

Itemizer-Observer
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Spring 2017

HOME & GARDEN

& CAR
CARE

Car Care on page 14



Three backyard projects you can tackle in a weekend

(BPT) - Now that warmer weather has finally arrived, you want to be outside to enjoy it. Your backyard could be the perfect place to bask in the sun, entertain friends or indulge in your hobbies. It just needs a little sprucing up, and the right projects can help.

Best of all, many of these projects are quick and easy. To get you started, here are three projects you can accomplish in a spring weekend - and enjoy all summer long.

Forging a fire pit

Whether it's an afternoon gathering or an evening under the stars, adding a fire pit to your backyard is a great way to make an enjoyable get-together last even longer. And building one is easier than you think.

Start by marking the center of your pit in the ground. Spray a circle around the center, outlining your pit's desired circumference - say 5 feet. Dig this space to a depth of 6 inches. In your new-found pit, make a similar circle 12 inches in from your outer circle to make the inner wall of your pit.

Fill this area with small stones to serve as the foundation, and lay wet concrete on the ground to solidify and build that foundation. If you do not have the tools you need to successfully make concrete, you can always rent them to eliminate the need for a one-time purchase.

Once the foundation is ready, apply mortar and stones around the ring. Build up the fire pit wall with additional mortar and stones. After the pit has been built to a height of your choosing, use a brush to remove excess mortar from the inside. You may also spray the inside with a can of spray paint to give your pit's interior a uniform look.

Planning the planters

If you've always wanted to add a pop of color to your backyard, planter boxes can be just the ticket. They are relatively simple to build yourself.

Start by choosing a wood, like cedar, for your project. Cut four strips with two



half the length of your other two, but sharing the same height. These strips will form the foundation of your rectangular planter. If you lack a saw to cut them with, you can always rent one.

Once your strips are cut, butt the ends together and apply wood glue at the joints to secure the fit. Drill a screw into each end to solidify the fit. Next, attach the bottom panels with glue and drill a screw through the ends of the bottom panels into the sides for a more secure fit.

Finish by lightly sanding any rough or unseemly spaces on the foundations. Add a touch of paint or stain to improve the planter's appearance and offer long-term protection.

Shedding new light on the shed

If you're going to spend more time in your backyard this year, it's time to finally do something about that old shed you've been ignoring for years. Fortunately, something as small as a new coat of paint can have a large impact on your shed's appearance.

Before applying a drop of paint, inspect the shed to be sure no structural maintenance is needed. Then it's time to clean it. Rent a pressure washer for a quick clean that will free the building of dirt, debris and cobwebs.

Once the shed is clean and dry, apply an oil-based primer, which will help protect the building from the elements and make it easier to paint.

Finally, it's time to paint. A long-nap roller works well for this project, but you can also rent a paint sprayer. Choose a color to your liking and be sure to select a paint designed for outdoor projects.

Each of these three projects can be tackled in a single weekend, and each can have a lasting effect on your outdoor space. So, what are you waiting for? Get started on your outdoor DIY project today. To find a rental tool provider near you, visit RentalHQ.com.

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5 fast shortcuts to make your house sparkle

(BPT) - We all know that one person who just adores cleaning. But for the rest of us, it's a necessary evil that gets old very quickly!

Before you tackle that long list of spring cleaning tasks, try some of these cleaning hacks designed to make these chores faster and easier. When cleaning is fun and even effortless, you'll feel more energized and gain the momentum you need to knock out your list of chores. Afterward, your house will sparkle from top to bottom, which is its own reward!

1. Find smarter tools - Throw out the messy bucket and mop and reach for a smarter floor solution that's efficient and fun to use. For example, the O-Cedar EasyWring Spin Mop & Bucket System has a built-in wringer that offers superior moisture control of the mop, which makes it safe and easy to use on all hard floor surfaces - even hardwood! The hands-free wringer requires a simple press of the foot pedal to easily spin out the water and help finish the job with less mess and faster drying times.

2. Try natural solutions - Commercial cleaning solutions can add extra costs to your deep cleaning session, not to mention the harsh chemicals can leave behind unpleasant odors. Why not experiment with everyday pantry items? These often cost less and are just as effective in their cleaning power.

A simple solution of warm water and vinegar removes built-up grime from your floors, while leaving a clean, rinse-free finish. Just add a half cup of distilled white vinegar to a gallon of warm water and start mopping.

