

# Vehicle Maintenance Checklist

By Taylor Peterson

- Preparation**
  - Time** Clear out enough time in your schedule to do this properly.
  - Tools** Use the proper ones; using a butter knife as a screw driver doesn't always work.
  - Location** Find a safe place to do the maintenance, preferably not in the middle of the street.
  - Directions** If you're doing some maintenance chore for the first time, read the directions carefully, or have someone do it with you.
  - Supplies** Ensure that you have all the correct supplies you need; oil, transmission fluid, etc. before you start.
- Gear**
  - Shirt** Make sure that this is a long-sleeved shirt that you don't plan on using for anything but greasy things again.
  - Pants** Long pants that you only plan to use for working on vehicles, because they're not going to be useful for much else.
  - Goggles** These will be quite useful when taking on nuts and bolts that are tight, having to do any welding, etc...but wear them all the time anyway.
  - Hat** If not a hat, pull long hair back into a pony tail so that it does not get caught into engine parts while being worked on.
  - Shoes** Preferably heavy-duty shoes or boots, with steel toes in them, just in case the vehicle falls on your foot.
  - Towels** A few of these on hand to wipe your hands on will help you grab hold of things much more easily.
  - Compressor** Use this only as necessary, to put air in tires, or test some lines.
- Equipment**
  - Wrenches** Use correct sizes where appropriate, with the correct handling, so you don't hurt yourself or the engine.
  - Ratchets** Using the correct ends, put them together, and use it correctly so nothing is stripped, and you don't get hurt.
  - Screwdrivers** Whether Phillips or flat, pick the right size so the screwdriver doesn't break.
  - Gauges** Use a tire gauge for a tire, not to check something else in the vehicle.
  - Lifts** If the vehicle needs to go up in the air for some under-body work, then use a lift, not some metal boxes or something similar. That's just asking for trouble.
  - Chargers** If some tools are portable, and can be charged, keep them out of the way of water so you avoid electrocution.
  - Toolboxes** Take advantage of these to organize your tools well, and keep them out of the way, as they will be heavy.

- Fluids** Keep these out of the way, up on a high shelf, so that no one wandering through will be able to just knock them over and cause a spill.
- Things to Plan For**
  - Time** Vehicle maintenance always ends up taking longer than planned, so build in extra time to your schedule.
  - Food** Make sure that you keep up your energy while doing the vehicle maintenance, so you can think properly and stay safe.
  - Cost** Know exactly what type of vehicle maintenance you are planning on doing, and the costs associated with it.
  - Hydration** Working on vehicle maintenance can get very hot, so make sure to take breaks for water, you'll be safer because you will feel better.
  - First Aid** Know exactly who to call, and what to do for quick First Aid procedures if it's needed for your or others' safety.
  - Problems** No matter what, there will always be some sort of problem that comes up, even during routine vehicle maintenance, so be prepared for it.