# 7 car fire safety tips.



Did you know that more than 100,000 car fires are reported each year? Because the consequences can be both destructive and deadly, we're outlining what can cause a car fire, how you can prevent it, and what you should do in the event of one. Read on for all of our car fire safety tips.

**Preventing a car fire.**

Car fires can be caused by a range of factors, from simple malfunctions to scary collisions. However, most are caused by mechanical or electrical issues. To help reduce your risk, we recommend you:

- **Keep your vehicle well-maintained.** Regular maintenance checks, including fluid changes, oil checks, and tune-ups, can help you identify and fix any issues that could lead to a fire. Be sure to check your brakes, exhaust, and electrical system for loose or worn parts … and don't neglect your tires. Overinflated or underinflated tires can create friction, which can cause a fire.
- **Practice safe driving habits.** Negligent driving, such as speeding or aggressive braking, can cause a car to overheat and potentially lead to a fire.
- **Be careful when refueling.** Never smoke, light a match, or use your phone while pumping gas. And be careful not to overfill the fuel tank. If you're traveling with gas, use only approved containers with a tight seal, place them on a flat surface to ensure they stay upright, and open the windows to keep fumes from building up. Do not store gas containers in your car for a long time or in the passenger area. Bonus read: 7 things you should never leave in your car.
- **Keep a fire extinguisher in your car.** Make sure to keep a fire extinguisher made for Class B and Class C fires safely secured in your vehicle. And make sure you know how to use it. Bonus read: 14 things you should keep in your car.

**Responding to a car fire.**

The first and most important car fire safety tip is to be aware of the warning signs that your car is about to catch fire. These include unusual noises, smoke, or steam coming from the engine, or a burning smell. If you notice anything out of the ordinary:

- **Pull over and turn off your car.** If your car catches fire, pull over as soon as you can. Turn off the engine but leave the keys in the ignition so emergency services can move your vehicle if needed.
- **Exit the vehicle safely.** Get out of the car and leave the scene, ASAP. If you have passengers in the car, make sure to help them out of the vehicle, too. And if you're trapped in the car, wrap yourself in a jacket or coat and, if possible, cover your mouth and nose with a cloth.
- **Call for help.** Once you're in a safe location, (at least 100 feet from the fire), call 911 immediately. Then, stay away from the vehicle until emergency services arrive and let them take care of the situation. Do not go back to your car for anything, and do not open the hood of the car, as this can cause the fire to spread.

These car fire safety tips can help you stay prepared in the event of an emergency. When the unthinkable happens, make sure your auto is protected with comprehensive coverage. Find a local, independent agent near you.