

Southport Gold Coast Affordable Premium Brand Tyres Quality Recycled Secondhand

How to Prepare a Car for a Long Trip

How to Prepare a Car for a Long Trip Preparing a car for a long road trip involves much more than just finding a way to squeeze the luggage into the boot - at least, if one wants to hit the road with maximum confidence. So says Chris Lett, owner of Branigans Tyres in Southport. "A breakdown far from home - or worse yet, in the middle of nowhere - can leave the driver feeling lost, frustrated and stressed out," says Chris. "While there's no guarantee that this won't happen, you can reduce the chances of a breakdown and contribute towards a safer journey by preparing your car for the trip."

From the Wheels Up Start by inspecting the tyres. "Look at the tread depth across the entire width of the tyre," says Chris. The treads should have a depth of at least 1.5mm. This means that the car is compliant with road safety legislation, it will have better stopping power, and a better chance of staying in control, even in slippery road conditions. Drivers should also check the sidewalls of tyres - any odd-looking bulges mean there is a risk of a blowout.

If there are signs of uneven tyre wear, the wheel balancing and alignment of the care are probably less than ideal. If the treads are still deep enough, Branigans Tyres can help by switching existing tyres around, rebalancing them, and checking the wheel alignment.

Battery Check, Belts, and Hoses Chris is an experienced mechanic, so he doesn't stop at the wheels and tyres his business specialises in. "Simply look under the bonnet and check your battery connections. They should be firmly attached with no signs of corrosion. If there is corrosion, the battery needs checking and cleaning. If you're confident that you can do it yourself, go ahead. Alternatively, get help from a mechanic."

"The belts and hoses should also be inspected to ensure that they aren't worn. They'll be working hard for you on your long road trip, so either check them out yourself, or get a trustworthy mechanic to take a look."

Check the Car's Fluids and Filters Check the oil, transmission fluid, brake fluid, power steering fluid, and coolant levels. If the oil is starting to look dirty, consider having the car serviced before racking up hundreds of kilometres. That way, the driver can be assured that all the necessary filters have been attended to and that the car's ready to go.

Even if the car is not taken for a full service, at the least the air filter should be checked out. If it isn't clean, not only will more fuel will be used on the trip, but engine problems could be encountered along the way.

Check the Brakes Apart from attending to tyres, Branigans is also happy to assist with brakes. "Being sure that the brakes aren't worn before a long road trip is very important. Squeaks, squeals, and grinding noises are among the signs that the brakes need urgent attention, but there are more subtle signs too. For example, if the car tends to pull to one side when you stop suddenly, there's cause for concern. You may feel vibration on the brake pedal, or it may seem softer than usual. Brake lights that come on for no apparent reason could also point towards an urgent need to attend to the brakes," says Chris.

Look at the Lights As a final, very straightforward road safety check before undertaking a long journey, get a family member to walk round the car while testing the indicators, brakes, and headlights. Apart from being in good working order, the covers should also be intact. "Your car won't break down because your indicator light covers are cracked or broken, but you won't be as safe on the road, and you could be in line for a hefty fine," warns Chris. **Ready to Go: Branigans Wishes Drivers a Great Trip** With the pre-trip checklist complete, it's a matter of packing the bags and enjoying the journey. "It's up to you now," says Chris. "Branigans Tyres wishes you a safe journey to your destination and wonderful welcome when you return home."

For further information, visit or call Chris and his team at Second Hand Tyres Gold Coast |Branigans Budget Tyres by contacting the Service Centres in Burleigh Heads (07) 5535 2660 or Southport (07) 5591 8633.

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