

Remember

- Inspect hoses.
- Squeeze radiator hoses.
- Examine belts.
- Check proper belt tension.

Warning Signs

You may be experiencing hose or belt problems if you notice any of the following:

- Small hose leaks.
- A collapsed radiator hose.
- Hoses that crunch or are soft, sticky, or oil-soaked.
- Belts that are cracking, fraying, or missing pieces or have a shiny, glazed appearance.
- Swollen areas on hoses.
- Coolant tracks.
- A squealing noise as the engine is accelerated.
- A slow, rhythmic slapping sound at idle.
- A sweet burning smell from a coolant leak.

Maintenance Schedule

Frequency	Maintenance Item
Monthly	Check belts and hoses

This maintenance interval is based on normal driving conditions.



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MAKE SENSE of CAR CARE

ADVICE FROM CAA

BELTS & HOSES



For more information about your belts and hoses, contact your local CAA Approved Auto Repair Service facility. To locate the AARS facility nearest you, call your local CAA office.

Approved Auto Repair Services are not available at all locations. Check with your local club for availability.



BELTS AND HOSES: ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

THE DO-IT-YOURSELF MECHANIC OFTEN OVERLOOKS HOSES AND BELTS. Yet, just a little attention to these vital components can ensure your car is operating at its best.

People often wait until they get some indication that their vehicles need service, such as noise or a squeal, before taking them to a repair facility. Although you should have a professional technician look at your belts and hoses as part of your regular maintenance schedule, basic inspection can be done in your own driveway.

By conducting monthly inspections of your belts and hoses, you can help prevent premature engine wear and extend the life of your vehicle.

IGNORING THESE VITAL VEHICLE COMPONENTS CAN ADD UP TO A MAJOR REPAIR EXPENSE.

Belts

WHEN YOU'RE READY TO CHECK YOUR VEHICLE'S BELTS AND HOSES, BE SURE TO DO SO BEFORE YOU START YOUR CAR, WHILE THE ENGINE IS STILL COLD.

First, you need to closely inspect the belts. Drive belts are necessary to operate the accessory systems attached to the engine, such as the alternator, power steering pump, air conditioner compressor, and the water pump. To fully assess the condition of the belts, you should do a visual inspection and test the belt tension.



To fully assess the condition of the belts, you should do a visual inspection and test the belt tension.

Begin with a careful inspection of the belts along their edges and undersides for any signs of cracking, fraying, or missing pieces. Also, look to see if they have a shiny, glazed appearance. These danger signs indicate a belt needs replacement.

In addition, the belt tension should be checked and adjusted on a regular basis. If the belt tension is too tight, it can cause bearings in the accessory components — and even in the engine itself — to wear prematurely. If it is too loose, the belt will slip and squeal, causing the accessory components to work less efficiently. Inadequate tension will also cause the belt to wear excessively. The only way to check tension accurately is with a belt tension gauge, but you can estimate correct tension by depressing the belt along its longest straight section. If the tension is correct, the belt should deflect about 1.25 to 2.5 centimetres.

Hoses

WHILE YOUR ENGINE IS STILL COLD, YOU NEED TO CHECK FOR SMALL HOSE LEAKS. If you notice a small leak, wrap duct tape around the hose until you are able to get it fixed. Next, make sure that the upper radiator hose is not collapsed. If it is, the radiator pressure cap is defective and must be replaced.

Now, firmly squeeze the radiator and heater hoses. A hose that feels very hard or makes a “crunch” as it is squeezed is deteriorating and should be replaced. You should also replace hoses that are extremely soft, sticky, or oil-soaked, as they are likely to fail.

Next, you want to finish inspecting your car's hoses with a warm engine. After driving the car far enough for the engine to be fully warmed up, turn off the engine and immediately open the

THE FINAL AUTHORITY ON YOUR SPECIFIC VEHICLE IS YOUR OWNER'S MANUAL. REVIEW IT REGULARLY TO DETERMINE THE CORRECT MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES FOR YOUR CAR OR TRUCK.

hood. Now, look carefully at all the hoses to spot any swollen areas. Such areas indicate weak spots.

You also want to look for small damp spots or trails of coolant at the hose-end connections. Dry coolant tracks, often greenish or pink in colour, leading downward from the hose ends, along the thermostat housing, firewall,

or radiator, may indicate a small “cold leak.” A cold leak seals itself when hoses and connections expand as they warm up.

Belts and hoses are relatively inexpensive parts to maintain or replace. But ignoring these vital vehicle components can add up to a major repair expense. Spending just a few minutes under your hood can help keep your vehicle running smoothly.