

SPRING VERMONT

HOME

garden & auto 2024

- ◆ EXTERIOR
- ◆ ENERGY SAVINGS
- ◆ HVAC
- ◆ POLLINATORS
- ◆ PLANTS
- ◆ AUTO MAINTENANCE,
WARRANTIES, CARE
& CLEANING



www.timesargus.com/springvermont

A SPECIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BARRE-MONTPELIER TIMES ARGUS

FREE

POWER WASHING 101

Build-up throughout the winter can leave our windows, doors and home exteriors covered in unsightly muck.



Power washing can leave it all looking as good as new. But don't stop there: This powerful tool is also great at bringing a host of other things to life in your home and garden, including driveways, grills, outdoor furniture, decks, fences and walkways. Just keep important safety guidelines in mind:

HOW THEY WORK

Power washers may be powered by electricity or gas. Gas-powered units are usually more powerful than the electric versions. They typically deliver up to 3,000 pounds of pressure per square inch, which may be too much for certain materials. That's why it's important to match the power of your equipment with the job: Vinyl siding can withstand that level of pressure, but aluminum,

soft-grain woods and stucco are only rated to 1,500 PSI.

PREPARING TO WORK

Cover items like air conditioner compressors and light fixtures around the home's exterior. Protect nearby plants, too. Note the location of outlets and windows, covering sockets with tape and then avoiding those areas. Put on safety gear before engaging the power washer, including work gloves and safety goggles. Pre-wash the exterior with a brush or spray in order to remove loose debris, dirt and mildew. Keep the wand at least six feet away from electric wiring, and stay away from cracks and holes in the exterior.

GETTING UNDERWAY

Mix water and detergent, following manufacturer directions, then attach the power

washer to a garden hose. Next, attach the preferred wand or extension to the sprayer. Test the power washer from a distance of three feet back, making slight adjustments until you can clean without creating surface damage. Once you've completed the job, turn off the washer and disconnect it from your garden hose. Rinse off any excess soap before storing.

RENTING OR BUYING?

Power washing equipment can be rented through many home improvement and hardware stores. That's a smart choice when doing annual cleaning of a home exterior, deck or driveway, since you're saving the cost of buying an expensive piece of equipment that you won't otherwise use. It may make sense to purchase if you have more regular jobs.



38%
FIBERGLASS
WINDOWS LAST
38% LONGER
THAN VINYL

ELEVATE
MARVIN ELEVATE® COLLECTION

Featured: Elevate Picture
and Awning Window

Outperform & Outlast with Ultrex® Fiberglass.

MARVIN®  **rk MILES**
SINCE 1940
BUILDING MATERIALS SUPPLIER 

For rk MILES locations and product info visit rk miles.com
*Visit our showroom for details.



LLOYD
PLUMBING • HEATING • AIR • ELECTRICAL

**Your Residential
Service Experts**

Fully Licensed & Insured

(802) 588-8879

CallLloyd.com 

SPRING VERMONT HOME garden & auto 2024

Power Washing 101	2
Spring Energy Savings	4
Is Your HVAC Ready?	6
Saving Earth's Pollinators	8
Planting for Your Zone	10
Get Your Car Smelling Fresh	11
Extended Warranty Basics	13
Car Air Filters	14
Maintenance Schedules	15

Publisher/Executive Editor Steven Pappas

General Sales Manager Tim Duguay

Customer Service Manager Melody Hudson

Creative Services Manager Keri Franzoni

Advertising Peter Morande, Kristine Wolfrom

Design Tiahna Gillam, Fran Grabowski

THE BARRE MONTPELIER
TIMES ARGUS
Established 1897

47 N. Main Street, Suite 200, Barre
800-498-4296 | www.timesargus.com

©2024 BRUNSWICK PUBLISHING, LLC ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Spring Home, Garden & Auto 2024. This publication is a product of The Times Argus advertising department. Reproduction in whole or in part without prior written permission is strictly prohibited. Opinions expressed in the publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the management of the publication.

