



David Noakes replaces a battery in a Toyota at Kiyō's garage in Georgetown. The garage specializes in Japanese cars but both domestic and Japanese cars need winterizing. Kiyō's garage owner Kiyō Tabuchi says. (Herald photo)

Foreign and domestic cars need winterizing

Winterizing Japanese cars holds the same ideas as winterizing domestic cars, said a local Georgetown businessman.

Kiyō Tabuchi, owner of Kiyō's garage, said, "There is no difference between imports and domestics, in terms of getting cars ready for winter."

Mr. Tabuchi said most of his regular customers winterize during their annual check over if they intend to winterize at all.

Apart from changing oil, lubricating, tuning-up, checking the anti-freeze level, and changing tires - most of which are done during regular maintenance checks - there is really not much you can do, Mr. Tabuchi said.

He added that the cars he works on generally have 5W30 oil recommended for them, which is low in viscosity and good for winter driving.

One precaution he does note deals with the new four-wheel drive cars. "All of these four wheel-drive cars coming out should change all their tires," Mr. Tabuchi said. Changing the

back two only is not as safe.

The radiator should be flushed every two years, he said, adding the anti-freeze used in cars today are also mostly anti-boiling.

One problem some cars may face is fan belts, or other rubber belts, cracking and eventually breaking because of the cold weather, Mr. Tabuchi said.

He noted that batteries are not a problem like they were in the past because recently "90 per cent of batteries are trouble free and if it needs replaced we can replace it."

Mr. Tabuchi has been working on cars for 26 years and has owned his own business for 11 years.

He said his garage can do almost any work needed for the Japanese car market that he specializes in.

Mr. Tabuchi said one area he can not do anything about is wheel alignments.

The proper equipment cost a lot of money and the cheaper equipment "can't do a good job, so I don't want to do it," Mr. Tabuchi said.

Organize your garage for quicker tool access

Nothing is more frustrating than trying to find the right tool when you're mentally ready to attack a project. If coffee cans, jars and old paint cans hold many of your supplies around the home or garage, maybe it's time to rethink this area. Being organized will save you not only frustration, but time as well.

Helpful tips

But it helps to have "helpers." If you don't have extra manpower as your help, here are some ways to keep the garage in order and to make life easier in general.

- Install shelving on garage walls to give you a head start on having a place for necessary supplies.

- Keep heavy-duty rust-proof containers in one location to hold leaf clippings, grass seed, recyclable materials and other goods. A large wheeled refuse container will make it easy to move things to the curb on pick-up day.

- Hang everything you can to keep the floor free for other things such as the lawn mower or bicycles. Install peg-board or wall strip that holds a variety of organizers to corral everything from the garden hose to shovels and saws.

No more clutter

- Rubbermaid's Rough Tote® Containers, of heavy-duty plastic with tight snap-on lids, can hold paint cans, sawdust and other supplies to keep the garage looking neat and to avoid spills.

Small versions of this container are perfect for keeping in a car trunk to hold a can of oil, funnel, can opener, flare, flashlight, tire gauge and other

on-the-road necessities. The smallest version makes a great first aid kit when filled with bandages, scissors, etc.

- Use see-through boxes to "catalog" supplies into neat arrangements.

One box could hold car wax, cleaners and rags, another could hold maps and a road atlas. A quick look through your own supplies will give you plenty of ideas for additional uses.



Here's some fuse tips

Car Care Council offers this advice on fuses:

1. Know the location of the fuse panel in your car. Your owner's manual should show you.

2. Keep replacement fuses in your glove compartment. Check to be sure what type of fuses are used in your particular vehicle. Some use the glass tube type, others use a ceramic fuse (most cars today use the plug-in type).

3. Learn how to replace them. This information may not be included in the owner's manual. If you're unfamiliar with the procedure, have your dealer or mechanic show you.

Precautionary notes from the Council:

If a fuse blows more than once, find out why. Do not replace a blown fuse with one of heavier rating.

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