

ENGINE BLOCK
BY EHSANUR RAZA RONNY



How to stop rats from eating your car

Most people want cars. Some need it. Few of us actually love cars. And that is the worst kind. We have cars we hardly use because it is much easier to walk, cycle or take a rickshaw. And rodents love cars that aren't used. Correction: they just love cars but for all the wrong reasons.

A car has hundreds of tiny, tight, dark spaces. Rodents love darkness for building their dream homes. Cars have nesting material in the form of carpet fibres and seat foam. Mice love it. They really love the new car smell for their newborns.

CARS ARE CHEWY

I was once driving along in the rain when suddenly my dashboard lights, AC blower, wiper and headlights cut out. Luckily, being an old car not dependent on electronics, it continued to drive. I pulled to the side and realised the music was still playing. Audioslave was on. I waited for the song to end and then stepped out and popped the hood. Rain spattered over my head as I stood staring into a dark engine bay like a manly man with no clue. My 5-year old son suggested I hit something. So I did. The fusebox took a slap and the wipers and lights were back on. I drove home with the lights fluttering a couple more times. Next day, I inspected the damage. Rats had lovingly chewed through some of the wires from the fuse box housing the relays for wiper, lights and fan. I know for a fact wires do not taste good.

AIRTIGHT CAR SHELTERS

I have an almost open garage. It has more holes than the argument for building a coal power plant in the Sundarbans does. That said, there is no way to completely prevent rodents from entering other than putting the car in an airtight bubble.

Which you actually can buy for about \$400 from Carcoom. It even has airflow devices for maintaining humidity levels.

SET THE TRAP

The best bet is to trap the rodents. I tried. I placed sticky mats underneath the car. But I also have massive rats outside. They are competitive long jump athletes preparing for the Furrylympics 2020. They avoid the sticky traps because they can. To make it effective, I basically have to drive over a floor covered in sticky goo. Not feasible. Poison doesn't work because it seems in Bangladesh, the rats have eaten so much rubbish, they are immune to poison. Or the poison is just sugar

pellets like every other processed food item we have.

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Mice and rats hate light. If the situation is really bad, leave the hood open and the lights on. I tried that for a week and it greatly reduced the



infestation. But they still would leave stinky little gifts.

FIGHT STINK WITH STINK

Mice are extremely sensitive to smell except their own. They hardly take a shower much less use any deodorant. They stink. And they poop and pee everywhere.

This sensitivity helps prepare repellents. Many people claim mothballs help especially if your car is sitting idle for a while. We call them naphthalene balls and it isn't considered perfectly safe for humans.

So don't drive around with those balls hanging from your rear-view mirror and slapping you in the face. But they work to an extent during storage. Place a few in the trunk area because there are vent holes through which mice get in. Place a few in the engine bay but if you drive around, those will evaporate within a week. The strong smell seems to keep away most mice and rats.

Peppermint has been known to help. Peppermint oil soaked cotton balls have worked for many people. Bonus is the car ends up smelling very nice. But it doesn't seem to deter them from entering the engine bay and leaving little black sticky calling cards.

The last step is to sell the car. Because you can't win against rats or mice.

By Ehsanur Raza Ronny

CAR LESSONS 101

Guide to Buying and Maintaining Cars

Recently, I was reading an article about a man who put in a handsome amount of money to buy a car which was identical to the car he was forced to sell back in college to pay off his tuition fee. Cars have been every man's number one love; they are the best machine closest to a man's heart! Men have been hooked to cars ever since the invention of automobile. The effort and time one puts into maintaining a car almost always surpasses any other work they do. If you are thinking of buying your first car, you've come to the right place because I'll be laying out some thoughts and tips on buying and maintaining cars.

SAVING UP FOR YOUR FIRST CAR

If you are a car lover/enthusiast, you will know that the love and passion for a car is overpowering. Your mind will keep going haywire thinking and dreaming about cars. Your world will revolve around cars. You will treasure the first cheque you receive and put it away in your secret locker so that you can save up to buy your first car. Whether it's a Maruti 800 or a second-hand Toyota



Carina, you will not leave any stone unturned to buy that car. You save for months as slowly your hard earned cash piles up in your hidden locker and finally you have enough to buy that amazing car of your dreams. Preparing to buy your first car will feel like falling in love. It'll give you warm, fuzzy feelings inside. It will give you

butterflies in your stomach. Yes people, this is how much a person loves cars!

BUYING A SECOND HAND CAR

For people who have a shoe string budget, they can opt for carmudi.com or even Car Haat which takes place every Friday in Rajdhani High School, opposite to The

National Parliament in Dhaka. But, it isn't as easy as that. When buying a car, you can't settle for anything at face value; you have to dig into the nitty gritty. All details must be examined before making up your mind. A thorough research has to be done analysing everything from the required papers to the chassis. If necessary, you have to turn it upside down. It has to be worth every penny and nothing should be compromised. From convenience, comfort to performance, everything should be under the scanner. The engine should be a top priority and then comes the body and all fittings from seats to lights to tyres. Once you park your new buy in the garage, you look with admiration at your prized possession and feel you have achieved something and your dream is now a reality.

LOOKING AFTER A CAR

Maintaining a car can be time consuming and requires a lot of attention and hard work. However, for car lovers, it's nothing but fun. I can write volumes about car maintenance, but here is a tad bit of information that you must always have when looking after your car.