

*Vehicle Safety Maintenance & Warranty*

# Myth Slaying Guide



*Be Car Care Aware™*

## MYTH 1:

# THE WINDSHIELD IS FOR COMFORT NOT SAFETY



**M**any people see the windshield as an important component of their comfort. It keeps cold and heat, wind and rain, and untold numbers of bugs and other airborne road debris out of their faces. But they do not see it as a crucial factor in their safety. That's where they are wrong.

While a consumer might worry about “dings” and cracks affecting the car's value, an engineer understands how such damage can affect the vehicle's structural integrity and passenger safety.

Today's automobile and truck windshields are part of the vehicle's safety restraint system (SRS) that also includes air bags and seat belts. If any of these safety components are damaged, or are inoperable for any reason, the effectiveness of the entire SRS could be compromised.

The SRS is designed to keep vehicle occupants within the relative safety of the passenger compartment during accidents, head-on collisions and roll-overs. (Over 30% of traffic fatalities occur when vehicle occupants are either ejected from the vehicle, or injured during rollovers.)

Windshields are intended to keep occupants inside the vehicle. The windshield also supports the roof thereby preserving the structural integrity of the passenger compartment and keeping it from collapsing and crushing driver and passengers.

If the original windshield is damaged, there are two choices. Either repair the original windshield, or replace it. The advantage of repair is the factory's safety seal is not broken. The windshield is not removed from the car. That saves both the very expensive windshield and the safety seal.

## MYTH 2:

# SUSPENSION ISN'T KEY TO YOUR CAR'S SAFETY

**L**ike your car's brake system, the steering and suspension systems are key to your car's safety. Together, they largely determine your car's ride and handling. Car Care Canada recommends having your vehicle's steering and suspension systems checked regularly, at least once a year and usually with a wheel alignment.

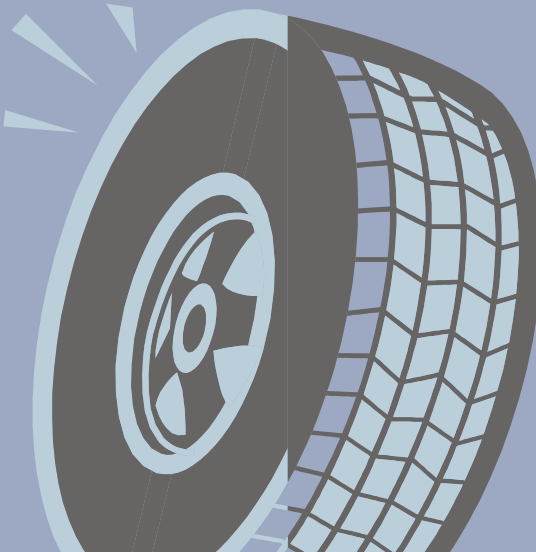
Over time, steering and suspension components wear out and require replacement. The suspension system maintains the relationship between the wheels and the



frame or unibody, and interacts with the steering system to provide vehicle control. Regular checks are critical to the safety of your car.

Here are some symptoms of steering and suspension wear:

- ❑ Pulling
- ❑ Uneven tire wear
- ❑ Noise and vibration while cornering
- ❑ Loss of control



## MYTH 3:

# CARS ARE SO COMPUTERIZED THAT I SHOULD LEAVE ALL CHECKUPS TO THE PROFESSIONALS

Starting in the 1970s, car manufacturers started using electronic means to control engine functions and diagnose engine problems to meet EPA emission standards. As a result, most cars and light trucks on the road today have On-Board Diagnostic systems, which make it important to take your car to a trained technician for most maintenance work.



However, that doesn't mean you have no role in the checkup process. In fact, once a month you should perform some basic checks to help identify problems that can cost fuel, harm the environment and most importantly, decrease overall safety.

### The Be Car Care Aware 10-minute Road Trip Check-Up:

1. Check all fluids including engine oil, power steering, brake and transmission fluids and windshield washer solvent and antifreeze/coolant.
2. Check hoses and belts.
3. Check the tires: Check tire inflation and also inspect the tread for uneven wear, also look for bulges and bald spots.
4. Check lighting.
5. Check the wiper blades and make sure the windshield wipers are working properly.

