfiring spark plug can reduce fuel efficiency as much as 30%. Follow the service schedules listed in your owner's manual. Replace filters and fluids as recommended.

\* Check your tires for proper inflation. Underinflation wastes fuel—your engine has to work harder to push the vehicle. Wheels that are out-of-line (as evidenced by uneven tread wear or vehicle pulling) make the engine work harder, too. Properly maintained tires will last longer, meaning fewer scrap tires have to be disposed.

Every ten days, motorists who drive with under-inflated tires and poorly maintained engines waste 70 million gallons of gasoline.

Car Care Council

\* Keep your air conditioner in top condition and have it serviced only by a technician certified competent to handle/recycle refrigerants. Air conditioners contain CFCs—gases that have been implicated in the depletion of the ozone layer. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, almost one third of the CFCs released into the atmosphere come from mobile air conditioners; some simply leaks out, but the majority escapes during service and repair—so it's important to choose a qualified technician.

\* Do-it-yourselfers: dispose of used motor oil, anti-freeze/coolant, tires, and old batteries properly. Many repair facilities accept these items. Or call your local municipal or county government for recycling sites. Never dump used oil or anti-freeze on the ground or in open

streams.

Each year twenty times the amount of oil spilled by the tanker Exxon Valdez in Alaska is improperly dumped into America's environment by do-it-yourselfers.

Automotive Information Council

\* Observe speed limits. Mileage decreases sharply above 55 mph.

\* Drive gently. Avoid sudden accelerations and jerky stop-and-go's. Use cruise-control on open highways to keep your speed as steady as possible.

\* Avoid excessive idling. Shut off the engine while waiting for friends and family. Today's vehicles

are designed to "warm up" fast, so forget about those five-minute warm ups on cold winter mornings.

\* Remove excess items from the vehicle. Less weight means better mileage. Store luggage/cargo in the trunk rather than on the roof to reduce air drag.

\* Plan trips. Consolidate your daily errands to eliminate unnecessary driving. Try to travel when traffic is light to avoid stop-and-go conditions. Join a car pool.

Remember, how your car runs, how you drive it, and how its fluids, old parts, and tires are disposed of all have serious consequences on the environment.

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### **What Are Hybrid Cars?**

**By Dennis Conner**

Hybrid plants like corn or rice are familiar to many but hybrid cars? Are these space-age cars that do not need fuel to run or even fly in the sky?

To the uninitiated, hybrid cars may seem like an alien form or specie that requires a lot of explaining. To car and environment aficionados, hybrid cars are either bane or boon especially with the increasing fuel prices worldwide.

Hybrid cars may just be the answer of modern scientists to the rising fuel cost and the deteriorating quality of the environment. Contrary to your belief, hybrid cars are no longer new to the society as the auto industry has come up with various models of hybrid cars. Car manufacturers who have been left behind in the race for the perfect hybrid car have announced their intention to compete in the market.

Hybrid vehicles are those that possess the dual qualities of being able to run on more than two sources of power like gasoline or battery. The first hybrid vehicles came in the form of hybrid bikes which has fuel features but can be operated using the pedal skills of the rider. Hybrid cars are more common in Europe particularly in Norway and France. Hybrid buses that are operated by overhead and by diesel when they travel in other areas without the overhead wires are also being used in Seattle. There are also hybrid submarines which run on nuclear, diesel or electric energy.

The most common hybrid vehicle is that powered by both gasoline and electricity. A hybrid car attempts to allow the owner to save on fuel while being environment friendly. However, can hybrid cars be efficient enough to provide long distance travel without being refueled or recharged?

Most gasoline-powered vehicles answer this requirement although they cause more damage to the environment because of the emissions. On the other hand, electric vehicles are more environment-friendly but can only go on a maximum of 161 kilometers until it is recharged and the recharging time is very slow. The hybrid car combines the advantages of both the gasoline-powered and the electric-powered car.

A hybrid car possesses a gasoline engine much like the ordinary gasoline powered car but the engine is much smaller, more environment-friendly due to lesser emissions and more efficient. It also possesses a very high tech electric motor which allows dual use of batteries and energy.

The hybrid car may just be in its infancy but the human mind can very well make sure that the hybrid cars will be the cars of the future.

The author is a regular contributor to Hybrid Headquarters

<http://www.hybrid-hq.com>

where more

hybrid car information is freely available.



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