

## Parking your vehicle for a long time?

### Here are a few tips!



#### **Where to park your vehicle?**

The first rule to remember is, if you need to park your vehicle for a long period, a private and covered areas is the preferred solution. If it's not possible, the most important point is that it's parked in a safe environment.

Ensure that you keep the car keys in a safe place such as a designated key cupboard. From time to time do a vehicle inspection to ensure that the vehicles are ok in the parking location.

#### **Air needs to circulate (ventilation):**

If you are in a humid and warm area, it is important to leave the front windows open a few centimeters (1 or 2 are enough) to allow a small air-flow to pass through the inside of your car. If there is no air-flow and windows are closed, moisture will quickly settle inside the car, causing bad smells and the start of moisture accumulating. Moisture is not a good thing for on-board electronics. The same goes for intense heat. If a vehicle cannot be parked in a shaded area, having some air-flow that can circulate in the vehicle will decrease some heat accumulating inside the vehicle.

#### **Fill your tank to a minimum:**

Over time impurities accumulate in your fuel tank. They settle in the bottom and end up creating sludge that the engine does not appreciate. Therefore, it is important to always leave a sufficient amount of fuel in the tank in the event of prolonged immobilization. A full tank is recommended if the car will park for a short time, this will help with condensation forming in the fuel tank. If the car is parked for a longer period, a quarter of the tank will be more than enough.



For gasoline and diesel engines, it's important to know that fuel loses some of its qualities over time. When restarting your engine, having fuel in the tank will help to not draw up dirt or deposits from the bottom of the fuel tank. In a short period of time it's why we would recommend a fuel tank. For a continuous immobilization of more than 6 months, it is important drain if possible the tank to clean dirt and contamination. If not possible, it's important to complete the tank of the car at the time of restart the engine in order to mix the old fuel with the new one. This will make it easier to start.

### **Over-inflate your tyres:**



Deformation of the tyre can be caused by the weight of the car. The tyre is the only part of the vehicle that is in contact with the ground.

It is advisable to slightly over-inflate your tyres before a prolonged shutdown (500 grams to 1 bar above the recommended pressure is sufficient). This precaution will prevent a puncture or a flat tyre when the vehicle will be used again.

For an extended stop of more than 6 months, the best option is to use jack stands. Putting your car on jack stands will avoid the flat surface formation of the tyre during the time of contact between the tyres and the ground.

The result will prevent a defect on the tyre that will cause a deformation. This could have a direct impact on the lifespan and safety of the vehicle when driving later due to less efficient handling of the car. If deformation is present after storing the car for a long period, replacing tyres may be necessary.

In any case, when restarting the car ensure that primary usage is smooth and not aggressive.

Before the vehicle is allocated back into circulation of the fleet, having correctly checked the condition of the tyre and controlling correctly the tyre pressure throughout its stoppage is important and must not be taken lightly.



### ***Don't leave the handbrake on:***

Don't leave a car stopped for a long period with the handbrake on. If the handbrake is tight, you may find it difficult when trying to loosening after a long period of immobilization. Worse, the brake pads can also stay stuck. The springs of the brake shoe brakes do not appreciate being under stress for a long time either! This phenomenon is accentuated by the humid environment your asset could be parked in.



It is therefore better to park your vehicle by blocking the front and rear wheels using wheels blocks and leaving a gear engaged if you are not using jack stand to park it.

### ***Unplug the battery or maintain them charged:***



#### *For cars that don't have electronics or smart keys:*

Batteries hate to remain inactive. Connected, a battery will without a doubt discharge because there are always residual power losses. Over a long period of time, you may simply find it discharged when you want to restart.

To do this we recommend unplugging your battery. Be careful here when doing this procedure. The negative pod (-) is always unplugged first and then the positive pod (+) when you unplug a battery.

To plug back the pods of the battery, the positive pod (+) will be plugged in first before the negative pod (-). If ever the battery is discharged, it will need to be charged or you will have to use jump cable with another backup battery. In both cases, it is important to refer to your vehicle's owner's manual to do this procedure correctly.

#### *For cars that have ECUs and smart keys:*

For cars that have onboard computers (ECUs) and smart keys to start the car, it is important **not to disconnect** the batteries. If you disconnect the battery for a long period, you have a risk of losing the computer settings. This means that you will need to reprogram the computer and keys to be able to start the car again.

If you have these type of vehicles we would recommend to turn the engine minimum once per month for 15 to 20 minutes to be sure that the battery maintains the minimum charge.



With a number of vehicles in a fleet you can organize a rotation of a car every month to be sure that you are keeping them running.

### ***Restarting your vehicle after an extended stop:***

If your vehicle has been parked for a long time, it will be important to take a few precautions before restarting.

Firstly, do a thorough daily inspection before starting the engine.



Once the check is done, when the engine starts, it will be important to let it warm up progressively.

It is important when you start driving the first few miles, to drive it smoothly (eco driving style) in order to test the vehicle and detect any possible faults.

If faults appear, it is important to have the vehicle checked by your mechanic before starting your daily activity. This ensures that you can take the road safely first time.

