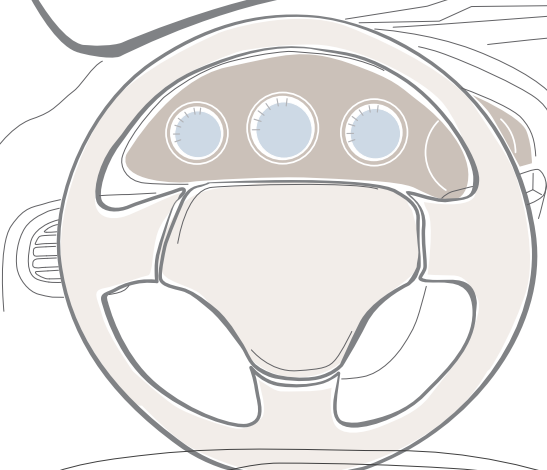


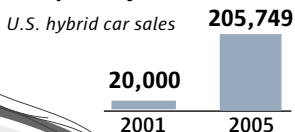
\$3.22 per gallon, 424 gallons per person: How to cut your costs



AN ALTERNATIVE: CONSIDERING A HYBRID

More of us are at least thinking about buying hybrid vehicles, some of which can get up to 60 mpg with their gas-electric engines. About 14 percent of new-vehicle shoppers considered hybrids in April 2006, more than double the number in March 2006, according to a study by Kelley Blue Book and Harris Interactive. On the other end of the fuel-economy scale, buyers' consideration for midsize SUVs hit a two-year low at 19 percent.

National hybrid sales have increased tenfold in the past 5 years.



CONSIDER BUYING A MORE FUEL-EFFICIENT CAR

If you trade in a car that gets 20 mpg for a car that gets 30 mpg, you can save \$4,000 over 5 years, according to the U.S. Department of Energy's calculator at www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/savemoney.shtml

| Sample calculation at \$3.22/gallon | NEW CAR | EXISTING CAR |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------|
| My average mpg is . . . | 30 | 20 |
| I drive approximately . . . | 15,000 miles per year | |
| I plan to own my car . . . | 5 years | 5 years |
| Annual fuel cost | \$1,610 | \$2,415 |
| Total fuel cost during the time you own your vehicle | \$8,050 | \$12,075 |

The new car would save you \$4,025 over 5 years

WAYS TO SAVE IN YOUR EXISTING CAR

- ✓ **Observe the speed limit:** As a rule of thumb, you can assume that each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional \$0.20 per gallon for gas (based on an assumed fuel price of \$2.91/gallon).
- ✓ **Use cruise control:** It helps you maintain a constant speed on the highway and, in most cases, will save gas.
- ✓ **Remove excess weight from your vehicle:** Avoid keeping unnecessary items in your vehicle, especially heavy ones. An extra 100 pounds in your vehicle could reduce your mpg by up to 2 percent. The reduction is based on the percentage of extra weight relative to the vehicle's weight and affects smaller vehicles more than larger ones.
- ✓ **Use overdrive gears:** When you use overdrive gearing, your car's engine speed goes down. This saves gas and reduces engine wear.
- ✓ **Avoid excessive idling:** Cars with larger engines typically waste more gas at idle than cars with smaller engines.
- ✓ **Maintain your car**
 - **Check the air filters:** Replacing a clogged air filter can improve your gas mileage by as much as 10 percent. Your car's air filter keeps impurities from damaging the inside of your engine.
 - **Keep your tires properly inflated:** You can improve gas mileage by around 3.3 percent by keeping your tires inflated to the proper pressure. Underinflated tires can lower gas mileage by 0.4 percent for every 1 psi drop in pressure of all four tires.

GIVE UP THE CAR

If you want to save some serious money (and reduce emissions at the same time), consider whether you can give up a vehicle altogether. On top of the rising cost of gasoline, AAA estimates that the average car costs more than \$6,000 per year to own and operate.

Sources: HybridCenter.org; R. L. Polk & Co., "Hybrid Vehicle Registrations More than Double in 2005," Department of Energy; AAA; AutoVIBES, Kelley Blue Book Marketing Research and Harris Interactive; Northwest Marine Trade Association

Top 10 hybrid states

| Rank | Market | Total new hybrid registrations 2005 |
|------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | California | 52,619 |
| 2 | Florida | 10,470 |
| 3 | Texas | 9,632 |
| 4 | New York | 9,372 |
| 5 | Virginia | 8,650 |
| 6 | Illinois | 7,286 |
| 7 | Washington | 6,970 |
| 8 | Pennsylvania | 6,948 |
| 9 | Massachusetts | 6,060 |
| 10 | Maryland | 5,673 |

MORE RESOURCES

www.bankrate.com/brm/calc/gasprice.asp: This site provides a calculator to help determine whether a lower price would be worth the drive to an out-of-the-way gas station.

www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/drive.shtml: More gas mileage tips.

www.seattletimes.com/gasgauge: Includes a primer on why prices fluctuate and other resources.

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in
Northwest Weekend

WHAT ABOUT GASOLINE-POWERED BOATS?

How many we have: Washington had 267,000 registered boats in 2005, ranking No. 16 in the nation. (This doesn't include smaller boats that don't need to be registered.)

What kind of gas mileage they get: Most boats in Washington are shorter than 30 feet and run on regular gasoline. A typical 18-to-22-foot runabout with a 4-cylinder outboard engine going 30 mph gets about 6 mpg. A high-performance boat, such as a ski boat, traveling at the same speed gets closer to 3.5 mpg. But boaters aren't necessarily using the motors constantly.

How you can improve your boat's gas mileage: Run it at a slower speed.