

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

AVOIDING A FLAT BATTERY



Ensure all interior and exterior lights as well as radios and mobile phone chargers are switched off when the car is not in use.

If the battery does become flat, turn everything off and don't attempt to start the car engine for at least 30 minutes- this should give the battery time to charge up enough to start the engine.

Try to get into the habit of checking the battery levels, unless you have a maintenance-free battery. If the levels are low, you can top them up with distilled water, but always refer to the user's manual before you attempt to do this. You can also check that the battery connections are secure and free from corrosion which will prolong the life of your battery.

Remember that battery acid is highly corrosive and contact should be avoided at all times.

AVOIDING FLAT OR DAMAGED TYRES



Flat or damaged tyres can be the result of many things out of your own control, but there are certainly things you can do to reduce the risk of damaged tyres.

Get into the routine of checking air pressure and tread depths on a regular basis- refer to the manufacturer's guidelines for correct tyre pressure per square inch.

Avoid kerb impact wherever possible as this can damage the car tyre itself and result in much weaker tyre strength.

And finally, ensure you have all the necessary tools and a spare tyre in good condition for emergencies.

PREVENTING RUST



Rust is the effect of moisture (oxygen and water) corroding bare metals such as steel and iron, which can become a vastly expensive problem to fix, the longer it is left untreated.

In order to prevent rust occurring in the first place, ensure that your car's paintwork is kept in good condition. Driving at a safe distance from the car in front will reduce the risk of stones flying up off the road and scratching your paintwork.

Check rust 'danger areas' regularly for early detection. These areas include wheel wells, doors and door sills, bonnet and undercarriage.

As the undercarriage is difficult to check, it is helpful to hose the undercarriage from time to time to remove any dirt and grime which could trap moisture in future.

PREVENTING ENGINE-OVERHEATING



For simple prevention, regularly check the cars coolant system and make sure that it contains water and anti-freeze, usually in equal measures, but check the car owner's manual for specific instruction in filling the tank.

If you suspect a problem, check that the thermostat is not broken by feeling the temperature of the pipe that returns to the radiator. If the thermostat is broken, this pipe will get hot within a couple of minutes of the engine being switched on.

Also check the fan at the front of the engine. This fan should be clear at all times. For front wheel drive cars, the fan starts and stops automatically according to the temperature sensors. For rear wheel drive cars the fan is connected to the engine- when the engine is off, try turning this fan by hand. If the fan is in good working condition, this should be very difficult to do.

PREVENTING ENGINE WEAR AND TEAR



The easiest way to ensure that your engine always performs at its best is to check the oil levels periodically; ideally once a month and whenever you are going on a long journey.

Always check the oil when the car is on a flat surface and the engine is warm- too hot or cold and you will not get an accurate reading as the oil expands or contracts because of the temperature.

Always wipe the dipstick with an old rag before you re-insert it into the oil tank to ensure an accurate reading, and add new oil gradually, it's much easier to add more than get the excess out!

