

# More miles for your money

## A guide to smarter driving



Most of us would say we spend too much on fuel. And since prices at the pumps tend to go up, the only way to spend less on filling up the car is to cut consumption. The good news is that there are three ways to use less fuel.

### 1) Smarter driving

Adopting 'smarter-driving' techniques can save fuel and save money. See box overleaf for examples. These techniques will also make you a safer driver and reduce wear and tear on your car. How much you save depends on how much you drive, but for average drivers it can be hundreds of pounds a year.

### 2) Buying a fuel-efficient car

Choosing a fuel-efficient car will help you save money and produce less emissions. But before you make your choice you should consider your requirements. What kind of journeys do you make, how many passengers do you carry and so on. Note that fuel-efficient models tend to be smaller, so they may not suit large families or be appropriate for someone who often drives long-distances.

**What engine: diesel, petrol, hybrid or electric?** Diesel cars are more fuel efficient and have lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions than the comparable petrol car. This means that a diesel car may save you money in the long term, even if the initial costs of buying the car are higher. Look at the car fuel-economy label on new and second-hand vehicles for more information (pictured).



This hybrid has both a petrol and an electric motor



Smarter driving cuts petrol consumption, reduces stress and makes you a safer driver

Hybrid cars, like the one pictured below left, are 25% more efficient than other cars. They achieve this by combining an electric motor with a conventional engine. The electric motor charges batteries which at times provide the sole power supply of the car.

Traditionally hybrids work best when you are driving around town, so if you mainly drive on long journeys, they may not be the best option.

Electric cars are a great way to cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and reduce fuel costs. They use a rechargeable battery to power them that simply plugs in to an electricity supply, and are a good option for shorter journeys and daily commutes. They are expensive, but you can claim a grant of £5,000 towards the cost of a new one; the dealership or vendor will complete the paperwork on your behalf, and the amount is deducted at the point of purchase.

New and used cars display a fuel-efficiency label which grade the car by its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, from 'A', the least, to 'M', the most. It also states the cost of road tax and the average cost per 12,000 miles. For fuel data of new and used cars visit [www.vcacarfueldata.org.uk](http://www.vcacarfueldata.org.uk)



For the best green car news, reviews and a comprehensive green car guide visit [www.green-car-guide.com](http://www.green-car-guide.com)

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### 3) Using your car less

Why use your car less? It's obvious really. If you can cycle or walk instead of taking the car, you'll save fuel, save money, reduce wear and tear on your car, and get a little fitter into the bargain.

Then there's car-sharing. Sharing a journey with a friend or colleague can relieve the stress of everyday commuting. You can find out more about car sharing schemes by visiting [www.liftshare.com](http://www.liftshare.com)

For up to date travel news, as well as planning your journey visit [www.transportdirect.info](http://www.transportdirect.info). To find a route near you or read tips on cycling to work or school visit [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

Riding a bike may get you there quicker than driving, and keeps you fit



This leaflet was originally produced by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and reprinted in this version on behalf of SEACS.

CSE's Home Energy Team offers free advice on domestic energy use to householders in Bristol, Somerset and South Gloucestershire. Call free on 0800 082 2234, email [home.energy@cse.org.uk](mailto:home.energy@cse.org.uk) or follow us on twitter @cse\_homeenergy

More energy advice leaflets at [www.cse.org.uk/advice-leaflets](http://www.cse.org.uk/advice-leaflets)



3 St Peter's Court  
Bedminster Parade  
Bristol BS3 4AQ  
  
0117 934 1425  
[www.cse.org.uk](http://www.cse.org.uk)  
[info@cse.org.uk](mailto:info@cse.org.uk)

We are a national charity (no 298740) that helps people change the way they think and act on energy.



## Smart-driving

### The key to cutting fuel consumption



**Check your revs:** when you speed up, change gear at 2000-2500rpm.

**Watch your speed:** the most efficient speed is 45-50mph. The difference between 70mph and 85mph is 25% more fuel used.

**Read the road:** anticipate the road ahead to reduce over-acceleration and sharp breaking.

**Step off the gas:** stay in gear but take your foot off the accelerator as early as possible when approaching a red light or roundabout. This cuts fuel to the engine to almost zero.

**Plan your journey:** a bit of preparation will help you to avoid congestion and/or roadworks.

**Drive off from cold:** modern cars don't need to be warmed up – just drive off from cold.

**Check your tyres:** under inflated tyres increase fuel consumption and are potentially dangerous.

**Reduce 'drag':** remove roof racks, bike carriers and top-boxes if you are not using them.

**Switch off:** if you are going to be stationary for more than a minute, switch off your engine to save fuel.

**Air conditioning:** use it sparingly, as it increases your fuel consumption. But on the motorway it's better than opening a window which increases wind resistance.

**Invest in a satnav:** many satnavs now have features that help you avoid traffic congestion.

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The aim of the **SEACS project** is to create opportunities to reduce energy demand, improve energy efficiency and use clean, renewable energy. SEACS was selected under the European Cross-border Cooperation Programme INTERREG IV A France (Channel) – England, co-funded by the ERDF.

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