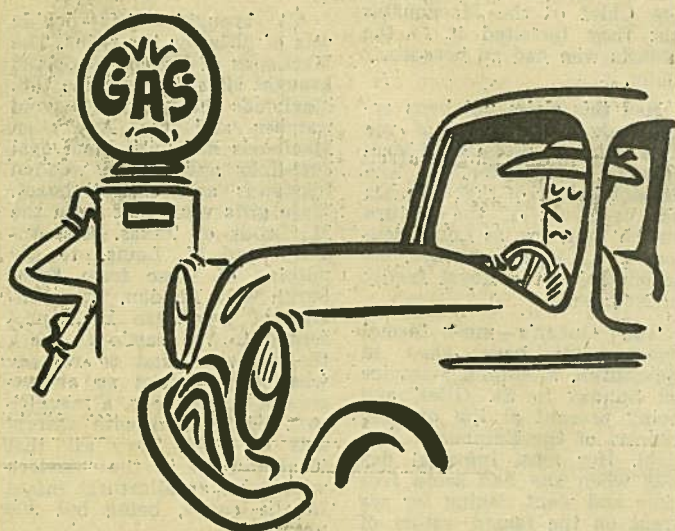


Good Driving Is Thrifty, Saves on Wear, Tear



By OLIVE DICKASON

It has been well said that good driving is thrifty driving. Gasoline, oil and tires can all be conserved by good practice. The first point in economy, however, is to maintain your car properly. Neglect usually turns out to be a better way of spending money than saving it.

Anything that loses power wastes money. This includes worn, dirty or incorrectly adjusted spark plugs, inefficient cooling system, poorly lubricated engine, dirty carburetor, slipping clutch, etc. Expensive breakdowns can be avoided by keeping your car in good repair. Incidentally, it also keeps the resale price higher.

The most obvious way to economize is on gasoline. There are several ways of doing this, with impressive results.

Keep your speed moderate, both on the highways and in the city. Recent tests showed that at a steady speed of 30 mph, gas mileage was very good. At 40, gas mileage was 10 per cent less. At 60 mph, it was 31 per cent less and at 80 mph, 52 per cent less. By driving at 50 mph on the open highway instead of 70, you can save one gallon of gasoline out of every four. At the higher speed, incidentally, you use about four times as much oil and wear out tires three times faster than at 35 mph.

Jet-propelled starts make the car a real gas eater. It has been found that 65 per cent of all drivers accelerate much too quickly when hurrying in traffic.

Avoid repeated accelerating and braking. Even in the city, where this is often necessary, gas consumption can be cut by planned driving, which means using a safe, steady speed. It's a matter of timing — looking ahead as you drive, judging the speed of traffic flow, gauging the approximate setting of the traffic lights. This type of driving is easy in some cities, where the lights are timed to a certain rate of speed. If you time yourself well, a whole lot of extra stops and starts can be avoided. Tests have shown that planned driving in traffic can save you one gallon out of every three.

Shift from lower gears as soon as possible, because travelling in low gear consumes gas. Don't keep the car in low beyond 15 mph, when you should shift into second. Go into high at 20 mph.

Don't race your engine to

warm it up. This is both hard on gas and on the motor. It's much better to let the engine idle for a moment or two to warm it up, if that is necessary. With modern cars it usually isn't.

As for what type of gasoline to buy, the thing to do here is to experiment and find out what type your car runs on best. High compression engines need premium gas. Some small cars, however, do better on ordinary gas.

Keeping the tires at the proper degree of inflation saves on both tires and gas. It has been demonstrated that a good driver will get up to six times as much wear from his tires as a careless one.

Smooth driving makes life easier for tires. Avoid scraping, bumping and bruising them, which means not hitting curbs, potholes or sharp edges. Other enemies of tires are high temperatures (which can come from high speeds), and letting your wheels spin either in sudden starts or on snow and ice in winter.

Trying to save on tires by using them longer than you should is an open invitation for a blowout. Rotating tires (including the spare) every 3,000 to 5,000 miles helps them to wear evenly and so prolongs their life.

Oil economy is best practiced by getting a quart when a quart is needed. It's not thrifty to run low on oil as it then burns faster.

No matter what you do, it's going to cost money to run your car. Wise management will make your dollar stretch farther.

Those interested in literature on the care of their car, tourist information, and just about any subject related to driving can usually get all they need from the public relations departments of the large car manufacturers, or from the large oil companies. An excellent driver's text, to which we have referred throughout this series, is Charlotte Montgomery's Handbook for the Woman Driver, published by Vanguard Press, New York.

Last of a Series.