

# **Special Report: Simple ways to cut your transportation expenses**

**by Azizi Ali**

Perhaps the single highest expenditure of every family is the transportation bill. The amount of money spent on fuel, parking, toll and not to mention paying the car loan often run into some big obscene figure. And it's never a pretty sight.

Worse, we often argue that the cost is justified. "Hey, we need wheels to get around, you know. And since we already paid fifty thousand for the car, we can't just let it rust in the garage, can we?"

Now while some of the points are valid, it may do us some good to review some of the points about traveling. If we can cut down just ten percent of our transportation bill, that's an extra ten percent available for more productive use.

## **Buy cars with low engine cc**

First thing we can do is to choose a car with a lower cc. The obvious example is the cute little Perodua Kancil. But if you find it a teeny weenie bit too small, then any engine below 2 liters should be fine.

On the other spectrum, any cc above 2.5 liters will just suck in fuel like water. This is not counting the higher road tax yet. So if you do buy those big cc cars, don't complain about high fuel costs. You know what you are getting into. Style, if you have not realized it yet, often cost a lot of money. A lot.

## **Service the car regularly**

Make it a point to send the car for service regularly. While you may think it is expensive, it is actually cheaper to do so in the long run. Firstly, your car will burn less fuel. A badly tuned engine will burn more fuel than one that is well maintained. This will cost you money. Next, you reduce the chances of the car breaking down while driving. I don't know about you but the thought of the car breaking down in the middle of the night in a dark deserted road just about kills me. Thirdly, you also reduce the chances of being involved in an accident due to poor maintenance.

And if you still think servicing the car is still expensive, try having an accident.

### **Drive slower**

You will also reduce the fuel burn by driving slower. If you are used to driving at 110 km/hr, you will save some 20% of fuel just by slowing down to 80 km/hr. That means the fuel will last longer and you will refill less often. End result - you save money.

### **Do not carry unnecessary cargo**

Obviously, the heavier the car, the more fuel will be needed to move the car. Carrying unnecessary cargo therefore will just cost you money. So, remove all items that do not belong in the car and keep them where it does not cost you money. The store room should be about right.

### **Ensure correct wheel pressure**

Under inflated tyres can increase the fuel consumption by 10 percent or more. They also wear out more quickly and are more dangerous in emergency situations. So always ensure that your tyres are having the correct pressure by checking them weekly.

### **Always check the map before driving to a new destination**

Always, always check the map before driving to any new destination or any place that you are unsure of. What you want to do is to get to your destination the most straight forward way, if not the quickest. This way, you avoid getting lost and driving around in circles. Because if you do get lost, driving around town in circles will just cost you money. Not to mention of the irritation and rising temperatures.

### **Car pool**

Car pooling will not reduce your fuel bill directly. But it will more than subsidize the cost. If you take in more than one passenger, you may even make money in the process! This is not counting the fun of having company to entertain you yet.

### **Use the public transport**

And finally, to save even more, you can always take the public transport. Especially when going to a spot well known for traffic jams - Jalan Sultan Ismail for example - take the LRT instead. You'll arrive there faster, fresher and less hassled. Way to go, kiddo.

**And if you want more...**

If you like to find out more ways to reduce your expenses, check out the book "1001 Ways to Cut Your Expenses" by Jonathan D. Pond. Needless to say, it is full of ideas in which you can save money. Even some far-out ideas that no one will think of in a thousand years. Examples - ask for a modest tombstone or even more drastic, to be cremated instead of being buried! Nothing will top that!

**ends**