

# The 10-Minute Tire and Car Check

One short walk around the car, once a month.



**FIND WHAT YOU NEED**

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**START YOUR CAR CHECK AND THE METHOD**

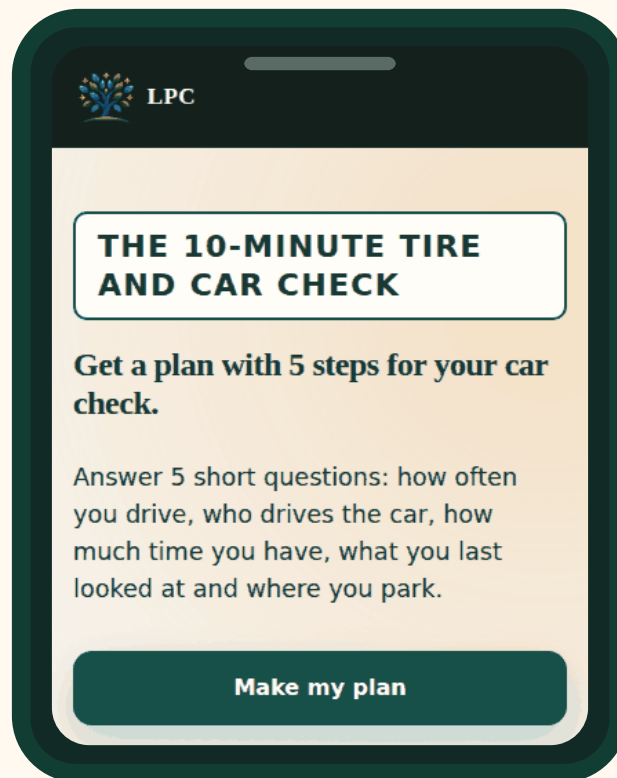
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# Quick Route: Start with the Car Check Companion App



If you cannot remember when you last looked at your tires, the Car Check Companion App can help you start now.

You answer 5 questions, and the app gives you a plan with 5 steps: check the tire pressure, look at

**CONTINUED**

the tread, find the manual and the door label, write one note and set the date for your next check.

Save favorites and add personal notes, so your app is tailored to your preferences.

You can create 2 complete personalized plans free.

Read the Important Note About Tire and Car Safety first. Then use the app for a plan, or keep reading and learn the method at your own pace.

**Open the Car Check Companion App**

<https://carcheck.lifeperksclub.com>

**A GENTLE NOTE**

# Important Note About Tire and Car Safety



This guide gives everyday ideas for looking at your tires, finding your car's manual and writing down a date to look again. It is general information. It is not mechanical, safety or repair advice.

**CONTINUED**

It does not tell you whether your car or your tires are safe. It does not say what to buy, what to fix or who to call. It gives no prices, no brands and no rules for any state.

The 10-minute frame, the 4 parts, the order of steps, the one note and the one date are this guide's own ideas. They are a way to make a small start. They do not come from an official source.

The guide leans on 2 pages from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, NHTSA. Whenever the guide says what those pages say, it says "according to NHTSA". Everything else is the guide's own suggestion, and it says so.

**CONTINUED**

If you are not sure about something you see, write "ask" next to it and look in your car's owner's manual. The manual is the place this guide points to every time.

This guide and the companion app never ask you for a card number, an account number, a Social Security number, a license plate, a vehicle identification number or a password. Please do not type those into either one, and do not write them in your notes.

You never have to do a step that feels like too much. If a step does not fit your day, skip it and go on to another one.

[START HERE](#)

# Why Tires Get Forgotten



Most people do not plan to ignore their tires. It happens quietly. The car starts every morning, so there is nothing that asks for your attention.

**CONTINUED**

Tires sit low and out of sight. You look through the windshield, not at the ground. A tire can go for months without anyone really looking at it.

There is also no date on it. A birthday gets a card and a bill gets a due date, but a tire check has no day of its own. It only happens when you remember it.

