

[ROADSIDE ASSIST]

TALE OF THE TAPE



IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

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

Re car servicing. Over the years I've taken my Holden Cruze, Mitsubishi Lancer and Hyundai i30 to the respective dealers for servicing. In each case I put hidden hacks, such as electrical tape over number plate lights, tyre valves and windshield wipers, and took photos pre-service. Afterwards, I asked if all components had been checked. "Yes" was always the reply, then I showed the photos and the existing hacks still in situ. Silence. Only Hyundai got full marks for the inspection. Clearly, motorists are not always given the service they're paying for. Dave Lardner, email

Your Sherlock Holmes skills are impressive, Dave. Sad that owners have to resort to such measures to test dealers' honesty — but in some cases, clearly, it's justified. I hope the dealers quickly reduced invoices for substandard inspections.

NUMBERS GAME

In recent items you've suggested the saving from using cheaper E10 fuel was negated by the lower octane rating than standard unleaded. I've noticed United service stations advertise the opposite: unleaded is 91 RON and E10 is 94 RON. Is this unique to United or an error? David Whiteman, email

We may have said the octane rating of E10 is lower than premium unleaded (95 or 98), but not sulphur-rich 91. United advertises its E10 as 95RON, which is the anomaly. Most E10 is 94 and therefore not suitable for cars requiring 95. It's your choice. There are some findings that fuel economy drops using E10.

RATINGS CONFUSION

Re safe use of E10 95 RON from United servos. Can I use it in my Renault Captur? Emilio Scalzo, email

Your Renault demands pricier 95 RON fuel, and United claims 95 RON with its E10 fuel, so in theory you can use it. Put "E10 OK" in your search engine to check a car's E10 suitability. If your car demands 95RON, typically the advice will be: "Sorry, we cannot say if your car is E10 compatible."

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Last year I had a major health scare. As I use cruise control, I wonder what would happen if I had another episode (heart attack) — how would my wife stop the car? I've been told she can put it into neutral, then steer out of trouble. It's impossible to reach over and turn off the ignition. Gerald Hardman, email

First thing, put the auto shifter into neutral. This will disengage cruise control. Take control of the steering wheel, put hazard lights on (if there's time) and, on the highway, steer into the breakdown lane when safe. Don't try to turn off the ignition, or put the gear shifter into Park. You



NOISE MONITOR

A few years ago I complained to your motoring section about tyre road noise in my 2015 Mitsubishi ASX's cabin. I was promised greater attention would be given to noise problems in future assessments. Your latest ASX review had no mention of whether the vehicle's quiet or otherwise. Surely motoring writers should assess this and advise readers? Merv Finger, email

won't be able to reach the brake pedal safely, so use the handbrake. If it's a manual handbrake, start pulling up gently at first. If an electric handbrake, pull it on and it will gradually bring the car to a stop. I'd suggest finding a quiet stretch of road and practising for the scenario. My wife and I have just done so to research this answer.

WEAR'N'TEAR

Re stop-start tech — it's not just the battery that suffers. Starter motors and ring gears cop it, too, and neither item is cheap to replace. Roger Baker, email

We'd hope stop-start set-ups were introduced with the best intentions (reducing CO₂ and fuel use when stationary), rather than as a clever way to get cars performing better on official fuel consumption tests. Some manufacturers are dropping this tech, perhaps due to customer dissatisfaction with the cost of the repairs you mention. It may also be because of the introduction of a new fuel economy test (called WLTP), which gives far more realistic figures for real world driving.

UNWANTED PRIZE

I've won a brand new Jaguar XE R-Dynamic in a raffle, worth \$75,000. It's a beautiful car but I really don't need it so was hoping to sell. I'd love to find someone to buy it so their name can go on the paperwork as a new car rather than a second-hand one. Any suggestions? Stephen Sharrock, email

Nice problem to have and shame not to keep it: the new XE's a cracking car. The easiest option would have been to sell it to the Melbourne dealership where it'll be delivered but I've learnt they low-

You're right, we do. My recent test of the 2020 Mitsubishi ASX revealed no excessive tyre noise relative to other small SUVs. The tweaks the car's had over the years have no doubt improved things versus your 2015 model. We'll always mention tyre noise when it's excessive — as in a recent Mazda6 article — because we know how it can tarnish an otherwise impressive vehicle.



balled you with an offer of just \$48,000. As it was a hospital raffle, not a Jaguar Australia one, a Jag spokesman suggested you "contact the people that ran the raffle and see if they can mediate directly with the dealer they bought it from". Don't be afraid to list it privately yourself and don't be tempted to take that offer for the sake of convenience.

EARLY WARNING

I'm really happy with my 2013 Kia Cerato except for its audible warning alerts for speed cameras, rail crossings etc. These warnings start about 700m before the hazard. I'd love to reduce the warning to about 100m instead but I've been told this isn't possible, with the only solution being to turn the warnings off completely. It'll probably stop me buying another Kia. Bill Harris, email

I've asked Kia Australia and, yes, unfortunately there is no alternative to turning off the warnings. Your feedback is being passed onto Kia's development engineers and perhaps your comments will lead to tech that can be customised.



Don't boil the oil

THE KEY IS TO AVOID THAT FLASHING DASHBOARD LIGHT

Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO



I'm often asked if it's really necessary to change the engine oil in cars if the oil light isn't coming on.

It's a long story but, notwithstanding the brakes on a car, engine oil is the very next thing that needs your attention.

Oil in a car's engine has a number of functions, but principally it's one of lubrication. If bits of metal in the engine rubbed together all day without this protective lubricative coating, well, you probably wouldn't even get home.

Almost all oils degenerate over time, especially if they're working hard in an engine.

This leads to a lessening of its protective capabilities and, as it breaks down, it can't wrap around the parts to protect them.

The thickness (viscosity) of the oil recommended for your engine is critical. Don't take a short cut by putting the wrong oil in because it's cheaper. It could cost you dearly.

Engine designers and lubricants developers spend a lot of time carefully matching the correct oil to your engine, then test and validate their findings. You should pay attention to their advice.

Different engines take differently coded engine oils.

Read your car's handbook and stick with the recommended oil, replacing it according to the service advice.

If you're not sure, pop round to a trusted service centre and ask them to check the oil and, if needed, replace it.

It's a wise investment, your engine — and your hip pocket — will thank you in the long run.

Prepared by the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce in the interest of better motoring.



Share your thoughts
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