



Routine Vehicle Maintenance Checklist

Place an "X" inside each shaded box to indicate that you've checked that item for the appropriate month. See accompanying information for details on each item below. If there are items you're not comfortable checking, ask us about our FREE 6-month vehicle inspections.

Month	"Check Engine" Light	Lights	Tire Pressure & Condition	Windshield Washer Fluid	Air Filter (Engine)	Transmission Fluid	Battery & Cables	Belts	Exhaust	Fuel Filter
January										
February					—	—	—	—	—	—
March					—	—	—	—	—	—
April										
May					—	—	—	—	—	—
June					—	—	—	—	—	—
July										
August					—	—	—	—	—	—
September					—	—	—	—	—	—
October										
November					—	—	—	—	—	—
December					—	—	—	—	—	—

Month	Hoses	Oil & Filter	Power Steering Fluid	Chassis Lubrication	Wiper Blades	Polish	Air Filter (Cabin)	Antifreeze (Coolant)	Spark Plugs	Steering & Suspension
January										
February	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
March	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
April				—	—	—	—	—	—	—
May	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
June	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
July							—	—	—	—
August	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
September	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
October				—	—	—	—	—	—	—
November	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
December	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—



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“Like” us on Facebook to receive monthly maintenance reminders, special offers & more!

Vehicle maintenance doesn't have to be scary or overwhelming. There are many simple things you can do yourself that take only a few minutes. Do the items you're most comfortable with and leave the bigger stuff to your trusted Colchin service technician.

Remember... the small things you do every month, or even 12 months from now, can add years to the life of your car and save loads of stress on you and your wallet.

Many of the following checks can be performed at home, or while you're at the gas station filling up your tank. We also offer a **FREE 6-month vehicle inspection** to help you keep on top of these crucial maintenance items. If you're uncomfortable performing some of these checks, or just don't have the time, please call us at 303-431-5421 to learn more about our vehicle inspection program.

Post the handy chart on the wall in your garage and use it to keep track of your vehicle maintenance items. Don't forget to “Like” us on Facebook at facebook.com/colchinautomotive to receive monthly reminders.

What to check monthly:

“Check Engine” Light

Watch for this or any other lights or messages that come on and take appropriate action. If the light is flashing, get service immediately.

Lights

Make sure all lights are clean and working, including your headlights, tail/brake lights, turn signals and emergency flashers.

Tire Pressure & Condition

Many gas stations have areas where you can check the pressure and inflate your tires if necessary – or keep your own pressure gauge in your glove compartment. The proper tire pressure for your car can be found on a decal in your car's doorjamb or in the owner's manual. *The correct tire pressure is NOT on the tire's sidewall*, which is the maximum pressure recommended by the tire manufacturer not your vehicle's manufacturer.

Also inspect your tires for any uneven wear, cuts, bulges, nails or other foreign objects.

Windshield Washer Fluid

Unscrew or pop the top off the wiper fluid reservoir and re-fill to the level indicated. While you're pouring, put some on a rag and clean the bugs and gunk off the wiper blades, too. *Remember, use washer fluid only, never water.*

What to check every 3 months or 3,000 miles (In addition to all of the above):

Air Filter (Engine)

Have the engine's air filter checked every time you have your oil changed, and replace it if it's dirty, leaking, torn or oil- or water-soaked. It's a good idea to replace it annually.

Automatic Transmission Fluid

With the engine running and your car in 'park', raise the hood and check the fluid level. If it's low, add the type of fluid recommended in your owner's manual. Change the transmission fluid as directed in your owner's manual, or every 2 years or 24,000 miles.



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Battery & Cables

While you're having the engine oil changed, have the battery checked out, too. Make sure the connections are clean and tight, and don't show any signs of corrosion or leaking. If your car battery is 3 years old or more, have it tested and replaced if necessary.

Belts

Replace engine belts when they show any signs of wear, such as cracking, pilling, fraying, or you see contaminants such as gravel, sand or oil. Also replace if the timing belt appears too loose. Timing belts should be replaced according to the schedule in your owner's manual – usually between 60,000 and 90,000 miles. Remember, your owner's manual offers general guidelines – if you see or feel any signs of wear, have your engine belts checked and replaced immediately – don't wait for your recommended service schedule date.