That is why "I should look at the tires" can stay on a mind for weeks. Nobody did anything wrong. The week was busy, and the thought had no place to go.

**CONTINUED**

Even people who care about their car lose track. They cannot say when they last looked, where the manual is or whether the car has a tire gauge.

This guide does not turn you into a mechanic. It does something smaller. It shows you how to take one short walk around the car, write one note and choose one day to look again.

You do not need tools or knowledge. You need your car, a pen or your phone, a little daylight and about 10 minutes.

The 10 minutes are a starting frame, not a promise that you will look at everything in 10 minutes. It means one short walk is enough to know what comes next.

THE 4 PARTS OF A TIRE AND

# The 4 Parts of a Tire and Car Check



A tire and car check can feel like a lot. This guide splits it into 4 parts so you look at less at a time.

**CONTINUED**

The split is the guide's own idea. It is not an official list.

**Pressure and tread.** How much air is in the tires and how the rubber looks. According to NHTSA, these are the 2 things to check at least once a month.

**Age and the spare.** How old the tires are and whether the spare gets looked at too.

**CONTINUED**

**The manual and the door label.** Where your car's own instructions are. Both are already in your car.

**Recalls and service.** A look at whether the maker has announced a recall, and a look at what the manual says about regular service.

If something does not fit, put it with the part that feels closest. The parts are only there to help you look at less at a time.

You do not have to do all 4 parts on the same day. A small walk with one part is a complete check.

**THE METHOD**

# Your 10-Minute Car Check Task Dump



A task dump means writing down everything that comes to mind, without sorting it. Set a timer for 10 minutes. This frame is the guide's own.

Take a piece of paper or open the notes on your phone. Write one line for each thing. Do not put

**CONTINUED**

them in order. Do not worry about whether it is big or small.

Write down what you remember about your tires and your car. When did I last look at the tires? Do I know where the manual is? Is there a gauge in the car? Does the car have a spare?

You can also write down the small things that you keep meaning to do. A line that says "look at the tires someday" is a complete line.

Your list may look like this: find the manual, buy or find a tire gauge, look at the front tires, check the

**CONTINUED**

spare and look at the date for the next service. These are only examples. Your list will be different.

Next to each line you may write which of the 4 parts it belongs to: pressure and tread, age and spare, manual and label or recalls and service.

When the timer rings, stop. You do not have to finish the list. A half list is better than a list in your head.

Keep the page. The next sections tell you how to use it.

**THE METHOD**

# The 10-Minute Tire and Car Check: Order of Steps



ONE WALK - ONE NOTE - ONE DATE - 10 MINUTES

Here is the order this guide suggests. It is the guide's own order. It is not from an official source, and you can change it to fit your day.

**CONTINUED**

1. **Check the tire pressure.** Use a gauge, when the tires are cold.

2. **Look at the tread.** Look at each tire from the front.

3. **Find the manual and the door label.** Know where they are.

4. **Write one note.** Write what you saw, in your own words.

5. **Set the date.** Choose the day to look again.

**CONTINUED**

You do not need to finish one step for every tire before you start the next. But if you are not sure where to start, start at the top.

Take one tire and do the first step for it today. A short walk that you finish is better than a long one that you drop.

If you share the car with someone, show them the note when you are done. 2 people looking at the same page often find something that one of them forgot.

The next sections go through the steps one by one.

## THE METHOD

# Tire and Car Check: Tire Pressure and the Gauge



Pressure is the first step. This section uses the NHTSA page about tires, and it adds one small habit of its own.

**CONTINUED**

According to NHTSA, you should check the pressure of all your tires, including the spare, at least once a month.

According to NHTSA, check the pressure when the tires are cold. Cold means the car has not been driven for at least 3 hours.

According to NHTSA, the pressure your car needs is not printed on the tire. It is on the Tire and Loading Information label on the driver's side door edge.

