

When it comes to personal transportation

# Car thriftiest way to travel

The term "getaway car" brings to mind Grade B gangster movies. The jittery driver, invariably portrayed by actors like Ed Brophy or Elisha Cook, Jr., fidgeted waiting for Jack LaRue to finish the heist.

While this kind of movie may have gone the way of free dish night and dime popcorn, the getaway car is still with us.

Now it is the family automobile that serves as a Cinderella's coach. It gets us away from the worry and humdrum of workaday life and takes us to adventurous places away from home.

### 85 per cent vacation by car

Some 85 per cent of us do our vacation and leisure-time travel strictly by car. Whether the trip is a coast-to-coast wander or a picnic at a nearby campground, the automobile provides the way to get there.

Certainly today there are problems we want to get

away from. Thanks to our national treasure of getaway cars, most of us can escape from cares for a few days or a few hours.

Especially in times when every dollar should be spent wisely, it is true that the automobile is still our most economical way to travel. Higher gasoline prices notwithstanding, there is no cheaper way (save walking) than the car to take the family on a holiday trip.

For many car owners the aim this year will be making the trip as economical as possible.

As inconsistent as it may sound, the best way to save money on your forthcoming trip is to spend it now. Invest in some basic car maintenance and the savings may be substantial.

With gasoline prices at heights unimaginable

only two years ago, an engine that wastes fuel due to lack of tune-up is a luxury no one can afford. Due to high gasoline prices it is accurate to say that the tune-up could pay for itself several times over.

Or consider items like shock absorbers, wheel alignment and other components that affect tire life.

An expensive set of tires can wear out an estimated 25 per cent before its time due to misalignment, worn shocks or just plain inattention to recommended tire pressure.

### Simple things save money

Something as simple as adhering to scheduled oil and filter changes, lubrication can save money in costly engine or chassis wear.

Even if one disregards the safety and riding pleasure a cared for car provides, the economies of the proverbial ounce of prevention-pound of cure formula still exist.

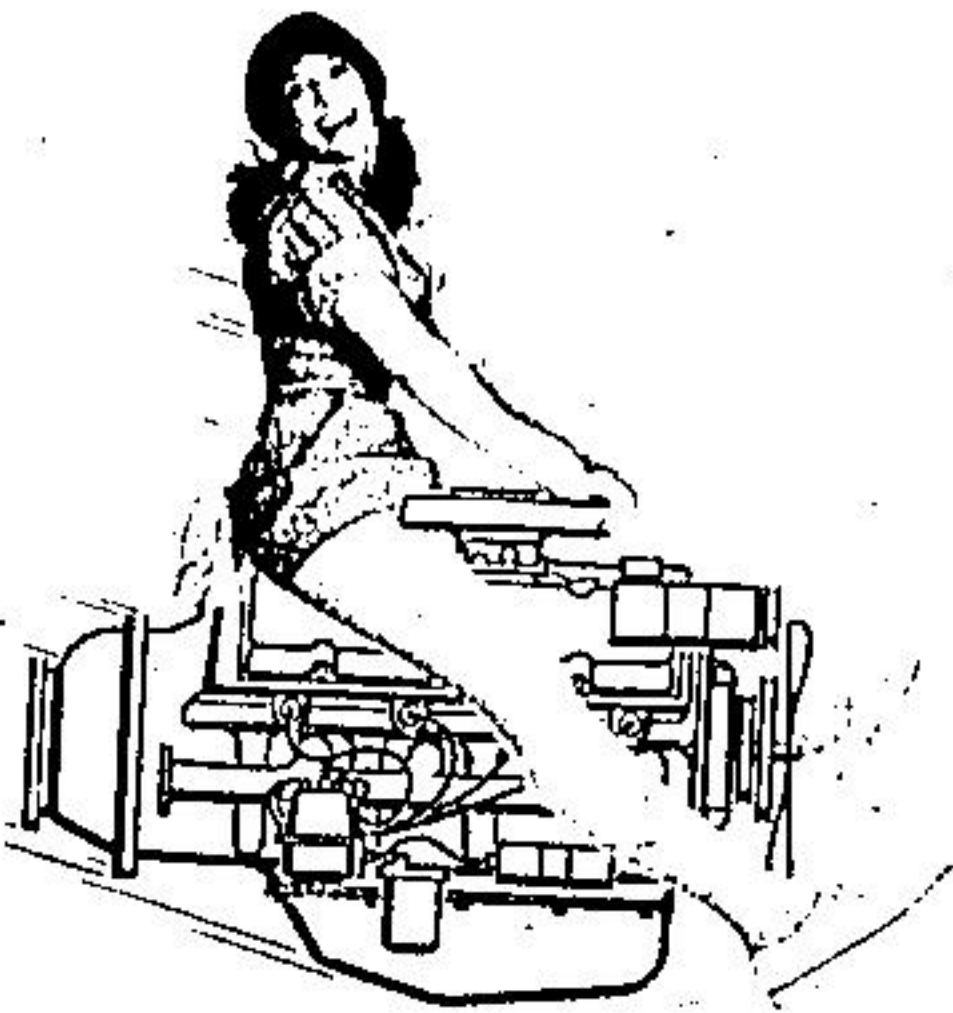
So make that "getaway from cares" car trip truly carefree. Don't add expensive bills or potential car troubles to your list of woes.

Visit a competent service outlet before you leave and be sure your vehicle is cared for and not another unwelcome care.

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## To avoid shocks, install absorbers

Standard operating procedure in many homes at this time of the year is installation of screens in windows and doors. It is the time to check hardware, tighten a few screws here and there and add a drop of oil where necessary.