SPRING ENERGY

SAVINGS



The first day of spring, for instance, can serve as an annual reminder to check the evaporator coil on your air-conditioning unit, since its cleanliness ensures optimum performance and the lowest utility costs per month. Routine maintenance like replacing air filters can lower your average energy consumption by as much as 15%. Here's a checklist of other things that can help you go green and save some green, courtesy of the U.S. Department of Energy:

WINDOWS

Open your windows as the mild temperatures of spring arrive, allowing for a cross breeze which will naturally cool rooms without using an air conditioner.

Consider updating your home's window treatments. Energy-efficient covers like shades, blinds or film can drastically impact heat gain as temperatures rise in the afternoon. You'll give the home a fresh new look while reducing energy costs.

Use these new window treatments to bring in more sunlight during daylight hours, then turn off artificial lights. Skylights can also significantly brighten a home — at no charge.

FANS AND VENTS

Experts say you can comfortably raise thermostats by as

much as four degrees simply by installing and cooling your home with ceiling fans. You'll be lowering costs without sacrificing anything in terms of comfort. Engage the venting systems while cooking and after bathing to remove warm, often humid air that can lead to longer operational cycles for your cooling unit.

LEAKS

Many homes lose pricey air conditioning through leaks around windows and doors. Buy weatherstripping or apply low-cost caulk to seal any openings. These cracks make a surprising contribution to high utility costs. For instance, air loss through your air-conditioning unit's duct system may account for nearly 30% of its energy consumption.

Check for leaks, then seal and insulate them to lower your electricity bills this spring.

OTHER TIPS

Consider installing a programmable thermostat so that you can raise the settings when you're not home or during off-peak hours, an option that may help reduce energy costs by as much as 10%. Consider using an outdoor grill on nice spring days, rather than heating up your home while using an indoor oven.



LIVE. SLEEP. BE WELL.

Designed and built with restful sleep in mind; making it the ideal choice for a bed-alternative. A healthy life starts with a healthy night's sleep.

zecliner
FLEXSTEEL™



Where customers become friends SINCE 1999
wendellsfurniture.com

697 Hercules Drive
Colchester, VT 05446

Next to Costco!
(802) 861-7700



IS YOUR *HVAC* READY?

**YOUR AIR
CONDITIONING
UNIT HAS BEEN
SITTING UNUSED
FOR MONTHS,
WHILE WINTER
HELD SWAY.**

Spring's return is the perfect time to pop the hood and make sure your HVAC is ready to roll for summer. Checks will need to be made inside and out. You don't want to find out that it's not working when you need air conditioning the most.

SPRING CHECKLIST

Check outdoor components, cleaning out any branches and leaves that have accumulated over the winter period. Sometimes small creatures may have even made a home inside the unit, and they'll need to be removed. Be careful when

clearing the area so that critical metal pieces aren't bent or broken. Corrosion is also a concern, particularly with older units or with homes in coastal or very humid areas. Inside, make sure all of your registers are opened and unobstructed. Examine the inside unit and duct work, keeping a sharp eye out for cracks or leaks. If you find anything concerning, call an HVAC technician to have a look before re-engaging the system.

TURNING IT ON

After your unit has passed all its checks, turn down the thermostat and make

sure air is arriving through every air duct and at the set temperature. If your HVAC struggles to reach the desired setting, it's time to call an expert. The same is true for anyone who doesn't feel confident in diagnosing some or all of these pre-summer diagnostic issues. Some companies offer contract service plans, making the whole process less stressful. They can also be more cost-effective, since potential problems will be identified before they become a bigger concern.

DUCT SYSTEM

Consider having your air ducts cleaned by a professional. Ducts that are free of dust and debris will move cool air around the house more freely, without spreading allergy-causing particulates like dust, mold, dander or fungi. Changing your air filters every month will also help achieve cleaner air while saving money. Dirty filters cause the system to become overworked, shortening your system's lifespan. It also increases your immediate costs in the form of higher utility bills. Check your owner's manual or the instructions on the filter to find out more.

