

Is Your Car in Shape to Drive You Out of Trouble?

A family of three was involved in a highway accident when the driver tried to avoid a stray animal. At 65 mph the car's right wheels moved onto the soft shoulder. The car swerved out of control and struck a tree.

Another car, approaching at about the same speed from the other direction, was forced to drop onto the shoulder but the driver was able to maintain control and bring his car to a safe stop.

While much must be left to conjecture about the true cause of the accident, inspectors concur the car's mechanical condition was a contributing factor. Loose steering parts had prevented the driver from maintaining control. Had the other car's steering been equally worn there might have been a two-car collision.

There has never been an accurate count on the percentage of highway accidents caused at least in part by mechanical failure of the car. Estimates range from under 10 percent to over 30 percent. When an emergency arises, it is becoming increasingly apparent that it must be the ability to "drive out" of that situation can be the difference between an accident and a scare.

So this becomes a matter of viewpoint. Is an unprevented because it is unprevented? Essentially, yes, say some automotive safety spokesmen. Because the car is an extension of the driver, the driver's ability to avoid an accident may be not better than the car's ability to drive him out of that situation.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that it must be the responsibility of the driver to avoid an accident—even when the situation is created by someone else. The ability to anticipate trouble and act to avert it is an essential element to safety margin.

Still, accident records probably would list this accident as a "driver error." While the human element still is primary in accident prevention (or creation) condition of the vehicle may be far more significant than is generally recognized.

just a trifle. This then must be corrected by the driver. Looseness in the steering adds a new element to the problem and may totally eliminate the safety margin.

There are precious few seconds from the time a driver sees an emergency until his foot depresses the brake pedal. If because of sluggish pedal action it takes another fifth of a second for the brakes to take hold, that car has traveled another car length at 60 mph.

If one tire is excessively soft, the car may pull to one side.

Nationwide Network is Source For Swift Dispatch of Needed Parts from Millions in Stock

In 1967 over one hundred million parts were assembled into 7 million, four hundred thousand U.S. cars. There were 370 different makes and models from which the buyer could choose, and he could specify a staggering number of options.

This becomes a crazy-quilt of combinations with which the country's 35,000 service outlets must contend, because many of these components change from year to year.

For the automotive parts companies and their channels of distribution, the problem becomes monumental. When a matter where he may be, or what make and model he is driving, parts must be readily available.

Here's a Good Example

A good example of the complexity of this parts distribution problem can be seen in the exhaust system. One manufacturer's catalog lists some 2,500 different exhaust system items. Virtually every make and model car required different sizes and shapes of components. Most jobbers stock an average of 1,500 numbers, exhaust pipes and tail pipes.

For a service station to carry every type would create an insurmountable inventory and storage problem. Nevertheless, nearly any mechanic in the U.S. can, in a matter of an hour or two, install a number and tail pipe on virtually any make and model car likely to come into his shop.

The secret may assume that when he drives into the garage or service station, the parts his car needs will be readily available. Thanks to a sophisticated parts distribution network, they probably will be.

The chain of events is capably handled by Mr. W. A. Rattery, Executive Vice President of the Motor and Equipment Manufacturers Association, whose organization is made up of over 500 leading makers of automotive parts, chemicals and service equipment.

"To begin with," he explains, "the life blood of the manufacturer is efficient distribution of his products. A company wouldn't stay in business long if there were not a well organized system of getting the product to the consumer."

Begins with Parts Maker

"At the other end of the chain, the service station, specifically the jobber, under outlets depend upon the manufacturer and warehouse to have parts when needed.

"The whole process begins with the parts maker, who sends his products to the warehouse distributor, the service distributor and the jobbers, who in turn supply the garage, service stations, car dealers,



Finding out what's wrong with your family car is no longer a "knee-jerk" business. Sophisticated testing equipment can get to the root of trouble as fast as protons and electrons can move. Service stations invest thousands of dollars each in such equipment to keep customers' cars running right.



A highly sophisticated test unit which includes a portable dynamometer, makes it possible for Champion Spark Plug Company engineers to check the effects of tune-up on the average motorist's car. These tests were conducted at shopping centers throughout the United States and in Mexico and Canada to permit the widest possible sample. See story below.

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Stinting on Maintenance Called False Economy

Better Care for Family Car Pays Off In Lower Operating Costs; Much Higher Trade-in Allowances

Expenses on car maintenance may be costing you more money than it is saving you.

The average U.S. car owner now spends about \$13 monthly to maintain his car. Yet, survey shows most cars today are not running at their best. Also, official inspections show that a sizable number have safety defects, according to George M. Galtzer, Manager of Champion Spark Plug Company's Automotive Technical Services.

Keeping a car in mint condition "in order to keep a car in mechanically-mint condition at all times, an average expenditure of \$19 a month is required," said Mr. Galtzer. "In other words, about one-third more than is now being spent."

"We arrived at this by pricing out a list of necessary services spread out over five years, the length of warranties on U.S. cars. Figures are based on maintaining a full-sized V-8 sedan in the low price group with automatic transmission.

"Though he'll spend an added \$8 a month, in the long run the typical owner should more than recoup the outlay. Money will come back to the owner (a) at trade-in time and (b) in lower operating costs.

How to Get Best Gas Mileage

"By driving with an engine always in tune and with good ignition, he'll realize his full gas mileage potential all the time, not just when the car is new. And he'll be able to start in any kind of weather.

