

These 7 steps will save you thousands on fuel cost

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With the recent oil crisis, prices of fuel are at an all-time high in Bangladesh. Commuters and regular automobile users are searching for ways to reduce their transportation costs or find some alternative means of transportation. However, it is possible to reduce fuel consumption using some simple tips and tricks, which can go a long way in not only saving money on gas but also increasing one's car's overall fuel economy. Here are some easy methods to reduce fuel consumption for your beloved four-wheeler.

Driving style
One of the easiest ways to boost fuel efficiency is by changing your driving style. Start by switching to gentler accelerations. The faster you accelerate, the more fuel the car consumes. Avoid speeding since vehicles use increasingly more fuel the faster they go. Fuel can be saved by lifting your foot off the accelerator early on and coasting down to slow down instead of using your brakes.

You should also avoid driving at high RPMs. For example, a car travelling at a speed of 130 km/h uses about 20% more fuel than one travelling at 110 km/h. On a 10 km trip, this speed and fuel consumption will cut 1.5 minutes from your travel time. Being even a bit wary when driving can do wonders to your car's fuel economy.

Losing weight
Losing all the unnecessary weight in your car can



increase efficiency, as it will take less power from the engine to push the car forward. Those with the habit to carry anything and everything in the car's boot like sports equipment and extra items for emergency spares should shed weight to save more



gas. This way, you can expect a 2-3% reduction in fuel consumption.

Tire pressure
Check the tire pressure at least once every week. If the tires are underinflated, the car may have more traction, but would not be the most fuel-efficient car out there, owing to higher rolling resistance on the road. Putting more resistance on the tires will also reduce their lifespan as there will be more wear and tear. If the tires are underinflated even by 10 psi, this could reduce the car's fuel efficiency by up to 10%. Hence, it's better to drive with the tires being inflated properly, as recommended by the manufacturer.

Avoid idling the car
Idling a car can eat away more fuel than people think, as the engine needs fuel to run even if it is idle. A car with a 3000 cc engine can eat away up to 300 millilitres (more than a can of Coca-Cola)

of fuel for every 10 minutes it stays idle. Until or unless the car has an idle start-stop function, it's best to turn off the engine when you stop for over two minutes.

You should not turn off the engine too often in slow-moving traffic, since doing so can put a lot of pressure on the engine thus burning more fuel. To reduce fuel consumption further, plan your route carefully before starting the journey. Avoid the worst peak traffic jam and use Google Maps to stay updated on traffic data.

General maintenance
Keeping up with general maintenance can make the car more efficient, not to mention can save you unnecessary fuel usage as well. Many drivers often do not maintain their routine leading to costly kilometres per litre. Change oil and oil filters as suggested by the owner manual.

Change air filters and spark plugs when needed, and have the wheels properly aligned and balanced. Take your car to the mechanic or dealership for a general tune-up whenever required. Doing so can potentially address issues that affect efficiency or fuel consumption. Identifying such problems beforehand can save you some valuable bucks for petrol.

Track fuel consumption
Tracking your consumption is important to reduce the monthly expenses on fuel. This can be easily done by checking how far you've driven since your last refuelling stop and dividing the kilometres driven by the amount of gas you bought in litres. This will help keep track of the car's mileage and whether the mileage is more than what you would expect.

Manually tracking the fuel consumption can also help you understand how far your car can go without filling the tank. As such, you can challenge yourself to refill as rarely as you can, subsequently reducing your monthly costs.

Driving with the air condition off
The AC powers itself using the engine which does consume fuel as it puts an extra load on the engine. There is a direct relationship between fuel economy and AC because the engine directly runs the AC compressor. The AC eats up to 20% more fuel than any other auxiliary feature in a vehicle, hence driving with the AC turned off can provide good results for fuel economy.



Can electric bicycles be the new choice for Bangladeshi commuters?

What are electric bicycles?
An electric bicycle is a regular bicycle with an electric motor that assists riders when they pedal on the streets. The electric motor essentially provides a boost through a pedal assist which propels riders forward without much physical effort. The motor gets its power from a rechargeable battery that is mounted on the bike.

What are the advantages of riding an electric bicycle?
Electric bicycles offer faster riding due to the boost from the electric motor which is integrated into the cycle. Generally, electric bicycles can move at speeds up to 25km/hour to 35 km/hour.

