

Car Service Checklist

Checklist · 24 items · 9 sections

Regular car servicing keeps your vehicle safe, reliable, and efficient. This car service checklist covers every key maintenance item from monthly checks you can do yourself to annual professional service items, organized by interval. The Car Maintenance Checklist covers the same ground by season instead. Before a road trip or used purchase, run the Vehicle Inspection Checklist. Owners of motorhomes: the RV Maintenance Checklist.

Open the editable, AI-powered version online:

<https://genechecklist.com/checklist/car-service-checklist>

MONTHLY CHECKS

- Check engine oil level: top up or schedule oil change if dark or low

HIGH

Most engines need an oil change every 5,000–7,500 miles (or per owner's manual)

- Check coolant/antifreeze level in reservoir

HIGH

- Check brake fluid level: top up if below MIN line

HIGH

- Check power steering fluid level

- Check windshield washer fluid: refill as needed

- Check transmission fluid level (if accessible)

- Check tire pressure on all 4 tires + spare (cold tires, use gauge)

HIGH

Correct PSI is on the sticker inside the driver's door, not the tire sidewall

- Inspect tires for uneven wear, cracks, or embedded objects

HIGH

- Check all exterior lights: headlights, tail lights, brake, turn signals

HIGH

- Check windshield wipers: replace if streaking or squeaking

EVERY 5,000–7,500 MILES

- Change engine oil and oil filter

HIGH

- Rotate tires to ensure even wear

HIGH

EVERY 12,000 MILES OR 6 MONTHS

- Inspect brake pads and rotors for wear
HIGH
- Inspect suspension: shocks, struts, ball joints, and tie rods
HIGH
- Check wheel alignment: correct if car pulls to one side

EVERY 12,000–15,000 MILES

- Replace engine air filter
HIGH
- Replace cabin air filter

ANNUALLY

- Inspect battery: check voltage, terminals for corrosion
HIGH
- Inspect drive belts: serpentine, timing belt (replace if cracked)
HIGH
- Inspect hoses: radiator, heater, and vacuum hoses for cracks or leaks
HIGH

EVERY 2–5 YEARS

- Flush coolant system and refill with fresh antifreeze

EVERY 2 YEARS

- Flush brake fluid and refill

EVERY 30,000–100,000 MILES

- Replace spark plugs
Check owner's manual: copper plugs every 30K, iridium/platinum every 60–100K

EVERY 60,000–100,000 MILES

- Replace timing belt if vehicle has one (not chain)
HIGH