

Getting a Tune-Up

A tune-up is the routine replacement of spark plugs, filters, and other, air-, fuel-, and ignition-related parts, as well as a precise series of computerized tests and adjustments to regain the best engine performance and fuel economy in accordance with the manufacturer's standards. It should be performed by a qualified service professional. When your vehicle is tuned correctly, systems and components are working smoothly together. Getting "air, fuel, and spark" in sync is what a tune-up is all about.

What does a tune-up include?

A tune-up may be major or minor, and may include the following checks:

- battery service
- idle speed adjustment
- timing adjustment
- pollution controls inspection
- vacuum and compression checks
- inspection of belts and hoses
- analysis of computer components

Each vehicle will have its own set of tune-up standards, but in the end, any tune-up should result in a quick-starting, smooth-running engine.

What's not included in a tune-up?

- an oil change (or an oil check)
- brake inspection
- windshield wiper blade inspection
- tire rotation or alignment
- many other services

If you want this and other maintenance work done at the same time you get a tune-up, you will need to ask for these services. Make sure you and the service professional clearly understand what work is to be done.

How will I know when my vehicle needs a tune-up?

Gas mileage goes down. If you continue to use the same good-quality gasoline you always have, but your gas mileage and performance continually decrease, it might be time to have your vehicle serviced.

Sounds different. If you hear abnormal sounds and can't determine the cause, it's wise to have a professional take a look.

According to the maintenance schedule for your vehicle (see your owner's manual). The maintenance schedule is a chart of recommended service tasks and indicates when to perform the tasks.



What do I need to do to between tune-ups?

- Don't run the engine on an empty gas tank.
- Use a good grade of gasoline with detergent.
- Check belts and hoses often. Make sure brittle belts and split hoses are replaced and are securely fastened.
- Replace gas, oil, and air filters regularly.
- Check the battery from time to time. Check for terminal deposits, electrolyte levels, fluid levels, temperature, and voltage output.
- Check spark plugs for gap and wear. Replace old plugs.
- Monitor the pollution control system. Check the catalytic converter to avoid engine overheating and monitor conversion function.
- Adjust the idle with a tachometer. Set idle to optimum levels to avoid stalling and optimize fuel usage (see your owner's manual).
- Fluids should be checked about every week and replaced as needed.