

Preventive Maintenance Checklist

Here is a “Top Ten” list of things that will prolong the life of your vehicles and equipment. Be sure to keep detailed maintenance records to track service intervals and upcoming needs. Automate it if you can and send out reminders when service is due because it is easy to forget. It only works if you actually do it.

Vehicles

1. Oil and Filter Changes

- Replace engine oil and oil filter regularly, as specified in the vehicle's manual.
- Check and replace air and fuel filters to ensure optimal performance.

2. Tire Maintenance

- Inspect tire pressure and tread depth at least monthly.
- Rotate tires every 5,000–7,500 miles (or per the recommendations).
- Check alignment and balance to avoid uneven wear and improve handling.

3. Brake System

- Inspect brake pads, rotors, and brake fluid regularly.
- Replace worn-out brake pads to prevent damage to rotors.
- Flush and replace brake fluid as recommended.

4. Fluids and Filters

- Top off coolant, transmission fluid, power steering fluid, and wiper fluid.
- Replace coolant and transmission fluid according to the manufacturer's schedule.

5. Battery Maintenance

- Inspect terminals for corrosion and ensure a secure connection.
- Test battery performance and replace it if showing signs of weakening.



6. Belts and Hoses

- Inspect serpentine belts, timing belts, and hoses for cracks, fraying, or leaks.
- Replace worn or damaged belts and hoses before they fail.

7. Lighting and Electrical System

- Check all exterior and interior lights, including headlights, brake lights, and turn signals.
- Inspect fuses and wiring for damage - mice love to chew!

8. Suspension and Steering

- Inspect suspension components like shocks and struts for wear.
- Check the steering system for play, noise, or fluid leaks.

9. Air Conditioning and Heating

- Test the HVAC system to ensure proper operation.
- Replace cabin air filters to maintain air quality and airflow.

10. Instill Good Habit in Drivers

1. Inform the shop about any new dings, scratches, loose panels, bad lights.
2. If it's making a weird noise, tell someone about it.
3. Look where the vehicle parks - see any leaks on the ground?

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Tools & Small Equipment

Here are some general best practices for tools and equipment like mowers, blowers, saws, etc.

1. Clean After Each Use

- Remove dirt, dust, and debris after every use.
- Use compressed air for tools with crevices or small parts. Wear goggles! PSA from a person who scratched their cornea doing this.
- Wipe down with a damp cloth or use cleaning solutions as needed.

2. Inspect for Wear and Damage

- Check for cracks, dents, frayed cords, or loose components before and after use.
- Replace or repair damaged parts immediately to avoid further issues.

3. Lubricate Moving Parts

- Apply recommended lubricant to keep moving parts and to prevent rust.
- Avoid over-lubricating because excess grease attracts dirt.

4. Store Properly

- Keep tools in a clean, dry place to prevent rust and corrosion.
- Use toolboxes, racks, or dedicated storage spaces to avoid unnecessary wear and tear. Label stuff!

5. Follow Manufacturer's Guidelines

- Follow the maintenance schedule and usage instructions in the tool's manual.
- Use tools only for their intended purposes to prevent damage. DO NOT overwork tools. What does that look like? Motor squealing, burning smell, blade seizing, sparks, you know stuff like that.

6. Keep Blades and Cutting Edges Sharp

- Regularly sharpen blades on tools like saws, hedge trimmers, and cutters.

7. Check and Replace Filters

- For equipment with air, fuel, or oil filters, inspect and replace filters as needed.

8. Inspect and Maintain Power Cords and Batteries

- Look for frays, cuts, or exposed wires on electric tools.
- Store batteries in a cool, dry place, and follow charging guidelines to avoid overcharging. It's also best not to run them down to zero.

9. Protect Against Rust

- Apply a rust inhibitor to metal parts, especially for tools exposed to moisture.
- Dry tools thoroughly before storing.

10. Calibrate and Adjust Settings

- Regularly calibrate tools like laser levels, pressure gauges, or torque wrenches for accuracy.

While it might sound like a lot of work, it really only takes a few minutes, and extending the life of your equipment by 50% is worth every one of them.