If you dislike the smell of vinegar, add a couple drops of your favorite essential oil - the fresh scent will be like a small reward!

3. Shortcut to shining windows - If you want streak-free mirrors and clean windows without the hassle, Cas Aarssen, author of "Real Life Organizing: Cleaning and Clutter-Free in 15 Minutes a Day" and the YouTube channel ClutterBug, has this expert tip: Add a teaspoon of cornstarch to your favorite glass cleaner and shake until dissolved. Cornstarch improves the cleaning power of the solution and makes streaks a thing of the past, so you'll get the job done more quickly.

4. Use a cleaning method that also protects - Aarssen has an easy tip that will not only shine up your kitchen appliances, it will repel fingerprints and food splatters often left behind. Just spritz on a little wood furniture polish and rub in with a soft cloth until the surface shines like new.

5. Clean up top - Dust can collect on those high, hard-to-reach places, such as decorative molding and ceiling fans, making cleaning day more difficult. To clean your ceiling fan without showering dust bunnies everywhere, an old pillowcase is your best tool. Spritz the inside of the pillowcase with a vinegar and water solution and slip it over the blades of the fan, pulling it back to trap the dust.

For those tough to reach moldings and corners, use a sturdy rubber band to wrap a microfiber cloth around the end a broom, and give those hard-to-reach areas a clean sweep!





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Creative Gardening Tips For the Spring Season

(StatePoint) Gardeners often focus on the science of their hobby: how much water and sunlight their plants need and how to improve soil quality and keep pests at bay. But there can be a lot of artistry behind the craft as well — from how you harvest and enjoy flowers to how you convert unused spaces of your home into a viable indoor edible garden.

Put your creativity to good use this spring season by gardening with style.

Indoor Gardening

For those who don't have an outdoor garden or yard, the dream of enjoying your own freshly picked fruits and vegetables may seem out of reach. However, the nooks and crannies of your home can be creatively rendered into productive growing zones. And experts say that nearly all homes can support indoor gardening.

"Whatever the size of your home, there will be a selection of edible plants you can grow indoors, as long as you have some natural daylight filtering in," says Zia Allaway, author of "Indoor Edible Garden: Creative Ways to Grow Herbs, Fruit and Vegetables in Your Home." "The areas where plants will grow can be windowsills, beneath a skylight or even in a dark, unlit area if you install grow lights."

In "Indoor Edible Garden," a highly visual guide full of practical tips and stylish ideas, Allaway offers step-by-step directions for everything from creating suspended shelves and hanging jars for growing herbs to mounting edible orchids onto bark and display-

ing them on walls. She points out that those embarking on indoor gardening should first evaluate the level of time they can commit.

"Just remember that unlike other projects in the home, such as decorating and cooking, all gardening projects require some aftercare. So, if you have a busy schedule, choose crops that will tolerate less watering and feeding."

Flower Arranging

While your flower garden is likely a beautiful work of art in and of itself,

you can spread the joy by harvesting your flora and bringing the beauty indoors. Floral arrangements add vitality to any interior space.

"For me, every arrangement starts with the container. Think about what mood or style you want to evoke, and remember, anything can be a container as long as it can be made watertight," says Rachel Siegfried, author of "The Flower Book: Natural Flower Arrangements for Your Home," which explores 60 flowers, bloom-by-bloom in portraiture, including quick-reference profiles and tips.

Siegfried recommends that, when selecting flowers for your arrangement, pay attention to shapes, textures and colors to achieve good balance. Start with a primary focal flower and build out with a couple of secondary focals, a final flourish, and foliage.

For her part, she relies on instinct. "I get a 'buzz' when I find a good combination," she says.

From flowering bouquets to spicy pepper plants, apply creativity to your gardening this spring.

How to Spruce Up Your Garden With Bird Safety In Mind

(StatePoint) You may not realize it, but the average residential property can be hazardous to local wildlife without proper precautions taken.

An estimated 98 million birds are killed annually in the U.S. when colliding with windows, according to Western Ecosystems Technology, making your home a potential death trap during migratory season. However, there are steps you can take to not only protect the birds whose flight path traverses your yard and garden, but also offer them a safe place to rest and feed — adding natural beauty for your garden.

Start by making glass visible to birds by applying safety decals to window exteriors every few feet. Remember sliding glass doors as well.