## MYTH 4: TIRE PRESSURE NEED ONLY BE CHECKED WHEN I GET AN OIL CHANGE

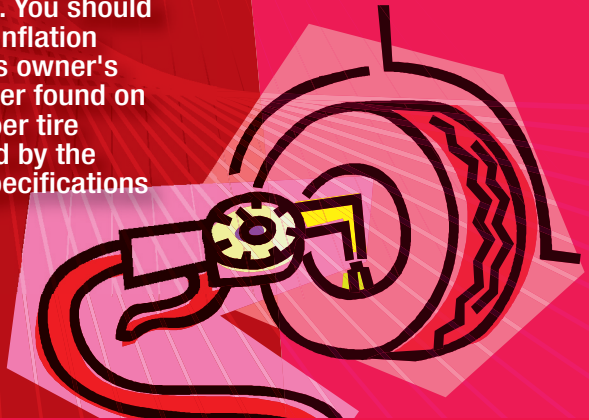
**Y**ou really should measure your tire pressure at least once a month. Tires can lose up to 2 psi of air pressure per month. Properly inflated tires last longer, make your vehicle safer to drive and can improve your fuel efficiency by 3.3%. This will save you about 2 weeks of fuel each year in addition to reducing smog, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Also, tires change pressure from season to season, (both up and down) due to the outside temperature. Every 5°C change in temperature results in about a 7-kPa (1 psi) change in tire pressure.

**If everyone in Canada and the United States maintained proper tire pressure on their vehicles, we'd save \$9 billion on gas, cut 24 million tonnes of air pollution, and prevent thousands of traffic accidents caused by poorly inflated tires! Not to mention, your tires will last longer.**

## MYTH 5: RECOMMENDED TIRE PRESSURE IS LISTED ON THE TIRE

**H**ow many times have you looked on the tire for the recommended tire pressure? Well, you are looking in the wrong place. This is a common mistake. The number on the tire's sidewall is the tire's maximum pressure. You should always use the recommended inflation pressure listed in your vehicle's owner's manual or on the inflation sticker found on the driver's doorjamb. The proper tire inflation pressure is determined by the carmaker as it relates to the specifications of your vehicle.



## MYTH 6: YOUR ENGINE SHOULD BE WARMED UP BEFORE DRIVING

**I**t's important for the engine to be warmed up, but not by idling. Even in cold weather, the best way to warm up a vehicle's engine is to drive away.

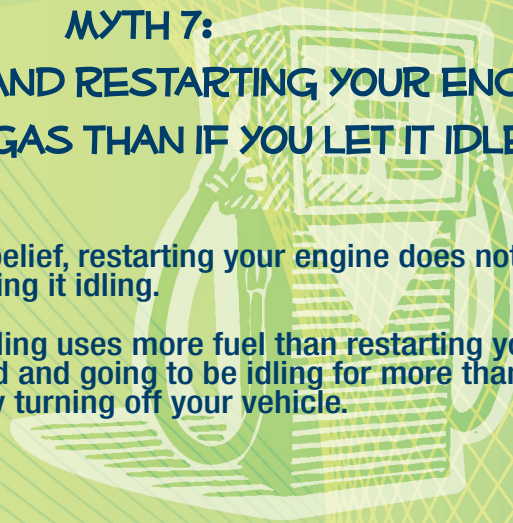


With today's modern engines, you need only 30 seconds of idling, assuming your windows are clear.

## MYTH 7: SHUTTING OFF AND RESTARTING YOUR ENGINE USES MORE GAS THAN IF YOU LET IT IDLE

**C**ontrary to popular belief, restarting your engine does not burn more fuel than leaving it idling.

In fact, 10 seconds of idling uses more fuel than restarting your engine. If you are parked and going to be idling for more than 10 seconds, save fuel by turning off your vehicle.



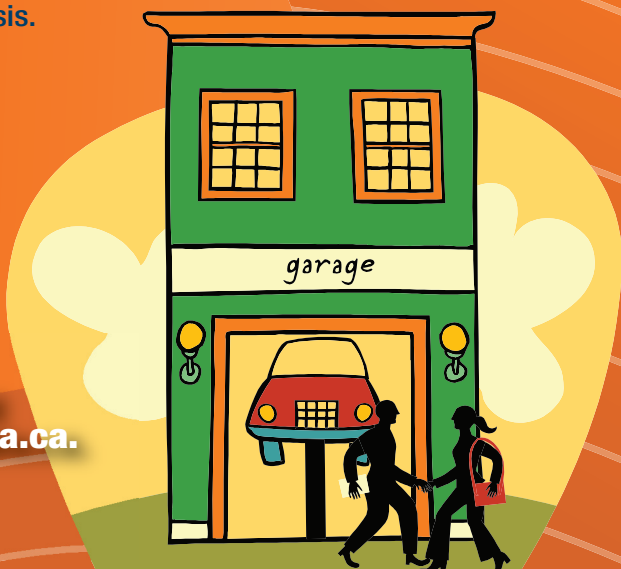
## MYTH 8:

# TO MAINTAIN MY WARRANTY I CAN ONLY HAVE MY CAR SERVICED AT A DEALERSHIP

**S**ervicing your car at a dealer is not mandatory to keep your warranty in effect. Maintenance can be done by any qualified service facility or skilled technician. Keep all receipts as proof of completion, and have the service provider fill out the Maintenance Record.

