



Eco-Driving

What exactly is Eco-driving? Eco-driving is a style of driving that significantly reduces the impact of gasoline on the environment. It does this by reducing fuel consumption and improving the automobile's efficiency.

What are the benefits of Eco-driving? By practicing "Eco-driving" you can be a safer driver, reduce exhaust emissions, save fuel, and save yourself some money at the gas pump.

How does Eco-driving work? Eco-driving is classified as a style or type of driving. It works by reducing an automobile's exhaust emissions through the automobile's operation or driving. The United Kingdom plans in the near future to require an eco-driving test to accompany their standard driver's license test. Listed below are a few helpful tips to becoming an eco-driver.

- ✓ **Accelerate and decelerate smoothly.** By accelerating and decelerating smoothly, an automobile is able to make more efficient use of its power. This also means better fuel mileage, which translates into a reduced consumption of fuel.
- ✓ **Avoid excess idling in non-traffic situations.** While sitting at a drive-through or other stopped or parked situation it is best to shut off an automobile. This will reduce fuel consumption and wear on the automobile's engine.
- ✓ **Observe the posted speed limits.** Drive either at or under the posted limit. The EPA estimates a 10-15% improvement in gas mileage by driving 55 mph instead of 65 mph. In addition to saving gas by observing the posted speed limit there is a reduced risk of getting a speeding ticket, as well as a reduced risk of getting in a fatal accident.
- ✓ **Keep tires properly inflated to the recommended pressure.** This alone can reduce the average amount of fuel you use by 3-4%.
- ✓ **Maintain a steady speed.** The use of cruise control on the highway is ideal (except in hilly terrain), because it decreases gas pedal activity.
- ✓ **Air conditioning should be used selectively** as to reduce the load on your engine.
- ✓ **Remove excess weight.** All unnecessary weight (such as unneeded items in the trunk) makes the engine work harder, consuming more fuel.
- ✓ **Plan and consolidate your trips.** This will enable you to bypass congested routes, lead to less idling, fewer start-ups, and less stop and go traffic.
- ✓ **Share a ride and/or carpool.** This reduces the total number of vehicles in operation. The fewer vehicles in operation at any given time will result in fewer congested roads, less pollution, less gasoline use, and reduced travel time.
- ✓ **Avoid "topping-off"** the gas tank when refueling. Overfilling your gas tank could result in spilled gasoline that contributes to air pollution when it evaporates.
- ✓ **Today's engines** don't need to be warmed up in the winter. Prolonged idling creates excess emissions and wastes fuel.

By following these simple tips you are on your way to saving time, money, and the environment we all live in.

The information in this handout was provided by

Forest Service Engineering Manual 7130-2, "Driver Operator Guide"
Ford Motor Company. <http://www.ford.com/en/company/about/publicPolicy/ecoDriving.htm>
The Observer http://observer.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,,1764631,00.html