To maintain the look of your home and your own view out the window, use decals that are unobtrusive to the human eye, but contain a component that reflects ultraviolet sunlight. Those from WindowAlert have proven in studies to be an effective visual barrier that only birds can see, particularly when combined with WindowAlert UV Liquid, a gel which can be applied between decals for greater protection.

"Everyone can help contribute toward making migration safer for birds," says Spencer Schock, founder of WindowAlert.

Because the UV reflectivity may fade over time based on exposure, replace the decals every four months and reapply the liquid every three months.

Schock also points out that if you want migratory birds to stay awhile, you may want to consider avoiding the use of pesticides that kill insects which are their natural food source. A strategically placed bird feeder — either within three feet of a window or over 30 feet away in order to prevent bird strikes — can provide nourishment and energy to hungry birds. Ideally, bird feeders will be placed well away from where prey may be lurking, such as bushes and trees.

If you own cats, you should also be mindful of their danger to birds and monitor your cats'

time spent outdoors to ensure they are not hunting feathered friends.

More tips for turning your yard into a safe haven for birds can be found at windowalert.com.

"Birds play a valuable role in our ecosystem," says Schock. "Protecting them from the hazards humans have created will not only save lives, but will improve your local environment, too."



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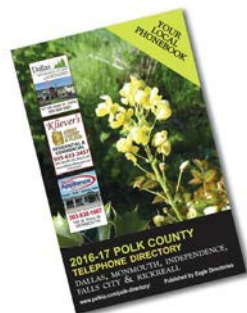


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Planning

- Plan your vegetable garden carefully for spring, summer, and fall vegetables that can be eaten fresh or preserved. If you lack in-ground gardening space, plan an outdoor container garden.
- Use a soil thermometer to help you know when to plant vegetables. Some cool season crops (onions, kale, lettuce, and spinach) can be planted when the soil is consistently at or above 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

Maintenance and Clean Up

- Lawn mowing: Set blade at 0.75 to 1 inch for bent grass lawns; 1.5 to 2.5 inches for bluegrasses, fine fescues, and ryegrasses.
- Compost grass clippings and yard waste, except for clippings from lawns where weed-and-feed products or herbicides (weed killers) have been used.
- Spread compost over garden and landscape areas.
- Prune gooseberries and currants; fertilize with manure or a complete fertilizer.
- Fertilize evergreen shrubs and trees, only if needed. If established and healthy, their nutrient needs should be minimal.
- If needed, fertilize rhododendrons, camellias, and azaleas with acid-type fertilizer. If established and healthy, their nutrient needs should be minimal.
- Western Oregon: Prune spring-flowering shrubs after blossoms fade.
- Western Oregon: Fertilize cane berries using band fertilizer, broadcast fertilizer or a complete fertilizer or manure.

Planting/Propagation

- Divide Hosta, daylilies, and mums.
- Use stored scion wood to graft fruit and ornamental trees.
- Plant insectary plants (e.g. Alyssum, Phacelia, coriander, candytuft, sunflower, yarrow, and dill) to attract beneficial insects to the garden. For more information, see Encouraging Beneficial Insects in Your Garden (PNW550).
- Western Oregon: If soil is dry enough, prepare vegetable garden and plant early cool-season crops (carrots, beets, broccoli, leeks, parsley, chives, rhubarb, peas, and radishes). Plant onions outdoors as soon as the soil is dry enough to work.


• Western Oregon: Plant berry crops (strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, currants, gooseberries, and other berry-producing crop plants). See OSU Extension publications for berry varieties.

Pest Monitoring and Management

- Spray trees and shrubs for webworms and leafrollers, if present.
- Protect new plant growth from slugs. Least toxic management options include barriers and traps. Baits are also available for slug control; use with caution around pets. Read and follow all label directions prior to using baits or any other chemical control.
- Learn to identify the predatory insects that can help keep aphids and other pests under control.
- Spray to control leaf and twig fungus diseases in dogwood, sycamore, hawthorn, and willow trees.
- Prune ornamentals for air circulation and to help prevent fungus diseases.
- Western Oregon: Start rose blackspot control tactics at budbreak. Control rose diseases such as black spot. Remove infected leaves. Spray as necessary with registered fungicide.
- Western Oregon: Monitor for European crane fly and treat lawns if damage has been verified.
- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don't treat unless a problem is identified.