Also keep in mind that some timing belt problems aren't always visible and could be caused by other related components, such as a failing belt tensioner. Ask your automotive service technician to take a quick look at the entire drive system while he's checking your engine belts.

Exhaust

When the car is cool, look for leaks, cracks or any other signs of damage or broken supports. (You might suspect an exhaust leak if you hear an unusual 'throttle' or muffler sound when the car is running). Exhaust leaks can be very dangerous — take your car to a professional service technician ASAP if you suspect problems with your exhaust system.

Fuel Filter

Check the engine fuel filter at every oil change. Generally, fuel filters should be changed once a year on cars with carburetors; every 2 years or 24,000 miles on cars with fuel injection.

Hoses

Inspect engine hoses at each oil change and have them replaced if you or your automotive technician sees any cracks, cuts, abrasions or bulges, or if they feel excessively soft or mushy. Even the best coolant hose can fail without warning — and many problems aren't always visible or could be caused by other related engine components. Ask your automotive service technician to take a quick look at your entire car cooling system while he's checking your hoses.

Oil & Filter

Change your oil and filter every 3,000 miles, or consult your owner's manual for the recommended oil change schedule for your car and follow it closely. Keep in mind that you may see two recommended oil change schedules, one for normal driving and another for severe driving conditions. If you idle excessively, often drive in stop-and-go traffic or under extreme weather conditions, you should consider the severe driving schedule.

Synthetic oils may extend the number of miles between oil changes, but it's more important to weigh your manufacturer's recommendations and your driving conditions against the longer interval. In between oil changes, try checking your oil level when you fill up with gas (and while the engine is off).

Power Steering Fluid

Check the level of your power steering fluid while checking other fluids under the hood (and when your car is warmed up). If the level is low, add the correct type of fluid. If you're topping off the level regularly, you might have a leak and should see a certified automotive service technician.



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What to check every 6 months or 6,000 miles (In addition to all of the above):

Chassis Lubrication

If you have a new car, chances are it's lubed-for-life and no action is necessary. If you have an older car, steering and suspension systems may need periodic lubrication. Check your owner's manual for specifics.

Polish

In addition to regular washing (always with car wash products, not other household cleaning products), car polishing at least twice a year to protect and maintain the exterior car finish.

Wiper Blades

The average life expectancy for wiper blades is 6-12 months. Replace them every fall season before severe weather sets in. Replace them any time they are cracked, cut, torn, streaking or chattering (jumping across your windshield) or whenever visibility is an issue.

What to check every 12 months or 12,000 miles (In addition to all of the above):

Air Filter (Cabin)

Cabin air filters clean the air passengers breathe. Replace annually or per the schedule in your owner's manual. You may have to replace it more often if you're in heavily polluted or contaminated areas, or if your heater or air conditioner is running less efficiently.

Antifreeze (Coolant)

Unscrew the radiator cap (only when the car is cool, never hot), and check the level of antifreeze. If it's low (you can see some of the radiator coils), add a 50/50 mix of antifreeze and distilled water. On most car cooling systems, coolant should be changed once a year. Consider doing this in the fall, as you ready your car for cooler temperatures.

Spark Plugs

Consult your owner's manual for the specific change interval for your vehicle. Generally, spark plugs are replaced between 30,000 and 100,000 miles depending on the car and type of spark plug.

Steering & Suspension

These systems control where your car goes and how it drives. Have them checked yearly or sooner if you notice any uneven tire wear, have a bouncy ride, or if your car squeals, shimmies or vibrates. Inspections include shock absorbers, struts and chassis parts, and wheel alignment.

Remember, these car maintenance schedules are merely recommendations. When in doubt, consult your owner's manual — it's the ultimate guide to proper care and maintenance on your vehicle. Most importantly, trust your eyes and your gut. If you see or hear any potential problems (or just feel that something's not right), don't wait for a scheduled check-up — take action now and save yourself headaches, hassles and bigger expenses down the road.