According to NHTSA, you should keep a tire pressure gauge in your car. If you do not have one, write "find a gauge" on your list.

**CONTINUED**

The guide turns these into one small habit. Pick the first morning of the month. Walk around the car once, before you drive. Write the numbers you see on your page.

If you are not sure how to use the gauge, write "ask" and look in the owner's manual. This guide does not explain how to add or let out air.

Some cars have a dashboard light for tire pressure. According to NHTSA, this tire pressure monitoring system, or TPMS, is on cars from model year 2008 and newer. The light means at least one tire is much too low. According to NHTSA, it is not a replacement for checking your tires regularly.

The guide does not say whether your pressure is right or wrong. It only helps you see the numbers and write them down.

**THE METHOD**

# Tire and Car Check: Tread and the Penny Test



Tread is the second step. This section also uses the NHTSA page about tires.

According to NHTSA, you should check the tread of your tires at least once a month. Tread means the grooves in the rubber that touch the road.

**CONTINUED**

According to NHTSA, tires are due for replacement when the tread has worn down to 2/32 of an inch. According to NHTSA, there are small wear bars built into the tire that show when you reach that point.

NHTSA also describes the penny test. You put a penny into a groove of the tread, with Lincoln's head upside down. According to NHTSA, the penny test is a way to look at the 2/32 of an inch mark. According to NHTSA, if you can see the top of Lincoln's head, it is time to replace your tires.

Try this on one tire first. Then look at the others from the front of the car. Write down whether the tread looks even from one side to the other.

## TIRE AND CAR CHECK

# Tire and Car Check: Rotating Your Tires



According to NHTSA, if your car's maker recommends it, tires should be rotated every 5,000 to 8,000 miles, or sooner if the wear looks uneven.

**CONTINUED**

According to NHTSA, you should see your owner's manual for your car.

This guide does not say whether a tire is good enough. If you are not sure what you see, write "ask" next to that tire and look in your owner's manual.

A note such as "front left looks the same as front right" is a perfect note. You are not judging the tire. You are writing down what you see.

## TIRE AND CAR CHECK

# Tire and Car Check: Tire Age and the Spare



Age and the spare are one of the 4 parts. A tire can get old without looking worn. This section uses the same NHTSA page.

According to NHTSA, some car and tire makers recommend replacing tires that are 6 to 10 years

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old, no matter how much tread is left. The guide does not know what your car's maker says. The owner's manual is the place to look.

According to NHTSA, you can find the age of a tire in its DOT Tire Identification Number. The last 4 digits tell the week and the year it was made.

The guide turns this into one small habit. Find the number on the side of one tire and write down the 4 digits. If the number is hard to find or to read, write "ask".

**CONTINUED**

According to NHTSA, the spare should be checked too. Its pressure is part of the monthly check, and the guide puts the spare on your list for that reason.

According to NHTSA, a spare is not a replacement for a worn tire, except in an emergency.

If your car has no spare, write that down. The owner's manual says what yours has.

The guide does not tell you what to do about a tire's age. It only helps you write the number down so you know what to look up next.

## TIRE AND CAR CHECK

# Tire and Car Check: Recalls and Service



This part is about the car itself, and it is short. It uses the NHTSA page about summer road tips, which was published in June 2020.

According to NHTSA, you can check whether your car has a recall. NHTSA has a lookup on its own

**CONTINUED**

website that works with the vehicle identification number, called the VIN.

Open that page yourself, on NHTSA's own site. Do not type your VIN into this guide or into the companion app. Do not follow a link from a message that you did not ask for.

The guide does not tell you where the VIN is on your model. Write "find VIN" on your list if you are not sure, and look in the owner's manual.

According to NHTSA, regular maintenance helps prevent breakdowns. NHTSA lists tune-ups, oil

**CONTINUED**

changes, battery checks and tire rotation, and says to follow the maker's recommendations.