The Maintenance Schedule in your vehicle owner's manual specifies how often you should have your car serviced and what areas need attention. It is essential that you have your car serviced as scheduled to retain its high level of dependability and safety, to protect the environment, and to enhance and maintain your vehicle's value.

Independent service technicians are qualified to meet your service requirements. Build a long-term relationship with your service technician to ensure maintenance is done on a timely basis.



To find a shop, visit  
[www.carcarecanada.ca](http://www.carcarecanada.ca).

## MYTH 9: PAINT CHIPS AND NICKS DON'T AFFECT MY WARRANTY

**T**o keep your new vehicle paint and corrosion warranty valid, have dents, scratches and collision damaged panels inspected and repaired. When the exterior finish is “broken” through damage to the body panel, the integrity of the bond between the metal and its protective “skin” is compromised. This can easily lead to moisture “creeping” under the paint and primer surface, causing rust to start to form. Left to the elements over time, the rust will spread. New cars have a minimum five-year rust perforation warranty. Unprotected panels that cause rust will not be covered by the manufacturer’s warranty.

The rust caused by nicks and chips can also impact lease returns. You must minimize the damage by chips and nicks to maintain your lease agreement.

Most chip and nick repairs cost less money than most people imagine. Cover paint chips as quickly as possible. For a quick fix until you can get some touch-up supplies, dab a little clear nail polish on the scratch.

Touch-up paint can be found for virtually every vehicle ever built, including antiques. Use the paint code number shown on the identification plate which is likely located on the door jamb, in the glove box, under the hood or in the trunk next to the spare. The owner's manual will tell you where to find it.

## MYTH 10: HANDS-FREE HEADSETS ARE SAFER THAN CELLPHONES

**R**esearch by Transport Canada suggests that there is an increased risk of collision while using a cellular phone, even when it is in hands-free mode.

Research indicates that whether it is a hands-free or hand-held cell phone, distraction is significant enough to reduce a driver's performance. This can cause a driver to miss key visual and audio cues needed to avoid a crash.

*(Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)*

**THE BEST RULE IS DO NOT USE A CELLULAR PHONE EVER WHILE DRIVING.**

Transport Canada has four simple rules regarding cellular phone calls and driving:

- ❌ Pull over and stop;
- ❌ Allow a passenger to operate the phone;
- ❌ Use voice mail and respond to the call at a safer time; or
- ❌ Let someone else drive, freeing you up to make or receive calls.

## MYTH 11: SEATBELTS ARE LIKELY TO INJURE OR TRAP YOU IN A CRASH

Research shows that the odds of being ejected from your vehicle and being killed or seriously injured are far greater than those of being trapped inside by a seat belt.

When used properly, seat belts reduce the risk of fatal injury to front seat passenger car occupants by 45% and reduce the risk of moderate-to-critical injury by 50%.

*(Source: National Transportation Safety Board)*

Crashes involving fire or water happen in only 1/2 of one percent of all crashes. However, if they do occur the best chance of survival rests in remaining conscious, uninjured, and alert/aware.

The biggest danger is with the impact of the crash. If you're not using a safety belt, it's very likely that you will be knocked unconscious or severely injured.

*(Source: Seatbelt Myths from Michigan.gov)*



# *Be Car Care Aware*<sup>™</sup>

## About The Be Car Care Aware Program

Be Car Care Aware is a consumer education campaign about the benefits of regular vehicle care, maintenance and repair. The campaign's goal is to build awareness and knowledge to prepare consumers to make sensible decisions about their vehicles. Built around three key message areas of dependability and safety, protecting the environment and enhancing and maintaining vehicle value, the campaign is spearheaded by Car Care Canada.

The goals of the campaign are to build awareness and knowledge to prepare consumers to make sensible decisions about their vehicles. As awareness builds, consumers will take action, thus reducing vehicle neglect. Reversing unperformed maintenance will benefit consumers by increasing their vehicle dependability and longevity, as well as maintaining or increasing the value of their vehicle. It will also increase profitability in the aftermarket, conserve energy, improve highway safety and benefit the environment by lowering greenhouse gas emissions.

For vehicle safety and maintenance tips, please visit

[www.carcarecanada.ca](http://www.carcarecanada.ca)

This message is brought to you by Car Care Canada, with EcoEnergy funding provided by Natural Resources Canada.

**Canada**