

### **Reducing the cost of filling your car with fuel**

The biggest cost of running a car is paying for fuel, so it makes sense to reduce fuel consumption any way we can. A full tank of fuel is quite heavy and you don't want to be carrying extra weight around unnecessarily, but it's not cost effective to just put in £5 worth as you'll waste time and money constantly looking for petrol stations - filling up half your tank at a time is the most sensible action. It's also worth clearing out any junk from the boot of your car as any unnecessary weight will reduce your miles per gallon. Take no notice of the myths that you get more for your money if you buy your fuel in the morning when it's cold – the fuel is stored underground and isn't affected by the outside temperature.

Modern tyres need little maintenance and can get neglected, however, keeping tyres properly inflated will make a significant difference to fuel consumption. When your car is fully loaded, it's particularly important to ensure tyres are inflated to the correct pressures - like when you're going on holiday. Over inflated tyres won't save money - the benefits are outweighed by the poor handling, reduced stability and braking capability of the vehicle. What's more, wrongly inflated tyres wear out quickly – the amount of fuel saved is worth less than the cost of replacing tyres - properly inflated tyres are safer and last longer.

### **Air Conditioning in your car – dispelling the myth**

Looking forward to warmer weather many of us will want to keep cool by using the air conditioning systems in our cars. If you've got air conditioning in your car make sure you use it regularly. Lack of use over a long period will cause the valves and seals in the system to crack allowing refrigerant to leak into the atmosphere where it does no good at all. Also it's important to make sure you get the full benefit by keeping the system topped up, as poorly maintained air conditioning won't cool effectively but will cost you just as much to run as when it's properly working. Running your air conditioning when travelling at motorway speeds has little impact on fuel consumption and it's much better to use it rather than open the windows or sunroof, which will increase the drag of the car and use more fuel. When driving around town, the opposite is true, where the extra load the air conditioning system puts on the engine will significantly increase fuel consumption, whereas opening windows at low speeds will make no difference.

Look out for more green, money saving ideas that I'll be passing on and I'm keen to hear your ideas - by sharing our successes everyone can benefit.

Contact me now if you want to know how to be more environmentally friendly.

Martin Smith - Environmental Consultant

Telephone: 07974 768553 Email: [info@consultmartin.co.uk](mailto:info@consultmartin.co.uk)