

Car Care Self-Inspection Checklist

Print it, keep it in your glovebox, and check items off as you go. Unsure about anything? Call us.

- Check off when done **J** We can handle this for you

At Every Fill-Up TAKES 60 SECONDS

- Scan the dashboard for warning lights**
If a light is on, don't ignore it. Catching it early keeps a small fix from becoming a big bill.
- Check the windshield for chips or cracks** **J**
A chip smaller than a dollar bill is a cheap repair. Let it spread and you're buying a whole windshield.
- Listen for any new sound**
A new rattle, squeal, or grind means something changed. Make a note of it.

Once a Month SET A PHONE REMINDER

- Check tire pressure — use the door sticker** **J**
The number on the tire sidewall is the maximum, not your target. Use the sticker inside the driver's door.
- Check the engine oil level** **J**
Pull the dipstick, wipe, dip again. Low or dark and gritty oil means it's time for a change.
- Look under the car for puddles** **J**
Brown is oil, green/orange is coolant, red is transmission fluid, clear and slippery is brake fluid.
- Test all exterior lights**
Headlights, tail lights, and brake lights. Have someone confirm the brake lights for you.

Every 2 Months QUICK VISUAL CHECKS

- Check all under-hood fluid levels** **J**
Coolant, brake, power steering, and washer fluid each have min/max marks. Low usually means a leak.
- Inspect the battery terminals** **J**
White or blue-green crust is corrosion. We clean it free with any oil change.
- Inspect the wiper blades**
Streaking, skipping, or chatter means replace them — before the next downpour.

SHOP TIP

The PSI stamped on your tire's sidewall is the maximum the tire can hold — not your target. Your correct pressure is on the sticker inside the driver's door jamb. Using the wrong number wears tires unevenly.

Every 3 Months / 3,000–5,000 mi ROUTINE SERVICE

- Oil change** **J**
Most cars run 5,000–7,500 miles between changes, longer on synthetic. Check your windshield sticker.
- Tire rotation** **J**
Front tires wear faster. Rotating regularly makes a set last far longer. Nearly 1 in 3 cars is overdue.
- Visual brake check** **J**
Look through the wheel at the pad. Thin pad, squeal, or grind means it's time to come in.

Every 6 Months SEMI-ANNUAL SERVICE

- Replace the cabin air filter** **J**
Filters the air through your vents. A clogged one strains the A/C and heater. Usually \$15–\$30.
- Test battery charge capacity** **J**
Not just whether it starts today — whether it holds charge at 10°F. Batteries last 3–5 years.
- Inspect belts and hoses** **J**
Hoses should feel firm, not mushy. A snapped serpentine belt leaves you stranded immediately.
- Undercarriage wash (Michigan winters)**
Road salt eats brake lines, fuel lines, and the frame. A few dollars after each storm adds years.

SHOP TIP

Brake fluid is the single most-skipped service in the country — about 88% of drivers never have it done (AAA). It absorbs moisture over time, which softens the pedal in hard stops. A flush runs around \$80; neglect can cost far more.

Not sure where your car stands?

Bring it in — we'll review this checklist with you, free, and estimate before any work.
Flip to page 2 for the smell & dashboard warning-light quick references.

(313) 999-6823



Once a Year / 12,000–15,000 mi

ANNUAL SERVICE

- Replace the engine air filter** J
Protects the engine from dust. A clogged filter cuts power and fuel economy.
- Brake fluid flush** J
The most-skipped service in the country (AAA). Old fluid absorbs water and weakens braking. Every 1–2 years.
- Coolant flush** J
Coolant turns acidic over time and corrodes the system it protects. Flush every 2–5 years.
- Spark plugs (if due)** J
Modern plugs last 60,000–100,000 miles. Worn plugs cause misfires and poor mileage.
- Full multi-point inspection** J
Everything on a lift: steering, suspension, brakes, exhaust, fluids. Written report, no surprises.



Every 30,000 Miles

THE LONG GAME

- Transmission fluid** J
"Lifetime fluid" lasts only if you baby the car. A \$100–\$150 service now beats a \$3,000+ transmission later.
- Differential fluid (trucks, SUVs, AWD)** J
Often overlooked. Skipping it leads to clunking and costly wear. Every 30,000–60,000 miles.
- Inspect shocks and struts** J
Worn shocks add 10+ feet to your stopping distance. Bounce after a bump is the tell.
- Timing belt (if equipped)** J
If your engine uses a belt, a failure can wreck the engine. Replace at 60,000–100,000 miles.

What That Smell Means

IF YOU SMELL...	LIKELY CAUSE	DO THIS
Sweet / maple syrup	Coolant leak — pull over	PULL OVER
Burnt rubber	Slipping belt or hot brakes	STOP NOW
Gasoline inside car	Fuel leak — fire risk	PULL OVER
Rotten eggs	Catalytic converter / battery	GET CHECKED
Burning oil	Oil on a hot engine	CHECK SOON
Musty from vents	Cabin filter or A/C mold	EASY FIX

Dashboard Warning Lights

WARNING LIGHT	WHAT TO DO
Check Engine Minor (loose gas cap) to major. We scan it free.	SOON
Oil Pressure No lubrication. Stop now or you'll ruin the engine.	PULL OVER
Temperature Overheating. Pull over, A/C off, heat on.	PULL OVER
Battery Charging system failing. Limited drive time left.	GET CHECKED
Tire Pressure A tire is ~25% low. Check all four soon.	CHECK SOON
Brake System Low fluid or brake fault. Don't risk it.	PULL OVER

Don't wait — come in if you notice:

- A warning light stays on
- Grinding or squealing when braking
- The car pulls to one side when stopping
- Any burning or sweet smell
- It's been over a year since an inspection

Call Jack's · (313) 999-6823

Written estimates before any work · Certified technicians · Honest pricing, every time