This guide does not say how to do any of that. It does not say what your car needs. For that, the guide points to one place: the owner's manual.

Write down one line: "Recall check: date" and "Service: see manual". That is enough for a first walk.

If you find a recall, the guide does not tell you what to do next. NHTSA's page says what to do, and you can write "ask" and follow the page.

**TIRE AND CAR CHECK**

# Tire and Car Check: Your Owner's Manual and the Door Label



The manual and the door label are the third step. They are good places to look, because they belong to your car.

**CONTINUED**

The owner's manual is the book that came with the car. Find it and write down where it is.

According to NHTSA, the Tire and Loading Information label is on the driver's side door edge. Open the driver's door and look at the edge. Take a photo of it with your phone.

The label and the manual are where your car's own numbers live. This guide does not repeat any numbers, because they differ from car to car.

**CONTINUED**

Make a small place for the manual. A glove box, a bag in the trunk or a photo on your phone all work. Write the place on your note.

If you cannot find the manual, write "find manual". That is a complete step for today. You can look for it later.

Whenever the guide says "see the owner's manual", this is what it means. It is the one place where the guide sends you to find out more.

You do not have to read the whole manual. Look at the pages for tires and for service. Write the page numbers on your note, so you can find them again.

## TIRE AND CAR CHECK WITH A

# Tire and Car Check With a Partner or a Shared Car



A tire and car check is easier when everyone knows what is happening. This section is the guide's own set of ideas, and it only covers small, practical things.

**CONTINUED**

**With a partner.** Share the note. One person walks around the car and says what they see, and the other person writes it down. Then swap next month.

**With a shared car.** Put the note in the glove box, or share a photo of it. Write the name of the person who looked and the date.

**With a teenager who drives.** Ask kindly, and do not make it a test. Walk around the car together and let them write the note.

**CONTINUED**

**With a parent.** If you are helping a parent, walk around the car with them. Write down what you see and let them decide what is next.

**Alone.** Do the check at a time of day when you have daylight and energy. Do one tire at a time, and stop when you want.

In every case, say the plan out loud before you start. Say how long it will take and who does what.

If someone does not want to take part, do not argue. Do your own part. Ask again another day.

## STEP BY STEP

# The Night Before Your Tire and Car Check



The night before is easier when the tools are close. This section is the guide's own plan. It only takes a few minutes.

**CONTINUED**

Look at your calendar and choose a 10-minute slot for tomorrow. Write it down.

Put a pen and a piece of paper, or your phone, where you will see them in the morning. If you have your task dump, put it with them.

Find your tire gauge, or write "find a gauge" at the top of the page. If the gauge is in the car, leave it there.

**CONTINUED**

Decide where the car will be. A spot with some daylight makes it easier to see the tread.

If you share the car, tell the other person that you will look at it. A short message is enough.

Decide which step you will do first. For most people it is the pressure.

You do not need to prepare more than this. A small start tonight makes tomorrow lighter.

## STEP BY STEP

# Tire and Car Check Day: A One-Page Plan



A tire and car check is easier with a one-page plan. The plan is the guide's own. Write it on a single sheet and keep it where you can reach it.

**At the top.** Write the date and the time you will start and stop.

**CONTINUED**

**Step 1: Check the tire pressure (about 3 minutes).** Use the gauge on each tire, and on the spare if you can. Write the numbers.

**Step 2: Look at the tread (about 3 minutes).** Look at each tire from the front. Try the penny test on one.

**Step 3: Find the manual and the door label (about 2 minutes).** Write where they are.

**Step 4: Write one note (about 1 minute).** Write what you saw in your own words.

**CONTINUED**

**Step 5: Set the date (about 1 minute).** Choose a day to look again. Put it in your calendar.

The times are only a rough guide. The frame is the guide's own.

**At the bottom.** Write 3 lines: what I did today, what I will ask and what I will look at next month.

When the time is up, stop. Tell someone what you did, in one sentence. That is the end of the day.