Houseplants and Indoor Gardening

- Trim or shear heather when bloom period is finished.
- Start tuberous begonias indoors.
- Western Oregon: Take geraniums, begonias, and fuchsias from storage. Water and fertilize. Cut back if necessary. Move outdoors next month.



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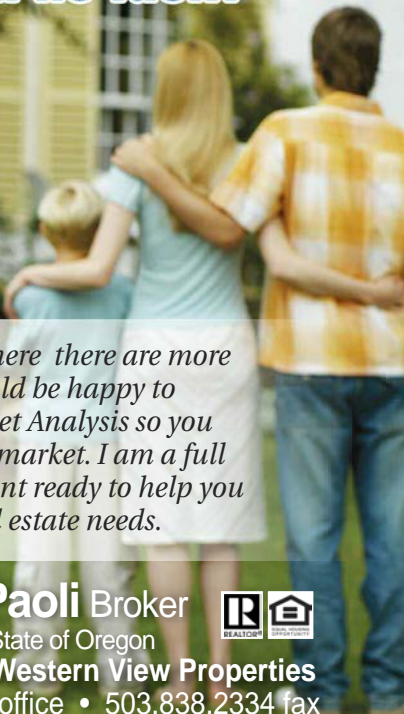

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4 Tips to Flip the Switch to a More Beautiful Home

(StatePoint) The average home has 45 light sockets which means you probably have more light bulbs than just about any home product, and yet the lighting aisle can still be a daunting place. With the right knowledge, you can save money, protect the environment and bring the best features of your home to life.

Here are four quick tips to get you started:

- **Opt for LED.** By 2020, half of all residential sockets will have converted to LEDs, which is good news, as LEDs can last over 10 years and use up to 85 percent less energy than the traditional lighting you may use today. Available in a variety of shapes, sizes, wattages and color temperatures, they are becoming increasingly affordable, too. Just a few years ago, LEDs topped \$40, but today you can find a high-quality LED for less than \$5.


- **Pay attention to color temperatures, wattages, shapes and quality of light.** A few lighting facts can help you make useful purchases. For example, an average 60-watt replacement bulb would require about 800 lumens. The higher this number is, the brighter the light will be. And remember: when you invest in an LED that's expected to last more than a decade, you want one that's going to reliably live up to your expectations, so brands that have been around for a while and have proven their commitment to quality truly matter in this space.

- **Identify how you use each room and the mood you'd like to create.** Use comfortable, soft white light in cozy places like bedrooms, family rooms and dining rooms. Active spaces like laundry rooms and playrooms can benefit from an energetic daylight bulb. Feature pure, clean lights in kitchens, bathrooms and craft and hobby spaces that tend to benefit from light that delivers exceptional color contrast and brightness. Today, select manufacturers such as GE, are taking the guesswork out of the equation by listing whether each bulb has a warm or cool tone and by offering room and use recommendations on the packaging. A warm white light will have a lower K (Kelvin) number, while a cool daylight will have a higher K number.

- **Put your home in its best light.** Even with the right colors, perfect accessories and trendy furniture, a home can look lackluster. Look for new options, such as GE's High Definition LED light bulbs which are engineered with a higher color rendering index for greater color contrast and boldness over an average bulb. This means the colors and features in each room can look even better.

Just imagine a room makeover in five minutes simply by changing your light bulbs. With today's advanced options, there's no better time than now to shed some new light in every room in your house.





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Buying a Home?

What to Know About Down Payments



(StatePoint) If you're in the market to buy a home, your down payment is probably top of mind. However, it's important to understand all your options, particularly if you've heard the rule of thumb that you shouldn't pursue homeownership unless you can put 20 percent down.

"In today's market, misconceptions about down payments are some of the most common, unfortunately" says Danny Gardner, Freddie Mac vice president of Affordable Lending. "And this

discourages many prospective buyers from even leaving the starting gate."

Gardner points out that a growing number of homebuyers are putting down between five and 10 percent, and even as little as three percent through

products like Freddie Mac's Home Possible Advantage. This is important to keep in mind when determining how much home you can afford.

Prospective homebuyers concerned about down payments should also be aware that there are nearly 2,500 homeownership programs across the country that can help with down payment and closing costs, and an estimated 87 percent of U.S. homes are eligible for one or more of these programs, according to research by DownPayment Resource.

