



Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
Oklahoma State University

Pathways to Success

A Basic Living Skills Curriculum

Taking Care of a Car

Sissy Osteen, Ph.D., CFP®
sissy.osteen@okstate.edu

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Leader Materials

Taking Care of a Car

Objective:

1. To help the person understand routine maintenance of a car.
2. To help the learner recognize the characteristics of a quality repair shop.

Materials Needed:

Learner's guide, pencils, learner's car, car repair supplies as needed (Example: oil, windshield washer fluid, etc.)

Introduction:

Discuss personal car repair experiences. Stress how proper car maintenance might have prevented the problems from happening.

To Say

To Do

Everyone likes to own a car. Some people do not realize that owning a car means more than just paying for it, buying gas and having money to pay for insurance.

Read and discuss pages 1-4 of the learner's guide. Have someone show the learner how to check the oil; and battery and radiator fluids.



Taking Care of a Car

Today you will learn: How to care for a car.

Taking Care of a Car

Owning a car costs a lot of money. Some people try to cut car costs by not making repairs.



All cars must be taken care of to keep them running properly and safely. You must yield to this check list of car repairs.



- * Check fluids in the battery, radiator, brakes, power steering, engine and automatic transmission.
- * Have engine tune-ups as needed.
- * Check the oil. Add extra oil as needed. Change the oil every 5,000 miles.
- * Keep the proper air pressure in the tires.
- * Rotate tires every 5,000 miles to help them last longer. Replace worn tires. Shop for free rotating service.
- * Check lights to be sure they are working properly.
- * Replace windshield wiper blades as needed.
- * Read your owner's manual.



Keep your car clean to help it last longer. Dirt on a car will hurt the finish. In some areas, salt or chemicals are put on roads to melt ice. These can hurt the car's paint. Wash the underside of the car too. Touch up chips in the paint. Wax your car to protect the paint.



Once you stop taking care of your car, there may be a No U Turn to get it looking as good as it once did.





Keep right on taking care of your car.
This will make your car last longer and
will save you money.

You can take a class to learn how to care for your
car or ask someone to show you how. You can also
read about car maintenance online at
www.edmunds.com.

To Say

To Do

Sometimes cars give us problems that we may not be able to avoid. These problems must be taken care of right away.

Read and discuss pages 5-6 of the learner's guide. Make a list of local car repair shops. Have learner select a car repair shop. Visit the shop and ask the questions on page 7 of the learner's guide.

When your car makes a strange noise or runs differently, merge into a repair shop. Have the problem checked out. This may keep a small problem from becoming a big one. If you catch a problem soon enough, you will be able to shop around for the best buy in car repairs.



If you wait to have small problems checked out, you may have to stop ahead at the nearest service station or repair shop. Then you may not get the best service at the best price. Do not be afraid to have a mechanic check the problem with his testing equipment. Knowing the problem for sure is far cheaper than guessing. The car can still be repaired at home if someone can do the repairs.

Ask friends for the names of good mechanics.
Everyone will have a different idea of which
mechanic is the best, but knowing some names will
help you decide.



Before choosing a mechanic, ask others if
the service was good. Also, ask if the
mechanic was honest.

Before having any work done, ask for an estimate.
Call other mechanics and ask what they would
charge. Choose the best.

Always tell the mechanic to call you
before they do any work that will cost
more than the estimate.



Stop and ask these questions.

- How much will the repairs cost?
- Can you use credit to pay for repairs? What is the interest rate? What are the monthly payments?
- How long will the repairs take?
- Is the location and hours of business good for you?
- Will the repair shop pick up and deliver your car for service?
- Will the repair shop drop you off at home or work while repairs are made?
- Does the shop stand behind its repair work?

To Say

To Do

Many car repairs can be avoided by getting into a routine of performing car maintenance tasks.

Have learner use the check list on page 8 of the learner's guide to evaluate his or her own car. Perform tasks on check list as needed. Stress to the learner that the check list could be used over and over again to help insure proper car care. Read page 9 of the learner's guide as a lesson summary. Discuss any questions or concerns.

Take Care of Your Car

Every week

- Check the oil. Add extra oil as needed. Change the oil every 5,000 miles. Use a new oil filter every other oil change.
- Wash the car. Clean the windows. Vacuum the inside.

Every month

- Check the water in the battery. Add distilled water as needed. Clean battery connections.
- Clean the rubber edges of the wiper blades. Replace blades as needed.
- Check the windshield washer fluid. Add fluid as needed.
- Check the overflow bottle of the radiator. Add fluid as needed.
- Check the air pressure in the tires. Add air as needed.
- Check the lights to be sure they are working.

Every year

- Check the drive belts and hoses. Replace every four years.
- Replace the spark plugs if needed.
- Replace the air filter.
- Check the tire treads. Buy new tires as needed.
- Rotate tires.
- Have a mechanic do a "load check" on your battery to see how much power it has.

Taking care of your car is important. Keep your car in good repair or you may have to



or



Extra Activities:

- Interview a car repair person. Discuss how car maintenance tasks can be performed to help reduce major car repairs later on.
- Take the learner's car in for a tune-up, tire air pressure check or tire rotation.
- Call local repair shops and ask for prices on such services as oil change or engine tune-up. Compare costs.

References:

www.edmunds.com

www.ehow.com_10758_keep.battery_alive.html