## THE METHOD

# After Your Tire and Car Check: Your First 10 Minutes



When you finish the walk, you do not have to be done with everything. This section gives you a short start. The 10-minute frame is the guide's own.

**CONTINUED**

Look at your page. You may see numbers, a few notes and a few lines that say "ask".

Take the first 3 minutes to look at the lines that say "ask". Pick one. Write where you will look for the answer. For most of them, the answer is in the owner's manual.

Take the next 3 minutes to do one small thing. It may be finding the manual, writing down the DOT number or opening the NHTSA recall page.

**CONTINUED**

Take the next 2 minutes to put the page where you can find it next time. A glove box, a folder or a photo on your phone all work.

Take the last 2 minutes to write the date in your calendar. Name it clearly: "Car Check".

Do not try to do all of it today. A short list that you come back to is better than a long list that you drop.

Then stop for the day.

## TIRE AND CAR ITEMS THAT GET

# Tire and Car Items That Get Forgotten



Some things are easy to forget. This list is the guide's own set of reminders. It is not official, and some may not apply to you.

- The spare, which is easy to leave out of the monthly look.

**CONTINUED**

- The tire gauge that is in a drawer at home.
- The date on the side of the tires, which nobody reads.
- The owner's manual, which is not where you think it is.
- The Tire and Loading Information label on the door edge.
- The recall check, which only takes a few minutes.

**CONTINUED**

- The tires on a second car that nobody drives much.
- The note you wrote last time and cannot find.
- The date for the next walk around the car.

If you see something here that you have not looked at, do not feel bad. These are the ones that everyone forgets, because they do not make noise.

Pick one from the list. Add it to your page. Write it down and put a date next to it.

If you use the app, your answers to 5 short questions shape the plan.

## WHERE TO START

# When Your Tire and Car Check Falls Apart



Plans change. A busy week arrives. The timer rings and you have looked at one tire. This section is for those days. The ideas are the guide's own.

**You ran out of time.** Stop. Write down where you stopped. Do the rest in another 10 minutes.

**CONTINUED**

**You could not find the gauge.** Write "find a gauge" and go on to the tread. You can come back to the pressure.

**It is dark or raining.** Do the part that you can do from the driver's seat, such as finding the manual. Look at the tires on another day.

**You are not sure about what you see.** Write "ask". Look in the owner's manual, using the pages for tires.

**Someone else uses the car.** Do not argue. Write their name on the page and ask them what they have noticed.

**CONTINUED**

**The month went by.** It happens. Write today's date and start again. You do not have to make up for it.

**You do not feel like it.** Do one thing: look at one tire. Then stop. A small start counts.

You do not have to do a perfect check. A short, calm walk around the car can help more than a perfect plan that you never use.

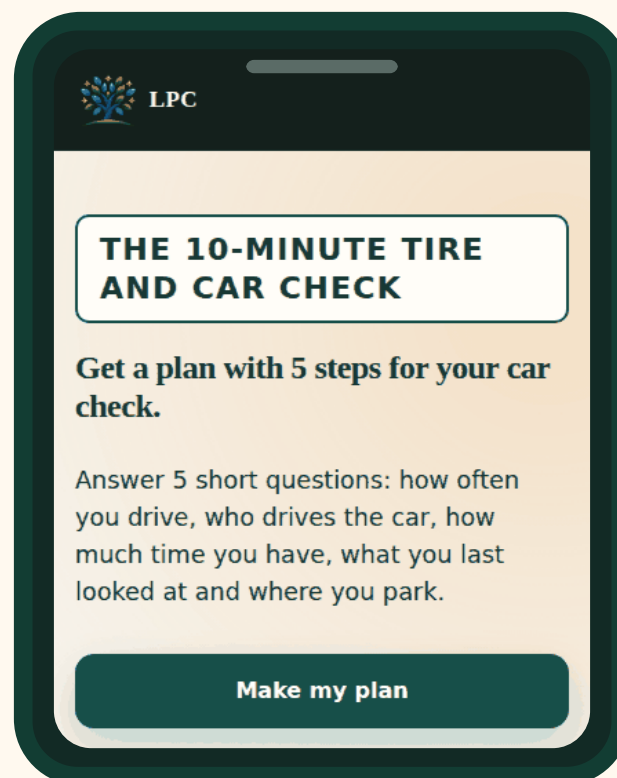
When you are ready, start again. Open your page. Pick the first step.