You may find an adjustment needed in the door closer, too. A combination of wear on the plunger and the lighter screen insert makes the door close differently.

This plunger is not unlike the shock absorbers on your car, which may be showing signs of wear after the rigors of winter. Shock absorbers are, essentially, plungers.

### Resists the hop

As the plunger on your screen door is designed to resist the forces of the closer spring, allowing the door to close gently, so the shock absorber resists the tendency of the wheel on your car to hop as it bounces off an obstruction in the road.

Shocks also keep the car's body from bobbing up and down like a row-boat at sea. The shock absorber's philosophy is to maintain the status quo; the wheels shouldn't hop and the body shouldn't bob.

Eventually, with age, a worn shock absorber loses its control of the situation. Instead of easing your wheels over bumps in the road, it lets them bounce, sometimes setting up an oscillation like a ball on a long rubber band.

### Other problems

If this only caused an

uncomfortable ride, it would be bad enough. But there are other problems created by worn shocks. Most important is the safety factor.

When the wheel is bouncing a few inches in the air, it cannot contribute much to the steering and/or braking of your car. During this short but critical period you are virtually out of control.

Tires and suspension parts also take additional punishment when shocks lose their control. If a worn shock absorber permits these parts to suffer two or three rebounds after a bump, they will have taken double or triple punishment. You'll feel this in your repair bills sooner or later.

### Rule of thumb

As a rule of thumb, any time after your shocks are two years old, they may be due for replacement. New ones will give your car a whole new lease on life.

Think about it the next time you are driving over a bumpy road. Or better yet, before you do.

### SHINING EXAMPLES

A survey in Great Britain reveals that among those who polish their cars regularly, 58 per cent have never had an accident. Only 31 per cent of those who don't polish cars could claim such distinction.



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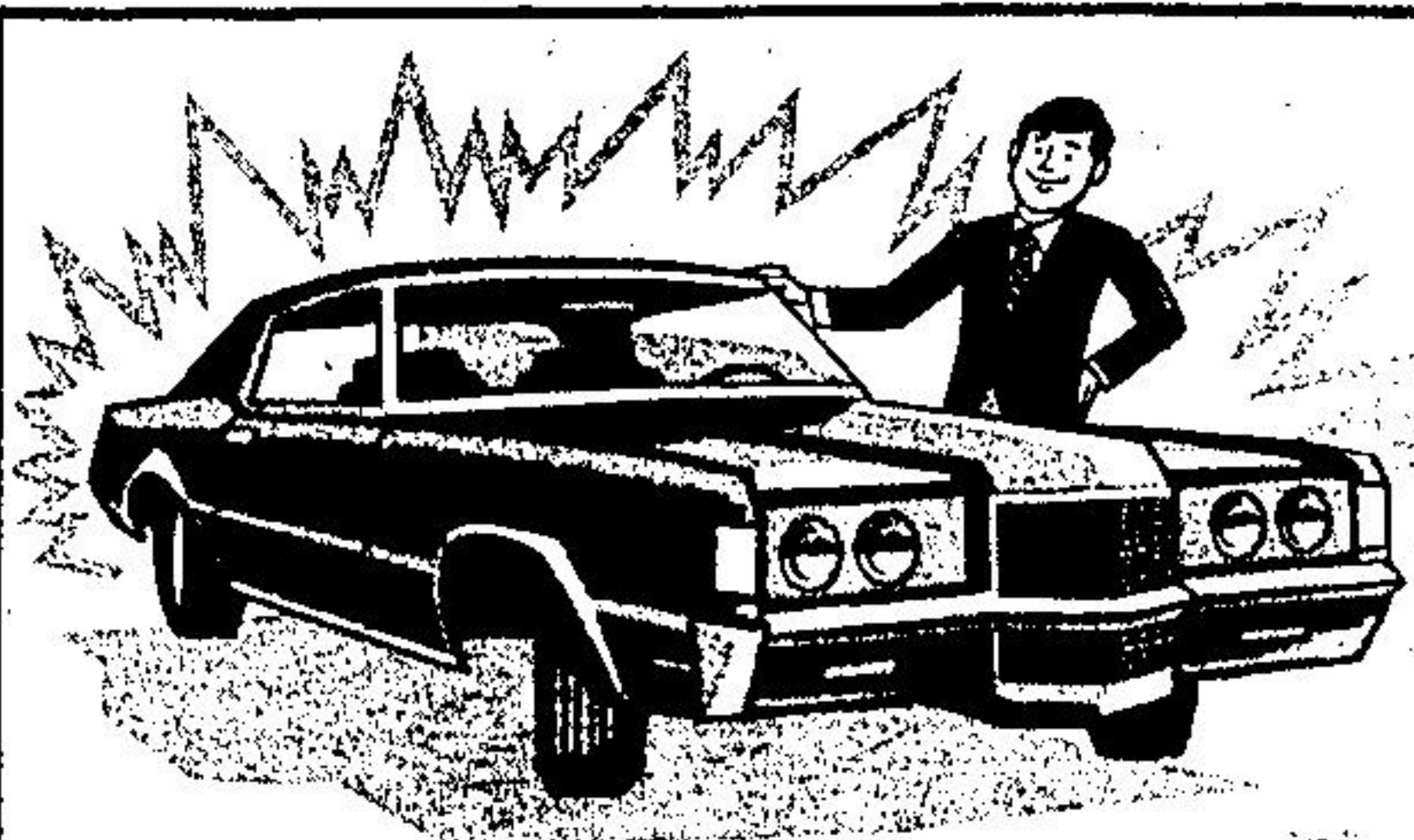
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