



Press Information

Changing Your Vehicle's Filters Is Still A Great DIY Opportunity

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BROADVIEW, IL – While the increasing complexity of today's cars, light trucks, and SUVs has put many tasks beyond the capabilities of light do-it-yourselfers (DIYers), filter changes can still be easily handled by most DIYers. In fact, the opportunity for car owners to change their own filters is actually growing, thanks to a design change in newer vehicles that includes never-before-used filters that clean the air you breathe.

"You can indeed change your vehicle's filters," said Ramon Nuñez, spokesman for Purolator Filters, which invented the very first automotive oil filter ("Pure Oil Later") and also the first spin-on oil filter, and is one of the world's largest suppliers of filtration products for cars, trucks, and other vehicles.

Oil Filters

The physical act of changing an oil filter has not changed much in recent years, explains Purolator's Nuñez. Most cars and light trucks today continue to use a spin-on oil filter, so it doesn't take much more than knowing where it's located and having a good oil filter wrench on hand. However there are three areas where you need to be up-to-date in order to do a quality and responsible job.

First, said Nuñez, be advised that the old oil filter you remove will contain a fair amount of oil, so the filter should be handled in an environmentally responsible manner. At the very least you should let the old filter drain overnight before discarding it in order to allow most of the old oil to drain out. Then, if local regulations permit, you can put it out with the trash. Bear in mind, however, that the parts store or retailer where you buy your oil and filter may well be a center for recycling used oil and, may be likely to accept your old oil filter for recycling as well. In any event, be sure to dispose of your used oil and filter in a responsible manner.

Of course you'll also have to pay particular attention to the oil you buy, since car manufacturers are now being very specific about the grade and viscosity of the oil you should use, as well as specifying whether you should use conventional or synthetic oil. You should always check your owner's manual for the manufactures recommended oil.

Beyond your choice of oil and using proper disposal methods for used oil, the other consideration is your choice of oil filters. This is especially critical today, with engines built to more exacting tolerances, and motorists more inclined to maintain than trade in their car. As a result, more and more DIY'ers are selecting Purolator's top-of-the-line PureONE oil filters as motorists opt for a filter that will remove the smallest particles and protect the life of their engine. Purolator PureONE oil filters provide 99.9% efficiency and a textured grip control for easier installation and removal.

Air Filters

There have been some changes in air filters in recent years, but in most cases, these filters are still easily changed by a DIYer. The biggest changes are in the shape and location of air filters, explains Purolator's Nuñez. "Long gone are the days when most air filters were rings sitting under a lid and wing nut. Most cars today use a panel-type air filter located in a plastic housing in the engine compartment. Car manufacturers usually provide clips or snaps for easy access to the air filter, and once the access panel is removed the filter usually just lifts out. Normally, your parts professional or service technician will be happy to show you how to access your air filter. And, as with oil filters, Purolator PureONE premium air filters are a favorite of motorists striving to afford their engine the greatest possible protection.

Cabin Air Filters

Increased concern about air quality and airborne germs and particulates has resulted in a new technology in late model cars. Most vehicles built in the recent past are equipped with a cabin air filter so the air we breathe in our cars is clean and healthy. But, surprisingly, many motorists are not even aware that their car has such a filter. The good news is that we're able to breathe cleaner, healthier air, and the filters that keep the air that way are fairly inexpensive and easy to change. These filters should be thought of in a similar fashion as your home furnace filter and replaced regularly.

"Because so many people are unaware that such a filter exists in their vehicle, there's a good chance that yours has never been changed," notes Nuñez. "We offer cabin air filters for nearly every vehicle on the road that has one," he adds, "and most every cabin air filter we sell includes vehicle-specific instructions, complete with detailed illustrations, to make it easy for DIYers to replace theirs, usually in just a few minutes. In addition, we are in the process of adding these vehicle-specific instructions to our web site, www.purolatorautofilters.net, so DIYers will be able to review and even print out the instructions before they even purchase a new cabin air filter. This way they'll know exactly what the job entails before they even start."

Continues our expert, "Purolator offers two types of cabin air filters for most applications. Of course we offer a direct replacement for the factory filter. But we also offer one that has the capability of removing odors to make motoring even more pleasant. Both styles of filters are installed in the same manner, and we're finding that many DIYers are seeing this extra feature as an inexpensive way to keep the cockpit of their car pleasant as well as healthy."

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Fuel Filters

While fuel filter replacement is a bit more involved than it used to be, many DIYers are up to the task. And that's a good thing since fuel filter replacement is more critical with today's fuel-injected engines, which are less tolerant of contaminants than their carbureted predecessors. Fuel injectors have very small, very precise passages that can be clogged with particles that used to pass harmlessly through a carburetor. Clogged injectors can hamper fuel economy, compromise performance and, in some cases, lead to illumination of the dreaded 'Check Engine' light. So regular fuel filter changes are economical and highly recommended, either by the car owner or by the service provider.

In most cases fuel filters are located under the vehicle, with threaded fasteners that must be unscrewed and, often, a bracket bolted to the underside of the car. You should consult a service manual for the proper installation procedures, paying attention to cautions about supporting a raised vehicle, as well as for relieving any pressure in the fuel line and capturing fuel that may drip during filter replacement.

DIY work can be rewarding and money-saving, and filter replacement is a service operation that can still be done easily by many DIYers. Oil and filter change intervals are typically specified in owner's manuals and the rule of changing your oil and filter every 3,000 miles is still a good one. Engine air, cabin air, and fuel filter replacement once a year is a safe guideline unless your driving conditions are severe or your miles driven are greater than average. Spending a little time and money on filter replacement can keep both you and your engine happy and healthy.