## OPTIONAL COMPANION APP

# The Car Check Companion App

This guide explains the method. The Car Check Companion App turns it into a plan for your life.

You answer 5 questions: how often you drive, who drives the car, how much time you have, what you last looked at and where you park.



**CONTINUED**

The app gives you a plan with 5 steps: check the tire pressure, look at the tread, find the manual and the door label, write one note and set the date for your next check.

The app gives no advice about any car, tire or repair. It does not say whether your car is safe.

Save favorites and add personal notes, so your app is tailored to your preferences.

**CONTINUED**

You can add a note that says when you last looked at your tires.

You can create 2 complete personalized plans free. After that, a one-time unlock of \$9 keeps it yours. There is no subscription and no renewal.

The app never asks for a card number, an account number, a Social Security number, a license plate, a vehicle identification number or a password.

**Open the Car Check Companion App**

<https://carcheck.lifeperksclub.com>

More Mini Guides and Companion Apps:

<https://carcheck.lifeperksclub.com/hub>

**FINAL CHECKLIST**

# Final Checklist: The 10-Minute Tire and Car Check



☐ I wrote down what I remember about my tires and my car in a 10-minute task dump.

☐ I checked the pressure of the tires when they were cold, and wrote the numbers.

**CONTINUED**

☐ I looked at the tread of each tire and wrote what I saw.

☐ I looked at the spare, or wrote that the car does not have one.

☐ I found the owner's manual and the door label, and wrote where they are.

☐ I wrote down the date from one tire, or wrote "ask".

☐ I opened the NHTSA recall page myself, or wrote "recall check" on my list.

**CONTINUED**

- ☐ I wrote one note in my own words and set the date for my next check.
- ☐ I did not write any card numbers, license plate or VIN on my page.
- ☐ I know that this guide does not say whether my car is safe, and that the owner's manual is the place to look.

The phrase 10-minute tire and car check means one short walk around your car in which you look at the tires, write down what you see and choose the day to look again.

**SOURCES**

# Sources Used for Tire and Car Check Guidance

The statements about tire pressure, tread, tire age, the spare, recalls and service come from 2 U.S. government pages. Both were checked again on October 18, 2026. Check the official pages for the latest wording.

The first page is about tire safety. The second is a consumer advisory from June 2020 about road tips.

This guide uses them only for these ideas.

**CONTINUED**

Check the pressure and the tread at least once a month, when the tires are cold. Find the recommended pressure on the door label and keep a gauge in the car.

Replace at 2/32 of an inch, try the penny test and rotate as the manual says. Know that the monitoring light does not replace a check, and ask about tire age.

Check for recalls and follow the maker's service recommendations.

The 4 parts, the one note, the one date, the 10-minute task dump, the night before, the day and the first minutes after the check are our own suggestions. They are not official guidance.

**CONTINUED**

This guide gives no mechanical advice, no prices and no rules for any car or state. For those questions, look in your owner's manual.

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Tire Safety Ratings and Awareness | TireWise: pressure, tread, tire age, rotation and the monitoring light.

<https://www.nhtsa.gov/vehicle-safety/tires>

- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Consumer Advisory: NHTSA Offers Summer Safety Road Tips (June 17, 2020): maintenance and recall checks.

<https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/consumer-advisory-nhtsa-offers-summer-safety-road-tips>

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