Support local news

**GET YOUR PRINT OR DIGITAL
SUBSCRIPTION TODAY**

CALL 802-479-0191

VISIT www.timesargus.com/subscribe

EMAIL customerservices@timesargus.com



47 N. Main Street, Suite 200, Barre | www.timesargus.com



(802) 454-7301

www.countryfloorsvt.com



Here at Country Floors we offer every flooring from start to finish.

We have a warehouse that is fully stocked with tools and materials. We offer fully backed professional installation on all of our products we sell. Our installers are certified and professional. Looking to do it yourself but don't have the tools we also offer tool rentals and have all the materials you may need.



471 HOLLISTER HILL RD, PLAINFIELD, VT • MON-FRI 8-5, SAT 9-1



Pollinators
play a crucial
role in bolstering
nature and food
production.

Saving Earth's **POLLINATORS**

We tend to think of bees as the only pollinators, and they are perhaps the most important single element in this important process. But butterflies, bats, birds, wasps and beetles also play a role. Unfortunately, some are under generational stress while others are actually in decline. Together, we can make a difference in saving them.

COLLAPSING COLONIES

The USDA reports that more than 100 crops rely on pollinators, with an annual economic impact in the tens of billions. Issues even with one key pollinator can have catastrophic results. For instance, the Western honey bee has been struck by colony collapse disorder. Worker bees are disappearing, leaving only the queen and a few others. The cause is likely environmental stressors, according to the USDA, including pollutants, pests, disease and

nutritional deficits. Growers, conservationists and government officials leaped into action, and the bee population began to rebound. Still, there are many others who remain at risk.

'BEE BETTER'

One of the easiest ways to support pollinators is at your local grocer, farmer's market or shopping center. Look for products that have been certified through the Bee Better program funded through the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. Growers and manufacturers earn this certification by using pollinator-friendly practices. Buying things with the Bee Better logo helps support those who in turn support pollinators.

IN THE GARDEN

Try creating landscapes and gardens that feature native species, timing them to flower during different seasons in

order to provide a steady source of food for pollinators. Clump flowers with different shapes and colors to attract them. Those who live in areas where monarch butterflies migrate can plant milkweed, which provides food for caterpillars.

NESTING SITES

Gardeners can also provide nesting sites to encourage these populations to grow. Many prefer specific plants for their young: For hummingbirds, it's shrubs and trees. Monarchs, on the other hand, like milkweed. Bees prefer to build nests in wood, in the ground or in dry plant stems. If you decide to encourage bees by building a ground-nesting site, make sure it's facing south so the bees get the most sun and that it is well-drained. Hollow stumps make a great habitat; there are also artificial nesting sites available at retail outlets that add a nice touch to any garden.

Washington County and Surrounding Areas

PROS *to* KNOW

For info and rates **CALL 802-479-0191**

Reach people in our community.

Enjoy a discounted rate when advertising in the Pros to Know directory. Also take advantage of the advertising frequency to drive ad recall or influence a purchase decision. You can reach our audience with relevant messaging and an effective creative to help you achieve your objective.

Contact Peter Morande today to reserve your ad space!

802.477.4003 direct or
peter.morande@timesargus.com



Summersweet GARDENS

AT PERENNIAL PLEASURES

Nursery, Gift Shop & Tea Room

Opens May 4



Tea Room opens for the season June 1

PERENNIALS, HERBS AND SHRUBS,
DISPLAY GARDENS AND GREENHOUSE

Gift Shop specializing in summer hats for men & women

63 Brick House Rd, East Hardwick, VT

Hours Wed - Sun 10-5, Closed Mon and Tue

WWW.SUMMERSWEETGARDENS.COM



"IT'S WHAT WE DO"

J.A. GOULD

PLUMBING & HEATING, INC.

COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL

802-476-6974



61 B Boynton Street
Barre, VT 05641



Office: 802-476-6974
Jeff.gould12345@gmail.com

PLANTING FOR YOUR ZONE



Having trouble getting certain things to grow? You might be planting the wrong things for your home's growing zone, according to the USDA.

These zones detail the minimum temperatures for growing plants by area. Find the zone for your area, then stick to plants that are best suited for those temps. Your lawn or garden will rebound in no time.