The down payment program benefit most frequently found is about \$10,000, making researching these options and discussing them with your lender and real estate agent a worthwhile step. To determine your eligibility and learn more about down payment assistance, visit downpaymentresource.com/are-you-eligible.

Of course, home buyers should not forget that there are benefits to putting more down initially — this will lower your monthly mortgage payment and reduce the amount you will owe the bank. Additionally, those who put down at least 20 percent don't have to pay Primary Mortgage Insurance (PMI), an added insurance policy that protects the lender if you are unable to pay your mortgage. However, if putting 20 percent down will deplete all of your savings and leave you with no financial reserves, it's probably not in your best interest. What's more, you can cancel your PMI once you've built equity of 20 percent in your home.



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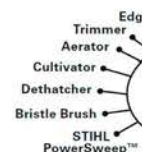
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Hot Tips To Avoid Buying a Hot Vehicle

(StatePoint) As more consumers turn to on-line sites and social media to find deals on used cars from private party sellers, experts warn that buyers should beware.

“Private sellers often offer some of the best deals available on used cars, but these transactions may also bear a certain amount of risk,” says John Rasmussen, Wells Fargo’s head of Personal Lending Group.

Over 707,000 motor vehicles were reported stolen in the United States in 2015, according to the FBI, a 3.1 percent rise over 2014. A portion of these vehicles are resold to consumers like you, which can mean problems down the line.

Consumers who buy a stolen car run the risk of the vehicle impoundment and troubles with the insurance agency should the car be involved in an accident. You may also find it virtually impossible to get your money back on the purchase.

To avoid this fate, Wells Fargo Direct Auto loan experts are sharing some smart tips.

Know your vehicle. This means doing more than just a test drive. Find out the vehicle history by using online resources like Carfax. Have a mechanic look at the vehicle.

Know the seller. Do your best to make sure the seller is who they say they are and that their name appears on the title and paperwork. Any person trying to sell a car on behalf of someone else is a red flag.

Know your options. Is the seller requiring that you pay cash? Be wary. That is a red flag, too.

Know the paperwork. Car thieves often replace the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) from the stolen car with one that belongs to a legally registered vehicle. This process, which is known as “VIN cloning” or “retagging,” allows car thieves to cover up the car’s true history and forge title documents. Be sure to check that all the VINs located throughout the car (dashboard, driver door, under the hood) match each other and the paperwork.

No matter where you buy your car or from whom, be sure you understand the ins and outs of your payment plan. If you are getting an auto loan from a bank, familiarize yourself with its terms before signing. You can learn more by visiting wellsfargo.com/auto-loans.

Ask questions and do your research. Being a savvy car shopper can help you avoid the risks associated with buying from a private seller.



6 Ways You Are Killing Your Car

- 1 Ignoring the check engine light. 
- 2 Failing to change fluids and filters. 
- 3 Neglecting your tires. 
- 4 Not following a service schedule. 
- 5 Keeping a dirty car. 
- 6 Being a severe driver. 



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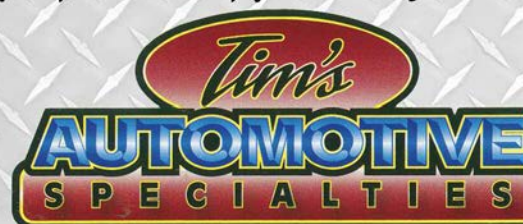
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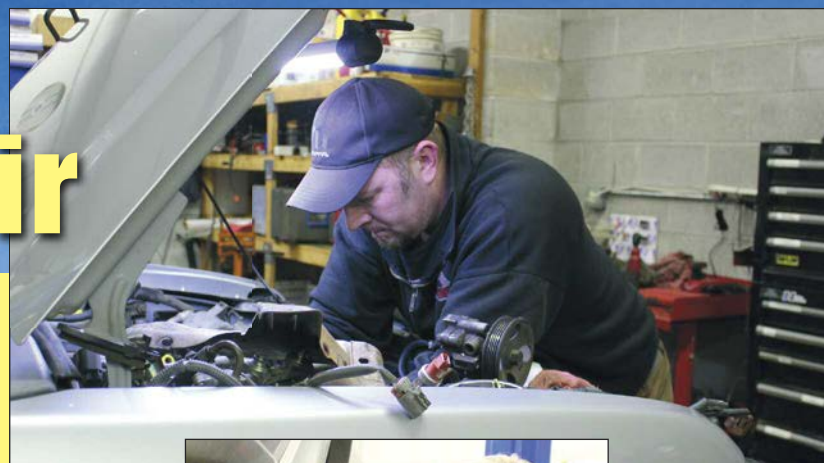
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Top Tips for Family Road Trips

(StatePoint) Getting behind the wheel for an extended road trip? To keep road warriors comfortable and content on their drives, Autotrader editors offer some of their top travel tips.

