

10 Tips to Always Remember for Long Summer Road Trips

It's summer and all your thoughts are on fun and vacation. If you are a car enthusiast who relishes time on the open road with your favorite cruising car, the last thing you want is problems with the car, whether when you are getting ready to go or when you are actually on your way. You simply want to enjoy.

According to Didyouknowcars.com, the most common problems people have during summer drives are broken drive belts, flat tires, fuel leaks, weak battery, broken Air Conditioning, overheating engines, worn shock absorbers, and worn wiper blades. Many of these issues can be avoided if you take your car into the shop for periodic maintenance, or at least check these before you start your summer road trip. This article describes 10 practical tips to consider ensuring your safety and pleasure while driving.

1: Fluids

Check the level of all your car fluids and carry extra bottles:

- Oil
- brake
- automatic transmission or clutch
- power steering
- windshield washer

2: Tires

Check the air pressure in each of your tires. Make sure your tires have a tread. Also check you have a spare tire, and it also has sufficient air pressure. Check that you have the tire changing tools for the car.

3: Air Conditioning

If your car has AC, make sure it is working.

4: Battery and Jumper Cables

Check that your battery is fully charged. (Some batteries may also require periodically adding distilled water to each of the cell levels.) Also make sure you have jumper cables in case there is a problem with the electrical system, and your battery goes dead.

5: Extra Keys

One of the unfortunate things that can happen is that you lose your car keys during your travels, and you are miles from home.

6: Extra Water

Take a few extra bottles of water. It can come in handy if it is really hot and there is no place to get something to drink. Also, cars often overheat during strenuous hill climbing. (It's amazing

how many cars overheat on their way up New Hampshire's Mt. Washington each year.) If this happens to you, **DO NOT TAKE THE CAP OFF THE RADIATOR WHILE IT'S HOT.** Hot steam can cause serious burns. The best practice is to turn off the car and open the hood. After a while, it will eventually cool down. Be patient. When the radiator cap is cool enough to the touch, open it slowly, standing away from it. Check the water level. If necessary, add some of the bottled water you brought with you and put the cap back on before continuing to drive. Monitor your temperature gauge. If necessary, stop for help at the nearest service station.

7: Roadside Emergency Kit

Put together your own emergency kit to include flares, a physical map of for your travels (for when there's no cell coverage. Also include a First Aid kit with such things as pain relief (e.g., aspirin, Tylenol), stomach ailment remedies (e.g., Tums, Pepto Bismal, Imodium), an antihistamine medication (e.g., Benadryl), an antibiotic cream to protect against infection, and bandages for cuts and wounds.

8: Windshield Wipers

Check that you have good, working windshield wipers. If necessary, replace them so that you can see clearly when driving through sudden downpours and thunderstorms.

9: Essential Documents

Make sure you have your license, registration, insurance information, and the car manual.

10: Phone and Charger

Don't forget your phone or your car-compatible charger.

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