



Idling Quiz

Idling is good for your vehicle because it warms up the engine and keeps it warm. True or false?

TRUE: Wrong! Idling can be hard on your engine because fuel doesn't undergo complete combustion, and some fuel residues condense on cylinder walls.

FALSE: Good for you! Idling can actually be hard on an engine because fuel doesn't undergo complete combustion, and some fuel residues condense on cylinder walls.

Idling wastes fuel and money and is hard on the environment. True or false?

TRUE: Right. Idling wastes an enormous amount of money because it burns fuel but doesn't get you anywhere. It's also hard on the environment because it produces needless emissions from the exhaust.

FALSE: Sorry. In fact, idling is an enormous waste of money because it burns fuel but doesn't get you anywhere. It's also hard on the environment because it produces needless exhaust emissions.

With the advanced emissions technology used in today's vehicles, carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from an idling vehicle are greatly reduced. True or false?

TRUE: Wrong. While it's true that automakers have succeeded in reducing emissions of hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and nitrous oxides, no technology exists for cleaning up emissions of CO₂.

FALSE: Good answer! While it's true that automakers have succeeded in reducing emissions of hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and nitrous oxides, no technology exists for cleaning up emissions of CO₂.

Idling contributes to the climate change problem. True or false?

TRUE: Right. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) – the principal greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change – is a natural by-product of burning gasoline. Each litre of gasoline that is used produces about 2.4 kg of CO₂. Therefore, every time you start the engine, you're contributing to the problem.

FALSE: Wrong. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) – the principal greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change – is a natural by-product of burning gasoline. Each litre of gasoline that is used produces about 2.4 kg of CO₂. Therefore, every time you start the engine, you're contributing to the problem.



Idling is needed on cold winter days to ensure that all of the vehicle's parts are warm. True or false?

TRUE: Sorry, the answer is "false." Many parts of the vehicle – including the wheel bearings, tires and suspension system – will warm up only when the vehicle is moving. You need to idle no more than 30 seconds to get the oil circulating through the engine.

FALSE: Another good answer. Many components of the vehicle – including the wheel bearings, tires and suspension system – will warm up only when the vehicle is moving. You need to idle no more than 30 seconds to get the oil circulating through the engine.

In winter conditions, emissions from an idling vehicle can be more than double the level of emissions immediately after a "cold start." True or false?

TRUE: Right. First, the engine has to work harder to circulate cold oil. As well, fuel combustion is much less efficient in a cold engine and the air-fuel mixture is richer – which means a sharp increase in pollutants. To make matters worse, until the converter reaches its peak operating temperature (between 400°C and 800°C), all of the engine's emissions pass through the exhaust untreated.

FALSE: Sorry, the answer is "true." Here's why. First, the engine has to work harder to circulate cold oil. As well, fuel combustion is less efficient in a cold engine and the air-fuel mixture is richer – which means a sharp increase in pollutants. To make matters worse, until the converter reaches its peak operating temperature (between 400°C and 800°C), all of the engine's emissions pass through the exhaust untreated.

Using a block heater helps an engine warm up quickly, which means less fuel consumption and fewer greenhouse gas emissions. True or false?

TRUE: Yes, a block heater can be a fuel-saving device because they heat the engine block and lubricants. This means that the engine will start more easily and reach its peak operating temperature faster. A block heater needs to be plugged in for only a couple of hours (instead of overnight) to do its job.

FALSE: The answer you're looking for is "true." Block heaters can be a fuel-saving device because they heat the engine block and lubricants. This means that the engine will start more easily and reach its peak operating temperature faster. A block heater needs to be plugged in for only a couple of hours (instead of overnight) to do its job.

Once a vehicle is running, the best way to warm it up is to drive it. True or false?

TRUE: Very good – driving your vehicle ensures that all parts get warmed up, and it doesn't waste fuel. Until the engine temperature begins to rise, it's a good idea to avoid high speeds and rapid acceleration.