- **Tune up.** Do a quick check on the essentials before you head out. Check the wear and pressure on your tires, and be sure your fluids (oil, coolant and wiper fluid) are topped off. For do-it-yourselfers, you can perform these quick and easy inspections on your own. For added peace of mind, visit your local mechanic or dealership where you can have your car serviced by an accredited technician. Tending to potential issues proactively means you are more likely to avoid having to deal with them while you're on the road.

To learn more, visit autotrader.com.

- **Avoid “are we there yet?”** Technology features like built-in screens and DVD players can be saviors on the road, but if your car doesn't come equipped with these, consider bringing along a handheld device so kids can play games or watch videos. And if technology isn't your thing, remember that magnetized board games and word games can work just as well. You can also encourage kids to stay occupied by having them help you navigate and by playing DJ.

- **Have patience.** These days, your car's navigation tools can offer realistic travel times, but be prepared for the unexpected. Inclement weather, traffic and bathroom requests can set you back. Give yourself extra time to reach your destination.

- **Have fun!** Road trips can be a great pastime for the whole family while creating wonderful memories. Enjoy the adventure of it!

“Family time starts the moment you hit the road,” says Tara Trompeter, managing editor at Autotrader. “A little bit of planning ahead before you get on the road will go a long way toward filling the experience with more fun and laughter for everyone involved.”

PHOTO SOURCE: (c) Nickolya - Fotolia.com



BASIC CAR CARE

WHEELS & TIRES

- **Clean brake dust off regularly** — Brake dust contains all sorts of nasty stuff. If you leave it too long, the combination of road grime, moisture and heat from your brakes will bake it on to your wheels. Brake dust normally clings to wheels with static electricity so a damp sponge and clean cold water is the best way to get it off.

- **Check your tire pressures** — Check your tire pressures regularly — once a week is ideal. Bad tire pressures can affect fuel economy, handling and comfort. It's easy to do and there is no excuse not to.

- **Check your tread depth** — Bald, slick tires might be good for motor racing but they're no good on the road. Most tires come with tread wear bars built into them now — find one, examine it and if your tread is too low, replace your tires. Four new tires might seem expensive but they're cheaper than a fine or an accident.

ENGINE

- **Check your belts** — At the front of your engine there will be a series of rubber drive belts that loop around various pulleys, driving everything from the alternator to the a/c compressor. Rubber perishes, more so in extreme conditions like those found in an operating engine bay. Get your timing belt and accessory drive belt checked every 25,000 miles, preferably replacing it every 50,000 miles. See the Fuel and Engine bible for information on interference engines and why checking your timing belts is a necessity, not a luxury.

- **Fuel Economy** — Check your tire pressures regularly — once a week is ideal. Bad tire pressures can affect fuel economy very noticeably. It's easy to do and there is no excuse not to.

- **Checking your oil level** — This is something everyone can do — it's quick and easy and it'll tell you if your engine needs oil. If the oil is too high or too low, it can cause trouble for your engine. To check the oil, park on level ground and wait until the engine has cooled down after driving, then locate the dipstick. Pull it out and wipe it clean, then push it all the way back in until the top of it is seated properly in the dip tube again. Wait a moment then pull it out again. Check the level of the oil. If it's between the high and low marks, you're fine. (If it's too low, add a little.) The high and low marks can be denoted by two dots, an "H" and "L" or a shaded area on the dipstick. Why not just read the level first time around? The first time you pull the dipstick out, it will have oil all over it and it will be difficult to tell where the level is. That's why you need to wipe it on a rag to get a clean dipstick, then dip it back into the oil to get a good reading.



