

Proper Check *Before* Hitting The Road CAN SAVE LIFE!

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Driving an automobile is one of the potentially most dangerous things people do, but you can prevent certain problems if you know how to check your car before driving. Visual inspections may prevent an accident caused by a blown tire, and many other potential hazards.

*Here are some very important **10 Steps** you need take before hitting the road.*

Step 1

Check under the car for obvious leaks.

Driving with leaking fluid may cause failure of the steering, brakes or radiator.



Step 2

Check the fluids in your car. Checking the oil, coolant, brake fluid and windscreen wash levels may help you avoid an accident or an unnecessary breakdown. Also check the levels for the clutch fluid (often the same as brake fluid) and power steering fluid (if fitted to your car). Refer to your owner's manual to see where fluid reservoirs are located.



Step 3

Check your air pressure.

These should be printed in the owner's manual or a sticker on the body where the driver's door shuts. The pressure marked on the side of the tire is the max, which must not be exceeded. Also, don't forget to check your spare tire pressure. Often neglected, not doing so will turn a bad time into a worse one if the spare is unusable.



Step 4

Get the oil changed before you leave if it's almost time for a change.

A long trip can put additional stress on your motor.

Don't think that adding extra oil by yourself will work like an oil change, because that does not get rid of the sludge from old used oil. You may not realize

this due to the fact that you are continuously adding new, cleaner oil which makes it appear as if it is clean oil. When changing your car's oil, you must always replace the oil filter at the same time.



Step 5

Check your tire wear by using a penny or tread gauge.

Ensure you have at least 1/16th" or 1.6mm tread left. If the tread is less than 1/12" or 2.5mm, consider replacing your tires for very long journeys as they will wear down more quickly. Tires heat up on long trips which can cause blowouts on worn out tires.



Step 6

Check your car's air filter.

A plentiful supply of clean air to your engine improves the vehicle's performance and efficiency. Also check and change your car's cabin (pollen) filter if it has one, as these are often ignored in services and, if worn, adversely affect the quality of air in the cabin.



Step 7

Know how the gauges on your dashboard should look when everything is working properly.

Check the gauges every time you start your car. Check the engine temperature gauge after the engine has had time to warm.



Step 8

Check to be certain that all lights and signals are functional on your car.

You may need the help of another person for this. Sit in the car, turn on each light or signal and ask your friend to tell you if it is working or not. Replace bulbs as necessary. Also consider carrying spare bulbs on a road trip (at least one for each light eg. headlights, indicators, tail lights, reverse lights). Changing bulbs (especially front) can take time in modern cars, so don't leave this to the last minute if bulbs need changing.



- *Occasionally, lights may not work because a fuse needs replacing. Consider checking your headlights alignment (using a white garage door or inside a*

garage) and adjusting the alignment if it is incorrect as poor headlight alignment will reduce visibility at night, especially on unlit roads.

Step 9

Ensure that you have all emergency equipment inside your car, and that everything works properly.

Emergency equipment includes: an up-to-date map, cell phone, spare tire, fire extinguisher, and emergency tools (e.g. screwdrivers, pliers and an adjustable spanner). Although usually absent; flares and medical kits may come in handy in worse-case scenarios. Carry a reflective warning triangle as these is mandatory when driving in Nigerian. If you are travelling from a left-hand drive to a right-hand drive country, then look to see if beam deflectors for your headlights are mandatory (so other road users are not dazzled).



Step 10

Make sure the spare tire is inflated and serviceable and the jack is present.

It's a good idea to check them periodically even if you aren't going on a long trip.