"By having the front-end always in good alignment — by rotating the tires regularly, and keeping the wheels balanced, the life will be extended — up to as much as 20 percent, which is another source of savings.

"At trade-in time," Mr. Galtzer said, "allowances for cars in mint condition, according to NADA, average at least \$215 more than comparable models in just average or fair condition on the first trade-in. That alone amounts to around four dollars a month rebate for the 60 months of ownership."

These figures, according to Mr. Galtzer, are the result of a study by the Automobile Manufacturers Association. More than 50 associations and manufacturers were queried.

"Next to the home, the car represents the largest cash investment the average American makes," he declared. "Only by taking care of that investment on a regular basis can it be protected fully. Waiting until you have a few extra dollars to maintain vital parts is an invitation to premature deterioration at best and a dangerous, accident-inviting situation at worst."

Other reasons were cited for following a program of car care. A carred-for car always will be in prime operating condition, breaking on the chance of inconvenient times and places.

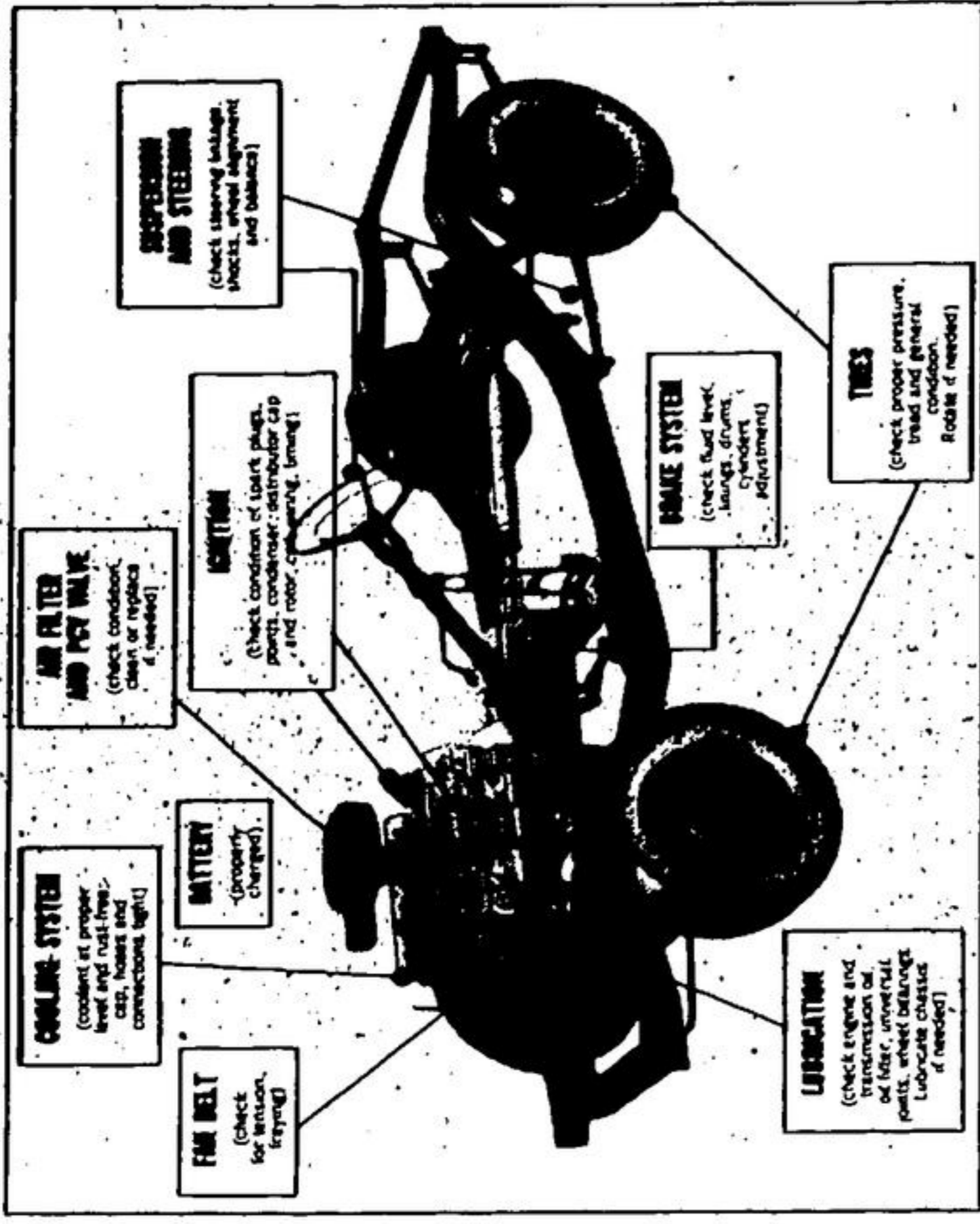
Also, new car warranties require adherence to maintenance schedules. By living up to warranty requirements, motorists need not worry about many expensive repairs during the time specified by the manufacturer.

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IF YOU'RE ABOUT TO LEAVE on a vacation trip, here's a handy check list of services to see you're in a trouble-free, safe journey. In addition to the services suggested above, here are some others you should have performed. LIGHTS — check for condition and aim of headlights. Also see that tail lights and directional signal lights, pipe, lamps for deterioration.

CARE... for your CAR begins with YOU!

learn to drive **PROPERLY FIRST**

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