

SPRING 2008

# GRAND ISLAND AUTO TECH



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7:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.  
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## Exhaust and emissions checks for a BETTER-RUNNING CAR!

Your car's exhaust and emissions systems work hand in hand to keep pollutants out of the air and dangerous fumes out of your car. The job of the emissions system is to enable the car to operate efficiently while controlling pollution. The exhaust systems on modern cars keep the occupants safe from exhaust while also reducing pollution that is released into the air. Both these systems need regular checks to be sure they are doing their jobs properly.

### Exhaust

If you drive a late-model car, your exhaust system is more than a muffler and a tailpipe. In addition to carrying exhaust fumes out of the car, the system quiets engine sounds to cut down on noise pollution. The catalytic converter controls pollutant levels within the exhaust.

### Emissions

Most states have some type of emissions or smog-testing program. Under these programs, car owners are required to have their cars tested. Cars are the main producers of smog and carbon-monoxide pollution. These pollutants cause respiratory problems and irritate the eyes and throat.

Newer cars are tested using onboard diagnostics; however, older vehicles may be tested using other methods. Gas caps are checked as well, since these are often responsible for allowing fumes to escape that help form smog. *Regular emissions testing is more than a legality.*

*It is an opportunity  
to keep your car  
running at its  
most efficient.*



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# TROUBLESHOOTING

Can you match these signs of trouble with their possible causes?

Answers are printed upside down below.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>1. A red, oily spot under the car</b>                    | <b>a. an electrical short</b>                        |
| <b>2. A burned smell that reminds you of overdone toast</b> | <b>b. a coolant leak</b>                             |
| <b>3. A sweet odor</b>                                      | <b>c. an exhaust problem or worn universal joint</b> |
| <b>4. A low rumbling</b>                                    | <b>d. power steering or transmission leak</b>        |
| <b>5. A squealing at low speeds</b>                         | <b>e. a loose AC belt or power-steering problem</b>  |

1. d 2. a 3. b 4. c 5. e



## Applying the right amount of pressure

Tires that are not properly inflated can interfere with good gas mileage...and they can also be dangerous. Not having enough air in a tire can lead to a blowout. To avoid this, follow the tire-pressure recommendations in your owner's manual.

If you can, purchase a tire gauge with a dial, and use it every time you put air in the tires. Use your owner's manual or information found inside the doorpost of the driver's side of the car to learn the correct amount of pressure for each tire. Before putting air in, be sure the gauge is at zero. Press it to the valve stem, and hold it until you have a reading. Next, either add or release air until you arrive at the appropriate pressure.

Remember to always check the pressure when the tires are cold. Driving more than a mile will warm up tires and affect your readings. Since tires lose up to a pound of air each month, check the pressure around the first of the month or the same date your mortgage or rent is due.

## The point of oil

Not the boiling point—the whole point. Why does your car need oil? What important function does it serve? What do all those numbers and letters mean?

Oil that goes into your car is more than just “oil.” Yes, the base is oil, but there are also additives. The main job of the oil is to lubricate the engine so that the parts don't wear against each other. The additives are there to help keep the oil in good condition, especially in extreme temperatures.

Oil also comes in different weights. The “weight” actually refers to the thickness, or viscosity, of the oil. Multiviscosity oils will have two weights listed (5W30). These are specially designed to handle different temperature ranges. The idea is to keep the oil moving when it's very cold, but also to protect the engine when the temperature hits a summer high. Synthetic oils are generally more expensive, but they can offer advantages.

The right oil for your car should be designated in your owner's manual. This booklet can also tell you the correct intervals at which to have that oil changed. Talk to us about setting up a schedule that will meet the specific needs of your car and keep it running right for you.



# CAR MAINTENANCE—a little now...or a lot later?

Soupy Sales often intoned, “Be true to your teeth, and they’ll never be false to you.” The concept was clear...take good care of your teeth, and you can keep them for life. Cars may not last a lifetime, but the idea of regular maintenance now preventing huge repair bills later could not be more true.