FALSE: Sorry. Driving the vehicle is the right answer – that way, all parts get warmed up, and fuel isn't wasted while you're going nowhere. Until the engine temperature begins to rise, it's a good idea to avoid high speeds and rapid acceleration.



It's a good practice to shut off the engine when your vehicle is going to be stopped for more than:

- a. 10 seconds**
- b. 10 minutes**
- c. 30 minutes**

a): Right. More than 10 seconds of idling can use more fuel than turning off the engine and restarting it.

b) or c): Wrong, the answer is "a." If you're going to be stopped for more than 10 seconds, you'll save fuel and money by turning off the vehicle and then restarting it when you're ready to drive away.

I should turn my vehicle off when I'm caught either in stop-and-go traffic or at a long stoplight. True or false?

TRUE: Sorry. While the 10-second rule is a good one, you can't avoid some idling. Turning off your vehicle in these situations might disrupt traffic. It could also cause you to speed away after you restart the engine, which would offset any fuel savings.

FALSE: The 10-second rule is a good one, but remember, you can't avoid some idling. Turning off your vehicle in these situations might disrupt traffic. It could also cause you to speed away after you restart the engine, which would offset any fuel savings.

Idling is a problem only in winter. True or false?

TRUE: Wrong – idling is a problem year-round. A recent study found that on any given day in August, Canadians idle their vehicles for a combined total of more than 46 million minutes per day – equal to one vehicle idling for 89 years. The problem is worse in winter, but there's never a good time to waste fuel and generate greenhouse gas emissions by idling your vehicle.

FALSE: Right, idling is a problem year-round. A recent study found that on any given day in August, Canadians idle their vehicles for a combined total of more than 46 million minutes per day – equal to one vehicle idling for 89 years. The problem is worse in winter, but there's never a good time to waste fuel and generate greenhouse gas emissions by idling your vehicle.

Which of the following are common reasons for idling:

- a.** warming up a vehicle
- b.** sitting in the drive-through lane of a fast-food restaurant
- c.** stopping to talk to a friend
- d.** waiting for someone
- e.** all of the above

a), b), c) or d): Yes, this is a common "excuse" for idling, according to a recent study of Canadian driving habits and behaviour. But so are all the others! The right answer is "e) all of the above."



e): Good answer. These are all "excuses" for idling according to a recent study of Canadian driving habits and behaviour. And you can avoid all of them!

Making sure it's safe to drive the vehicle away is more important than reducing idling time. True or false?

TRUE: Good answer! Safety should always be your first consideration. Make sure that the vehicle's windows are clear of ice and snow and are defrosted before you pull away. To prevent your car windows from fogging up, clear snow from the air intake on top of the hood and open a window as soon as you enter the vehicle.

FALSE: Sorry, the answer here is "true." Safety should always be your first consideration. Make sure that the vehicle's windows are clear of ice and snow and are defrosted before you pull away. To prevent your car windows from fogging up, clear snow from the air intake on top of the hood and open a window as soon as you enter the vehicle.

Restarting my car many times, rather than letting it idle, is hard on the starter and other parts. True or false?

TRUE: Sorry, this is a common misconception. Studies show that restarting the engine many times has little impact on components such as the battery and the starter motor.

FALSE: Right. Studies show that restarting the engine many times has little impact on components such as the battery and the starter motor.

A poorly tuned engine uses up to 15 percent more energy while idling than a well-tuned vehicle. True or false?

TRUE: Right again! Whether you're driving a vehicle down the road or letting it idle in your driveway, a poorly tuned engine will consume more fuel – and generate more greenhouse gas emissions – than one that you properly maintain

FALSE: Sorry, this statement is true. Whether you're driving a vehicle down the road or letting it idle in your driveway, a poorly tuned engine will consume more fuel – and generate more greenhouse gas emissions – than one that you properly maintain.