



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

How to make your brand new car last forever



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You have bought your brand new car and you cannot stop smiling. Here are a few things you need to watch out for so you can keep smiling years down the line.

The first month

Once upon a time, owning a new car meant having to follow a complicated ritual called the break-in period. A new engine is fresh off the factory floor and moving parts often used to need a few hundred miles of usage before they could move more freely. Manufacturers used to recommend cars be driven gently for the first 1,000 kilometres so the engine parts

could loosen up. This is no longer really the case, at least not for most average to premium cars. Common cars simply come in with a break-in completed right from the factory. Technology has improved so much that engines are now built so well, they do not need to be gently 'broken in'. Most cars come ready to run perfectly from the factory.

It still does not hurt to take it easy during our first 1,000-2,000 kilometres as things settle in further. Engine oils have also developed to run longer and further. Synthetic oils allow you to go as much as 10,000 kilometres between changes. The goal is to keep the first two oil changes a little frequent. Engines may

have a little debris in the form of metal shavings; you do not want those circulating all throughout, which is why the initial flush takes care of them. Of course, this is mostly a concern for the basic, lower-end cars which still require a bit of very careful break-in.

The other thing most people want to do right away is either to get extra metal bumpers attached or convert to some alternate fuel system. There are two problems right here. New cars often come with multiple airbags. Many mid-range cars also come with brake assist functions that help, well, brake better during emergencies. Having extra metal bumpers sticking out could cause those airbags to deploy improperly or not at all.

Why? Because those bumpers get in the way of sensors.

The first year

The most important thing is to make sure you change the engine oil on time and get the right type of oil. Engine oil comes in many different grades. Thicker oils will cause your engine to work harder. Simply put, get the correct grade which is written in the manual that you get with a new car, or it is mentioned on a sticker under the hood. Using the wrong engine oil is what kills most cars in Bangladesh over a period of five to ten years.

Also, replace radiator coolant and power steering fluid after the first two years. People never change the coolant and it stops being

effective after a while, meaning your engine starts to slowly and gently overheat. It refuses to cool as well and one fine day the radiator goes Kaboom.

Every year, AC units should be cleaned and washed. They lose a little coolant over time but that takes a while.

The fifth year

By now, you have had multiple scratches. The AC should require a thorough servicing because contrary to popular belief, ACs do not run forever without service.

And that is it. The right oil along with regular replacement of perishable parts with original equipment, and the car should run more than a decade without trouble.

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