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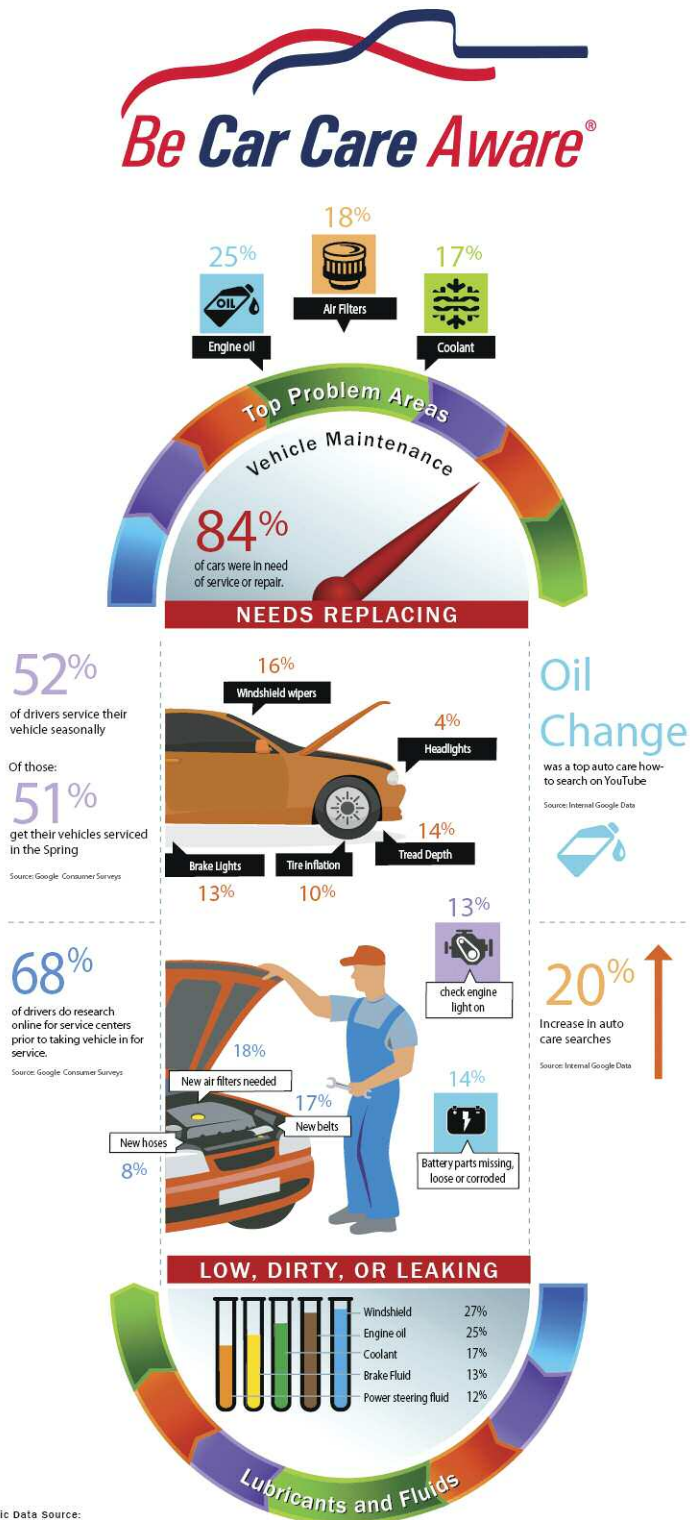
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BE AWARE! KEEP YOUR VEHICLE SAFE, DEPENDABLE AND ON THE ROAD LONGER.



Auto technicians say the key to keeping vehicles running well—today and down the road—is routine maintenance. Yet many drivers tend to stall when it comes to keeping up with some everyday auto basics.

A recent survey (<http://www.carcare.org/april-is-national-car-care-monthspring-for-vehicle-maintenance/>) by the Car Care Council found:

25% of cars had low or dirty engine oil.
(<http://www.carcare.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Car-Care-Stats-Infographic-2015.jpg>)

13% had low or contaminated brake fluid

18% had dirty air filters

17% had inadequate cooling protection or low coolant levels

16% needed new windshield wiper and 27% had low or contaminated washer fluid

18% needed new belts

Overall, **89%** of vehicles were in need of at least one service or repair.



2015 Infographic Data Source:

National Car Care Month check Lanes Final Report 2014. This report details the findings of free car care events held across the country in 2014. <http://www.carcare.org>

Google data in partnership with the car care council is sourced from Google Consumer Surveys, March 2015, 2015 Google-Critical Mix Service Pat to Purchase Study, and query data gathered from searches on Google.com.

