



Fuel's paradise

DON'T MAKE THIS DREADED MISTAKE

Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO



So, you rock up to a service station after a hard day at the office.

Cars pack the forecourt. You're distracted. You drive up to a free bowser ... and put the wrong fuel into your car.

It's every driver's worst nightmare. Hopefully, this doesn't happen to you. But what if it does?

No matter how many people beep their horns at you and tell you to get out of the way, do not get in your car and turn on the engine.

You will damage your engine if you put diesel into a petrol-powered car or vice versa and drive away.

Clever people design engines to run on certain types of fuel and if the wrong one goes in, catastrophe will shortly ensue that will involve an expensive repair.

So, if you find yourself in this embarrassing situation, tell the console operator straight away.

If you can, push your car to a safe place on the edge of the service station forecourt and wait for help to arrive.

The console operator should be able to arrange for an expert to visit the site and, using specialised equipment, they will drain your fuel tank and responsibly dispose of the contaminated fuel.

Alternatively, you may need a tow to a workshop where drainage of the fuel tank can take place.

This is a costly mistake, but not as costly as driving off and waiting for your car to fail.

Once you have done the aforementioned, you can fill up your car's tank — with the correct fuel this time — and be on your way.

Prepared by Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce



ROADSIDE ASSIST

NO STING IN THIS TALE

IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

WRITE TO MOTORING AT
CARS@NEWS.COM.AU OR
PO BOX 2808, GPO SYDNEY, 2001

Do you know when the new model Kia Stinger will be available in Australia?

Gaye Schneider, email

New model? What new model? No talk of one, but rumours persist the Stinger will cease production later this year and not be replaced. It was facelifted in December 2020, and 2022's changes begin and end with Kia's new badge on its bonnet, rump and steering wheel. If you want one, buy one now. The twin-turbo V6 model is an underrated and underbought big performance car.

HOPES DASHED

We've just bought a Haval H6 and I asked the dealer could I order a dash mat. They said no as they are classed as unroadworthy as they're not a permanent fixture. It shocked me as they're readily available in auto stores and online.

Bob Adamthwaite, email

I spoke to the mechanic who does my roadworthy tests and he said he's never heard of this. He said as long as the dash mat is the correct custom fit to your model car so it doesn't block your heater vents or dashboard airbag he'd not classify it unroadworthy. Most he sees have Velcro fittings so are fixed in position. The major auto stores and many online sites stock dash mats, including for your H6. Your phone, drink bottle, coins or packet of smokes aren't permanent fixtures either... surely they're allowed in a car? To be fair to your Haval dealer, I can't find any car companies selling OEM dash mats, so they may well be restricted.

HOPES SHATTERED

I've been a loyal Holden buyer for over 50 years but feel let down and treated with utter disrespect. I bought a Holden VF Calais V8 in 2016 and it failed last December after 115,000km. A spring in a cylinder had

shattered, sent a piston down the cylinder and put a hole in the bottom of it. Customer service were sympathetic and I was loaned the parts ute while my car was assessed. My car was six months and 15,000km out of warranty so was told it would be close to \$4000 to repair. I was told I'd missed the 60,000km service and was late on a couple of others so it wouldn't be covered under warranty. If a missed service was the cause, why wasn't the issue picked up on subsequent services?

Gary Taylor, email

While it's an early failure, warranty terms insist you're only covered if the service schedule is adhered to. Missing a service gives Holden grounds to deny a warranty claim, plus yours has also expired on date and kilometres, if only by a little. You'd be relying on a goodwill fix even if you hadn't skipped a service. You've nothing to lose by asking for goodwill assistance – offer to pay labour if they pay parts – but it's unlikely. A Holden specialist should be able to do the work cheaper if you have no joy.

EARLY EXIT

I hate the road and tyre noise from my 2021 Mazda6. Are there wagons or large hatchback alternatives under \$50,000 that are really quiet with cheap servicing, reliable and not with a CVT or DCT auto gearbox?

Paul Bishop, email

I also found the Mazda6 suffered marked road noise on my highway tests, but it'd be drastic to sell without trying to resolve it. Michelin's Primacy 4 tyres are often recommended by readers to reduce road noise. If not, used cars are in such demand you'll probably get your money back on your Mazda. I'd look at the new Skoda Octavia wagon with its eight-speed torque converter automatic, but the waiting list is long and ex-demo dealer prices are well over list price. Low-kilometre Peugeot 508 GT wagons are in budget and graceful, quiet things but are stupidly expensive to service. May be easiest just to turn your radio up.

THE CAT'S BIG LAP

I own a Jaguar XE and am thinking of driving it



GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR

I'm very interested in the MG ZS Excite SUV. I know they're made in China but at a drive-away price of around \$23,000 with seven-year warranty it's too hard to pass up. It's for my wife who just drives to get milk and bread; no off-roading and she doesn't care about torque and handling, only Bluetooth and an easy step up and out of the car. Any dramatic issues?

Paul Williams, email

If you're not bothered about the drive and just want an SUV that looks reasonable, is well-equipped and has a long warranty, the MG ZS is as cheap as they come. Aussies have lapped them up: the ZS outsold the Hyundai Kona, Mazda CX-30 and Mitsubishi ASX to be 2021's best-selling small SUV. But don't confuse the bargain basement MG ZS with the newer, better (and pricier) ZST version. When I tested the ZS I found cabin build quality was cheap, the three-cylinder engine over-worked and handling decidedly average. Resale values could plummet too. I enjoy driving so would pick something different, but your wife sounds an ideal candidate for the ZS.

around Australia. I have Jaguar roadside assist, but should I join RACQ? I've never used roadside assist so don't know how reliable they are.

Terry Bullen, email

Great road trip car. You roadside assist is complimentary if you service at Jaguar dealers, so don't pay extra for RACQ coverage. Jaguar uses Assist Australia, the leading provider of roadside assistance services to OEMs. It's partnered with NRMA, RACQ, RACV and more, so coverage is extensive. Have a chat with Jaguar assistance to ensure there are no specific exclusions, and when planning your odyssey factor in which Jaguar service centres you'll use to ensure you maintain your free roadside assist.

STEELIE SHOCKER

Re spare wheels for Toyota RAV4s, my Toyota Yaris Cross Hybrid has only an inflation kit. I'm going on a long trip so sought a spare wheel from Toyota. They offered me a steel wheel only (no tyre) for \$1373! I went to an auto wrecker and bought a brand-new full-size wheel from another marque for \$100 with tyre.

Jim Tasney, email

Good grief. Was the steel wheel gold plated with diamond wheel studs? Comical quote for a steel spare wheel, the dealer should be ashamed. I'm glad you took your business elsewhere; I hope the \$1273 saved covers all your road trip fuel and fancy lunch bills.

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