ABOUT THE ZONES

This document is officially known as the USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map, and it's meant to set the standard for gardeners to determine which plants thrive by location. There are 11 growing zones in the U.S., with eight located in the lower 48 states. Temperature minimums begin all the way down to -60 to -55 degrees, in Zone 1a. The far warmer Zone 13b, on the other hand, is at the other end of the spectrum with temps in the 65-to-70-degree range. These numbers represent the average coldest temperatures each year, and not the all-time lowest. Be prepared for early spring freezes, where appropriate.

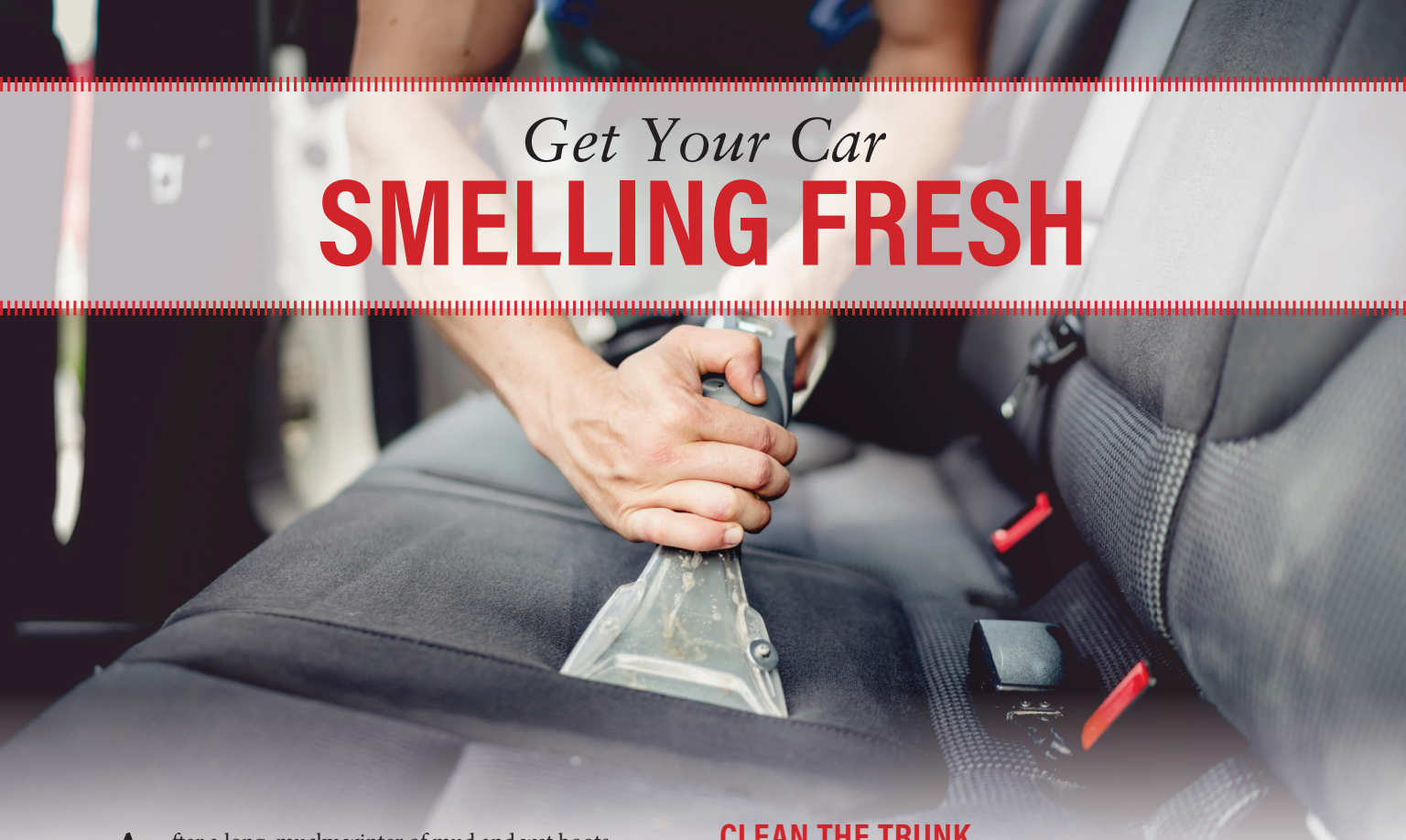
FIND YOUR ZONE

Your growing zone can be found by using the USDA's helpful interactive map at planthardiness.ars.usda.gov. Simply