Infographic created by: **LUNA** lunadesignpages.com



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COMPOST WORKS FOR YOU

Not only does composting help the environment, but it can help your garden, yard, and house plants too! When compost looks like soil and smells sweet and earthy, it is ready to use. Here are some of the most common ways to use compost:

IN THE GARDEN

Before planting, mix a 4" to 8" layer of compost into newly reclaimed or poor soils. Mix a 1/2" to 3" layer of compost into annual garden beds at least once a year. Compost will add nutrients and beneficial microbes, hold water, and improve plant growth.



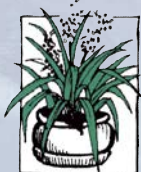
AROUND THE YARD

Spread a 1" to 6" layer of coarse compost on soil as a mulch or spread a 1/2" layer of sifted, weed-seed free compost on turfgrass as a topdressing. These can be done anytime of year to improve soil fertility and reduce watering needs.



ON HOUSE PLANTS

Sprinkle a thin layer of compost over house-plant soil to provide nutrients. You can also make a great potting soil by mixing one part compost with two parts sand and/or soil.



DON'T HAVE A GARDEN?

You can still make compost and use it on a house plant, give it to a friend, sprinkle it around a street tree, or use it in a community garden.

CHOOSE A SYSTEM

SYSTEM FOR FOOD & YARD TRIMMINGS RODENT-RESISTANT BINS

- For fruit, vegetables & yard trimmings (using "Mixed" compost recipe)
- For yard trimmings alone (using "No-Fuss" recipe)
- Bins require a lid, floor, & no holes bigger than 1/4"



OPEN PILES & SIMPLE BINS

- For yard trimmings ONLY
- Requires "Active" composting (chopping & weekly turning to keep animals out)
- Usually inexpensive or free



FOLLOW THE BASICS

Thanks to friendly bugs and worms, composting is as easy as 1 - 2 - 3" - no matter which recipe you use!

- 1 CHOP** materials if you want them to break down more quickly.
- 2 MIX** "browns" (dry, woody materials) with "greens" (moist, green materials).
- 3 MAINTAIN** air & water balance by keeping compost as moist as a wrung-out sponge. Browns, Greens, Air & Water are the "big four" that will keep every compost pile happy.

"MIXED COMPOST"

For fruit, vegetable & yard trimmings together. This recipe requires a rodent-resistant bin and active maintenance to prevent animal nesting and feeding.

INGREDIENTS:

Fruit, vegetable and yard trimmings (browns' and greens), water as needed.

DIRECTIONS:

Feed yard trimmings to your pile as you generate them by chopping them first into pieces 6" or smaller. Food scrapes need to be buried and mixed into the center of the pile. Never dump and run! Be sure to mix in enough browns to balance your greens. Feed as often as you like.

Maintain compost by turning or mixing it about once a week. Keep it moist as a wrung-out sponge.

Harvest rich, brown, finished compost by sifting our coarse, unfinished materials after 3 to 8 months.



A RECIPE FOR OPEN PILES

"ACTIVE" COMPOST

For yard trimmings ONLY. In open piles & simple bins, active maintenance prevents animal nesting.

INGREDIENTS:

Yard trimmings only (browns & greens), water as needed.

DIRECTIONS:

Feed yard trimmings to your compost by chopping them first into pieces 6" or smaller, then mixing them into the pile. Feed as often as you like. Be sure to balance browns and greens.

Maintain pile by turning or mixing it about once a week. Keep it as moist as a wrung-out sponge. Covering it with a plastic tarp will help keep it moist.

Harvest rich, brown, finished compost by sifting out coarse, unfinished materials after 3 to 8 months.



COMPOST

- Most saw dust
- Chopped, woody prunings
- Pine needles
- Fallen leaves
- Tea bags
- Citrus rinds
- Coffee grounds & filters
- Lawn clippings & young weeds
- Fruit & vegetable trimmings
- Herbivore manures

DON'T COMPOST

- Meat, bones or fish
- Dairy products or grease
- Grains, beans or breads
- Dog, cat or bird feces
- Sawdust from plywood or treated wood
- Diseased plants (in cold piles)
- Fruit & vegetable trimmings (in open piles/simple bins)



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Come visit the Composting Demonstration Site at the Polk County Fairgrounds.