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**Internet Provides Wealth of Information on Car Maintenance**

**By ARA Content**

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by: **ARA Content**

(ARA) – A thorough check of your vehicle's major systems is a good idea before the snow flies, and checking your tires, brakes and battery is a good start. But if you're like many drivers, you may not know enough to recognize a problem when you see one.

For instance, do you know the telltale signs of a weakening battery? Do you know the difference between all-season tires and performance tires, or which one is right for your vehicle?

The Internet can provide a wealth of information for the car maintenance novice who is looking for tips on how to winterize a vehicle or make a specific purchase. Online resources, such as [motorist.org](http://motorist.org) and some manufacturer Web sites, can provide basic information on how systems such as brakes, shock absorbers and batteries work, why they're important, and what car owners should be aware of when preparing their vehicles for winter conditions.

For example, if your car cranks slowly when you try to start it, has trouble starting in cold weather, or if your headlights dim when the car is idling, have that battery checked. And if you're buying tires, all season radials are designed to handle dry and wet surfaces as well as some snow, while performance tires provide more grip and a sportier feel.

A new Web site, [sears.com/auto](http://sears.com/auto), lets drivers compare features and prices of batteries and tires, gather information about automotive maintenance, and find answers to commonly asked questions and definitions for useful terms related to vehicle maintenance.

On the site, car owners can enter the year, make and model of their car to receive a list of tires and batteries designed to fit their vehicle. Items can be sorted by price, brand or product name, and car owners can compare as many as four similar items side by side. By entering their ZIP code, car owners can then find the nearest Sears Auto Center, where they can discuss questions and options with the experts on staff.

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"With the information they gather online, car owners gain a better understanding of what they need and why, before they even begin comparison shopping," says Bill White, president of Sears Automotive. "Savvy consumers frequently come into their local Sears store with their printout of side-by-side comparisons when they are looking to purchase major appliances, lawn tractors, home theatre and other big-dollar items," he says. "Now, automotive tires and batteries are two more areas where sears.com can help consumers make fact-based decisions for major purchases."

The "Automotive Advisor" section of the site offers information on buying, maintenance, safety and more -- ideal as owners prepare their vehicles for winter driving. Common questions, ranging from how and when to check tire pressure to why "cold cranking amps" in your car battery are important, are answered in this section of the site.

The site also provides information on services Sears Auto Centers offer, such as alignments, brake

service and wheel balancing, as well as a list of what is included with each service. All information from the site can be printed for quick reference. Because the products offered on the site must be installed on a vehicle, they are not available for online purchase, but can be obtained at Sears Auto Centers nationwide.

"On the Internet, auto owners can research the advantages of various products, compare prices and make decisions in the comfort of their own home," says White.

Sears also offers a wide variety of merchandise and services through its Web site, [www.sears.com](http://www.sears.com).

Courtesy ARA Content,

; e-mail:

EDITOR'S NOTE: Sears, Roebuck and Co. is a leading U.S. retailer of apparel, home and automotive products and services, with annual revenue of more than \$40 billion. The company serves families through 860 full-line stores nationwide.

## **Things To Consider When Buying A Car**

**By Andrew Smith**

Buying a new car is a major purchase with major amounts of money leaving your pocket. Ask an honest car salesman and he will tell you that he is trying to get his potential customers to buy something they don't really need. Ask a dishonest salesman and he won't tell you why. That about sums it up plus it opens the door for all kinds of scam artists to try to use tricks to get you to buy a new car. Arm yourself with all the information you can when buying a new car. Here are some tips:

- There are some classic scams that car salespeople use to get you to sign the dotted line on a sales contract. Get on the internet and see what these scams are. Car salespeople are probably the most

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persuasive type of salesmen/women (most tend to be men) that you will come across. It is very tempting to give into their hype.

- Don't be afraid to say "No."
- If there is ONE thing you don't like about a car - don't buy it. That one thing will bug you down the road as you make those expensive car payments and the honeymoon has worn off. Often, people find the need to purchase another car than keep mending the current one, because of their poor decision making when purchasing the existing one.
- Don't give the salesperson a feel for what you like and don't like. Don't get too personal with the salesperson. Scam and con artists are skilled at getting into you head and detecting something you have an emotional or preference stake in. Keep focused on buying a car and try to avoid the small talk with the salesperson.
- How much is that car really going to cost you in terms of maintenance, insurance, and fuel? There are web sites where you can get this information. Another bit of knowledge to arm yourself with is knowing how much that car loan is going to cost you in terms of interest.
- Check your credit report and correct any errors that may be there. It will help to get your loan approved faster.
- Read reviews on various cars and educate yourself before going to the car lot. The internet has a wealth of information resources for buying new cars.
- Today, there are many places where you can purchase a car. There are classifieds in your local newspapers, local car dealerships, car magazines, the internet, with a huge array of sites, also offers many great deals. Ebay is also an increasingly popular destination to find cars and not necessarily just to from it. Ebay can also be used for researching the car you are looking to buy. You can use it to gain an idea of how much cars in general go for based on your specifications and conditions. There are many, many new listings every hour that you can browse through to help find your new car.

How to

Andrew Smith is the owner of Howtoall, a site with guides on how to do things.

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