

## Keep fit for cars: losing weight in 08

### Put the car on a 'low-fuel' diet to slim fuel bills

Lean and mean motoring is one answer to rising fuel costs, says Neil Greig, Director of the IAM Trust. A low-fuel car diet for the New Year can offset recent price rises by slimming down your fuel bills by as much as 10 per cent. A trim and fit car is best able to manage the demands of winter motoring. Just apply the elements of all good weight-loss regimes:

- Set a target
- Plan how you'll achieve it
- Measure your progress

#### Set an MPG target

How many miles can you squeeze out of each gallon of fuel? Find out the official MPG figure for your car; few of us achieve this figure in everyday driving, so it's a good challenge.

#### Make your car a lean, mean, green machine.

Excess weight, wind resistance and rolling resistance all guzzle precious fuel. To achieve optimum weight loss, take out everything that is unnecessary for your journey. Remove roof racks or storage boxes to cut wind resistance and check tyre pressures regularly to minimise rolling resistance.

#### Don't get steamed up.

Use some detergent, kitchen roll or a cloth, to get the *inside* of the windows squeaky clean. Clean windows are much less likely to mist up, so you'll need your fuel-hungry air conditioning or heated windows less (\*See notes to editors).

#### Scrape and save!

Running the engine for 10 minutes to clear frosted windows easily uses a litre or more of fuel before the car even leaves the driveway: a can of de-icing spray or good scraper is a better option.

#### It's cool to be hot.

Cars use much more fuel when the engine is cold so warm it up as quickly as possible. Reverse into your drive or parking space while the engine is warm and efficient. Then you can drive straight off in the morning, rather than manoeuvring back and forth with a cold, inefficient engine.

Fuel consumption for the first mile with a cold engine is heavy and fuel efficiency plummets with repeated short trips. Combine short errands into one longer journey or, for the occasional local trip, leave the car at home and enjoy the benefits of walking or cycling.

#### Less weight on the accelerator

A heavy right foot is the biggest fuel waster - keep the pressure light! Driving smoothly and sticking to the speed limit dramatically cuts fuel consumption and you won't need to worry about those safety cameras.

#### Measure your progress.

If your car has an MPG monitor, start using it. Or jot down the odometer reading on the back of the receipt when you fill up. You'll soon build up a picture of how well you're doing. And by saving fuel, you're also cutting emissions that cause global warming. So resolve to make 2008 your low fuel year.

#### Notes to editors

\*Heated windows can add up to 3mpg to fuel consumption

[www.iamtrust.org.uk](http://www.iamtrust.org.uk)

## Media Contacts

Neil Greig 020 8996 9772 [neil.greig@iamtrust.org.uk](mailto:neil.greig@iamtrust.org.uk)

Barry Walsh 020 8996 9776 [barry.walsh@iamtrust.org.uk](mailto:barry.walsh@iamtrust.org.uk)

---

Institute of Advanced Motorists  
© 2008 IAM  
Charity No. 249002  
Built on [OneStopCMS](#)