enter your ZIP code to learn more. Static images are also available for those without faster broadband internet access. You can also get more details about zones at your nearest agricultural extension offices and garden centers. Just remember that the USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map can't account for hyper-local conditions, including moisture, soil, humidity, heat or other weather conditions that might impact how plants grow at any specific point in time.

NEW UPDATES

The USDA map is constantly updated with temperature data, with information going back to 1976. The high-resolution interactive map allows page views down to the street level in your community. Zones 12 and 13 have been added more recently to account for new annual extreme minimums. Some zones, like those in Puerto Rico and Hawaii, obviously never freeze but this information nevertheless helps gardeners to plant smarter in tropical and subtropical conditions. Note that zones might change around a larger city since they tend to capture more heat than breezy areas with hills and valleys.



Get Your Car SMELLING FRESH

After a long, mucky winter of mud and wet boots, your car may have acquired a new fragrance. Get it springtime fresh again with these few steps.

CLEAN YOUR AIR VENTS

Use a small brush or a vacuum cleaner and crevice tool to get all the dirt and debris out of your air vents.

USE BAKING SODA

Baking soda is a natural odor absorber. Sprinkle it on your upholstery and carpets, let it sit for a few hours, then vacuum it up. For tough odors, place a bowl or open box of baking soda in the car overnight.

USE AN AIR FRESHENER

Choose a scent that you enjoy and a method of deployment: spray, plug-in, vent clip, visor clip, sachet. Don't use too much and avoid fresheners with harsh chemicals.

AIR IT OUT

As soon as weather permits, open up the windows and go for a drive to circulate fresh air and get rid of musty odors.

CLEAN IT UP

Clean up any spills, especially food and drink, which tend to turn into mold. Clean the floor mats by shaking them to remove loose dirt then vacuum them and use a carpet cleaner to remove stains. Wipe down the interior with a vinegar and water spray to get rid of stubborn odors. Your car may smell like vinegar for a while, but once it dissipates, so will any other unpleasant smells.

CLEAN THE TRUNK

Don't forget to clean your car's cargo spaces, too. Remove everything, vacuum it out, and toss in a bag of charcoal to absorb odors.

CHANGE THE CABIN AIR FILTER

Many new cars have a cabin air filter. Check your owner's manual to find the instructions for replacing it and how often it should be replaced. If bad smells are plaguing your ride, you may want to change it no matter your mileage. The good news is that it's generally an easy fix that you can do yourself.

CLEAN AND CONDITION THE LEATHER

If you've got leather upholstery, you can start by cleaning and conditioning your leather. Not only will it get rid of any smelly grime, these products often come with a leathery smell that will chase off any other offensive odors.



EASTMAN'S AUTO

WE FINANCE THROUGH THE CREDIT UNIONS

**FIND YOUR NEXT CAR
AT EASTMAN'S AUTO IN BARRE, VT**

431 East Montpelier Road | Barre, VT 05641



**Voted "Best of the Best"
Used Car Auto Dealership**

802-476-4456

A photograph of a white car being towed by a tow truck. The car is in the foreground, and the tow truck is in the background. The title 'EXTENDED WARRANTY Basics' is overlaid on the image.

EXTENDED WARRANTY *Basics*

Most new cars come with a factory warranty of three years or 36,000 miles that covers defective parts or flaws in workmanship. However, you can buy an additional warranty to protect your budget from repair costs.

Here are some tips from MarketWatch for buying an extended warranty.

NOT ALL WARRANTIES ARE CREATED EQUAL

Not all extended warranties cover everything. You can opt for a bumper-to-bumper warranty, which covers just about everything in your car. A powertrain warranty is more bare bones, covering only repairs to the engine, transmission, drive axles and transfer case. You can get a hybrid option — often called stated-component coverage — to cover powertrain plus other components.