The electric bicycles also allow the movement of heavy goods as they usually have capacities beyond 100 kilograms. Electric bicycles also enable taking longer trips when compared to traditional bicycle as it moves faster and increases the overall range of the trip. Riders can also use electric bicycles as a way of maintaining their physical well-being as they get some exercise out of riding the bike, even in an assisted mode.

The most useful advantage of using an electric bicycle would be the reduction in transportation expenses as the recent price hike has impacted the transportation



bicycles would be sold worldwide between 2020 and 2023, suggesting that electric bicycles are becoming more popular than ever before.

In Bangladesh, electric bicycles are getting increasingly popular in the urban areas of the country and proper penetration in the rural areas can increase the demand for electric two-wheelers in the country.

Where to buy it? What is the pricing?
There are many stores that have authorised dealer points where electric two-wheelers are available across the country. Some of the notable shops including Green Tiger, E-Supply Mart and Advanced Dynamics have a vast range of electric bicycles which can be purchased through their websites and showrooms. The Daily Star spoke to multiple dealers and most of them mentioned that the demand for electric bicycles has been increasing recently.

Most of the electric bicycles are sourced from China. Prices of electric cycles range from Tk. 35,000 up to as high as Tk. 300,000. Please note that the price and availability of different electric bikes may vary across different stores.

How do you charge?
Charging an electric bike is a relatively simple process, though it can seem a bit confusing at first. First, make sure the battery is turned off. Then, release the battery lock to open the battery hatch from your bike. Usually, the battery is easily detachable. Connect the charging adapter and insert the power cord into the adapter slot.

The charging port, usually found on the upper side of the battery, needs to be connected with the charger as well. You can then plug the power cord into any outlet with electricity. Look out for a visible signal, usually, a green light, to ensure the charging has begun. The battery usually needs 3 to 6 hours of charging, depending on the power capacity.

Difference between electric bicycles and regular cycles
There isn't much of a difference between riding a regular bicycle and an electric bicycle. Functionally, they are driven the

same way. With an electric bicycle, however, you need to start by switching the main motor and choosing an assistance level for the controller and pedal. These features make the initial acceleration easier to control, ensuring you are at a safe speed. Keep in mind that because of the added weight from the motor and battery, riding an electric bicycle may seem a bit slower than regular bicycles. Some electric bicycles also have wide tyres that further add weight, but in turn, provide better grip when turning and accelerating. They also have disc brakes to help decelerate or stop, but these too can add more weight to the bicycle.

Is it legal though?
According to Section 2.1 of the Electric Motor Vehicle Registration and Traffic Regulations 2021 draft proposal, there is no need to avail of any licence to ride an electric bicycle in Bangladesh. This means that users can ride an electric bicycle on the streets without any formal issues.

Is it risky? Helmet and safety gears
Riding electric bicycles can prove to be much safer than regular bicycles because of the added protection and drive assistance. Because of the added weight, even during high accelerations, electric bicycles are easier to control and navigate around. The speed is also enough to keep up with cars during typical traffic hours.

However, it must be stated that first-time riders or those lacking experience riding traditional bicycles on city streets should spend time adjusting to two wheels before attempting daily usage on the roads. Keep yourself updated on riding regulations, and always wear a helmet and sufficient gear to stay protected.

What other alternatives?
Regular bicycles, electric scooters, Segways and mopeds are some other alternatives to consider if you feel an electric bicycle isn't the right fit for you. Regular bicycles may not come with the added features, but they are still a much-beloved transportation method for busy non-motorised two-wheel owners. Electric scooters and mopeds are always an option if you want to opt for other electric vehicle alternatives.



budget of many people in the country. If people use electronic bicycles instead of motor vehicles, then they can save money in the long run. Overall, electronic bicycles are convenient as they reduce the physical effort of the rider while also allowing them to travel faster to reach their destinations.

How are bicycles performing globally?
Electronic bicycles have been around for a long time, with a strong presence in European countries and in China. Other countries are also adapting to the electric version of the two-wheeler as the popularity of electric bicycles is increasing. According to a study conducted by leading audit firm Deloitte recently, electric bicycles are leading the way in terms of EV adoption in Germany. Deloitte also predicted that between 130 million units of electric