



How To Protect Your Car's Resale Value

Few drivers start thinking about resale value when driving a new car off of the dealership lot for the first time. Still enamored with that new car smell, drivers can be excused for not thinking of resale value as they put the pedal to the metal and speed off in their brand new ride.

But it's never too early to start protecting a vehicle's resale value, especially if you hope to recoup as much of your vehicle investment as possible when the time comes to sell your car or trade it in for a newer model. The following are some ways motorists can protect the resale value of their vehicles from the moment the dealer tosses them the keys.

- Keep all maintenance records. New cars typically do not require much maintenance. But drivers should keep records of all work and maintenance done on their vehicles, even if that work does not extend beyond routine tune-ups or oil changes. Keeping maintenance records shows prospective buyers you prioritized taking care of the vehicle over the years, and that makes the car or truck more attractive to preowned vehicle buyers who want to avoid buying a lemon or a car that has not been taken care of.

- Don't overlook looks. Looks can be deceiving, but new car buyers who eventually plan to sell their vehicles should do all they can to keep the car looking as new as it did the day it was first driven off the dealership lot. Much like homeowners benefit when selling a home with curb appeal, a car that looks good gives buyers the impression that it was well taken care of. But a dirty car or one with lots of dings and dents is a red flag to preowned car buyers.

- Keep a clean interior. New car owners typically maintain some strict rules with



regard to food and beverages in their vehicles. After all, no one wants their brand new car to succumb to stains or spills. But the longer drivers have a car the more lax they tend to become with regard to allowing food and drinks into their cars, and that can ultimately hurt the resale value of the vehicle. Maintain a clean interior whether you just bought the car or have driven it for a few years. Much like an impressive exterior leaves a lasting impression, a clean interior

that has not succumb to coffee stains or muddy boots is more likely to impress buyers than a car with an interior that has seen better, cleaner days.

- Drive defensively. It's not just what you do to a car but how you drive the car that can affect its resale value. Driving defensively reduces your risk of accident, and an accident-free preowned vehicle is a top priority for potential buyers. But driving defensively also reduces wear and tear on your vehicle, as over time

constant stop-and-go, aggressive driving takes its toll on vehicle engines and other components.

- Periodically examine the vehicle history report. Today's preowned car buyers know to ask for a vehicle history report before buying a car. If your vehicle history report contains any suspicious or inaccurate information, you may be forced to sell the car for less than it's worth or delay selling until you can have any issues corrected. That won't necessarily happen overnight, but you can avoid dealing with a host of issues all at once by periodically examining the vehicle history report. Any discrepancies on the report can be brought to the attention of your insurance company, who can then work with you to correct the issues and restore your vehicle's reputation. Resale value may not be foremost on the minds of new car owners, but the earlier buyers begin to factor resale value into their car-care routines, the more they will benefit down the road.

Car Battery Care In Extreme Weather

Few things can be more frustrating than jumping into the driver's seat on a frosty morning, turning the key in the ignition and failing to hear the engine roar to life. Frigid weather can cause trouble with a car's battery. Some drivers do not understand why, but getting the facts can help people avoid having to deal with dead batteries on cold winter days. Cold temperatures wreak havoc on batteries because they slow the chemical reaction inside of the battery. Batteries work by combining lead plates with lead dioxide and sulfuric acid to create electrons. While batteries can function under myriad conditions, the cold weather tends to degrade high-quality batteries and may render subpar batteries useless. The cold weather can cause the fluid in the battery to freeze and lose function. A battery that is frozen will not hold a charge, and, as a result, the car won't start.

There are various ways to protect a battery from failure in the cold, and some of them involve taking precautionary measures even before the arrival of cold weather.

- * Assess the age of your battery. If your battery is old, now may be the time to replace it. Batteries differ in how long they last, but many last anywhere from five to 10 years. If your car is still running on its original battery and your car is several years old, it may be a good idea to get a new battery before the arrival of winter. Battery size will not necessarily provide better starting. It's important to buy the correct battery for the make of your car, which can usually be found inside of the owner's manual.
- * Verify that there is no corrosion. Corrosion can prevent a car from starting just as much as a worn-out battery. Corrosion is caused by a faulty connection that allows battery acid to escape and corrode surrounding areas. Regularly inspect the battery to keep abreast of issues that may cause corrosion. Carefully clean away any corrosive residue that has formed and make sure the battery is correctly seated. Cold weather can sometimes wreak havoc on vehicles. Knowing how to skirt trouble with your car's battery can keep your car on the road throughout the winter.

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