

It All Rides On This.



Why do we need to check the tire pressure on the car? Because if they are properly inflated the tires will last longer and steering will be easier. You will also get better gas mileage and have a smoother ride.

We are going to check what is called the psi (pounds per square inch) using a tire gauge. You can pick one of these up at an auto parts store or Walmart for three or four dollars. The best time to check your tires is when it is cool outside and the car has not been sitting in the sun. When you check the psi the tires need to be cold. They shouldn't have been driven in the last three hours. If you have driven, it needs to have been less than a mile.

Look on your driver's side door jamb or your owner's manual to see what the correct psi is for your tires. It is different for every car. For some cars the front tires and the back tires may require different amounts. If your front and rear tires require different pressure you might want to write it down so you won't get confused.

Take the valve cap off one of the tires and press down on the valve stem with your gauge until you don't hear the hiss sound and the bar pops out. The number on the bar will tell you what your current reading is. If it is less than the recommended number we need to add more air with the compressor. If there is a gas station with an air hose close to your house that is going to be the best place to go because getting the tires warm will affect the reading. If you had to drive more than a mile to get to your gas station then your tires will be hot. If that is the case add 4psi to the recommended amount and then recheck them again later when they are cold.

Park where you can reach all four tires with the hose. We are going to put some change into the air compressor, and it will turn on for a few minutes. It usually takes a couple of dollars and some of them will take credit cards. If we don't go too slow there should be enough time to fill all four tires. Go around and fill them all to the required amount by putting the air compressor on the valve and pressing down for about thirty seconds. Check the pressure with your gauge, the gas station gauges are usually not as accurate. If you overfill you can release some of the air to get it to the right amount.

Your turn: Look inside the door jamb and find the correct tire pressure for your car. Check the tire pressure on all four tires. Fill with air if needed.