There are a number of parts on your car that need regular attention. Fluids include power-steering, transmission, and brake fluid. Add antifreeze and engine oil to that list, and you’ve about covered the liquids. Tires and the suspension system are other areas where you can keep things lined up and adjusted regularly or pay out a lot more in both tires and fuel charges over the years. Air filters need to be replaced regularly, as do belts and hoses. These should be inspected for signs of wear and then replaced or adjusted if necessary. Your battery, lights, and wiper blades all deserve regular checks.

This may seem a lot to pay attention to, but we can devise a schedule that will encompass the maintenance your car needs. By making sure the small maintenance needs are taken care of now, you just might avoid a large repair bill later on. Plus, you’ll be assured that your car is running right for your daily trips or whenever you plan to travel some distance.

## Convertibles— *Put a little wind in your hair*

Among the first “convertibles” was the Kissel Kar. The 1913 model sported a roof that could be removed to “convert” the car into a touring vehicle. In 1922, Friedrich Werner and William Kissel received one of the first patents for their fun and convenient invention.

Fast forward to 2007, when Rolls-Royce debuted their first convertible in a few years. The luxury automaker’s Phantom Drophead Coupe was introduced at the North American International Auto Show. Production began in the summer of 2007 at a plant in England.

Few drivers can deny the joy of a convertible. Whether on the open road or tooling around the city with the radio blaring, the feeling of the wind in your hair and oneness with the great outdoors experienced in a convertible can’t be matched. From Beetles to BMWs, cars with convertible tops haven’t lost their aura of excitement and fun for drivers and passengers alike.

There are basically two types—hardtops that can either be retracted or removed, and soft-tops, or “ragtops.” Some modern hardtops that convert are done at the push of a button. The roof automatically folds and is stored into a compartment or the trunk of the car. These cars offer the quiet and protection of a hardtop combined with all the fun of a convertible. Ragtop roofs may be power operated or manual. Usually, they must be unlatched before they go down.

Creating a convertible is no simple matter. It must be structured with reinforcement to provide adequate stability. Most convertibles actually weigh more than their hardtopped cousins. Special consideration must be made with regard to aerodynamics as well. While convertibles with the roof down aren’t as aerodynamic as when the roof is up, they sure are a lot more exciting, and for aficionados of these cars, that’s really what it’s all about.



### REMEMBER THESE?

*Some of the better-known convertibles are the original Ford Mustang, the '56 T-Bird in the movie American Graffiti, and the 1949 Buick convertible Tom Cruise inherited in Rain Man.*

Check out our  
new website:  
[www.giautotech.com](http://www.giautotech.com)

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Our state-of-the-art  
diagnostic equipment  
and trained  
professionals ensure  
your car is  
repaired correctly  
the first time.*

### **OUR SERVICES**

*The many services we  
offer include:*

- ◆ tune-ups
- ◆ brake jobs
- ◆ state inspections
- ◆ air conditioning recharge
- ◆ oil and filter change
- ◆ tire rotation

## What causes breakdowns?

Not all breakdowns are the result of mechanical failure. Rather, it's human error—a battery that died because the lights were left on or misjudging the gas gauge—or coincidence, such as a flat tire, that accounts for breakdowns. Other situations may be related to a genuine failure of a part or problem that has been neglected—lack of coolant, for instance.

Essentially, many breakdowns can be avoided with a pretrip inspection of vital automobile functions. This means a check of the tires and engine, including belts, hoses, and battery terminals. It also means checking headlights, windshield wipers, and air conditioning.

Safety requires that brakes and windshield wipers be in good working condition as well. Tires should have good tread and be properly inflated for the best gas mileage.

### *Why not leave the pretravel checkup to us?*

If this sounds like a lot to do before you hit the road, why not leave the pretravel checkup to us? While you concentrate on making plans and packing, we can do what we're trained to do: inspect your car to be sure it's safe and all systems are functioning properly. Then, you can fill up, avoid any nails in the road, and remember to shut your lights off to avoid any other problems that might cause a breakdown.

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