DEalersHIP WARRANTIES

Dealership warranties are sold at car dealerships at the time of purchase. They usually only allow repairs at one of the brand's own repair facilities. For instance, if it's a Ford truck, repairs can be done only at other Ford dealerships. You may have fewer options at the dealership when it comes to stated-component coverage and car parts used. Dealership warranties often only cover OEM components.

AFTERMARKET WARRANTIES

Aftermarket warranties are purchased directly from the warranty company. Repairs can usually be done at any shop certified by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence. Depending on the vehicle, you may have more options for stated-component coverage and terms, and the plan may also allow for generic parts.

COST

MarketWatch says extended warranties typically cost between \$1,500 and \$4,000, depending on several factors. Dealership warranties come from the dealership, usually at the time of purchase, while aftermarket warranties can be purchased at any time directly from the company. You might be able to get more flexible payment terms and coverage options from the aftermarket.

ADDITIONAL FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Aside from cost and what's covered, look at the deductible amount. Generally speaking, the lower the deductible, the higher the premium and vice versa, just like with insurance. Check companies' reputations online and with the Better Business Bureau. Read customer reviews and ask your friends and family members for recommendations. As always, carefully read the contract, including the fine print, before signing on the dotted line.



MAINTAINING

Your Car's Paint

Paint also protects the car from rust and other damage to the frame of the vehicle. Here's how to keep it in tip-top shape.

The paint is probably the most visible part of your vehicle. Keeping it looking shiny and new is important to keeping your car looking good and to maintaining its value.

WASH YOUR CAR

Dirt and grime doesn't just look bad, it can also degrade your paint's finish. Wash your vehicle regularly. Be careful not to use a pressure jet or cleaner that's too strong and can damage the paint.

PICKING THE RIGHT WAX

Waxing can help preserve the car's finish, but using the wrong wax can actually take the paint off of a car.

Dark-colored vehicles are more prone to scratching or swirling due to wax. Make sure the wax you choose is safe for clear-coat finishes.

USE PAINT CONDITIONER

Paint conditioner adds oils to the paint, taking out fine scratches and swirls while leaving behind a glossy shine. Follow the product instructions carefully and use either a yellow wool pad or a blue or black foam pad.

PARK IN THE SHADE

Always try to leave your car in a shady spot, whether it's your garage or under a tree in a parking lot. The sun's ultraviolet rays can fade and oxidize your car's paint. If you can't park in the shade, consider using a car cover. You can get a universal car cover that's water resistant but breathable for much less than a new paint job.

FIX SCRATCHES AND DENTS

Fix scratches and dents as soon as you can, especially if you can see bare metal underneath the paint. Exposing the bare metal leaves your car vulnerable to rust, which can be exacerbated by things such as compounds used on winter roads or salty air if you live near the ocean.

USE A PAINT PROTECTION FILM

This is a thin thermoplastic urethane film that goes over the vehicle's paint, protecting it against stone chips, bugs, scratches and UV rays. Some films have self-healing properties, which can take out minor blemishes over time. A major downside is cost; PPF can run thousands of dollars, but can be well worth it for peace of mind.

CAR AIR FILTERS

Explained

Your car, just like you, needs to breathe fresh, clean air for it to work properly.

The vehicle may have two air filters, one for the engine and one for the cabin. Here's how each works.

ENGINE AIR FILTER

The engine air filter prevents your engine from being damaged by dirt and other contaminants. A clogged air filter can cause your car to misfire or have black smoke coming from the exhaust. Change your engine air filter every 30,000-45,000 miles, or more frequently if you drive in dusty or hot climates.

A clogged engine air filter may cause your check engine light to come on, and it may negatively affect your gas mileage and engine components. It may also increase pollution coming from your vehicle. If you live in an area where you must get your car emissions tested, this could cause you to fail the test.

CABIN AIR FILTER

The cabin air filter works with the air conditioning system to provide clean air to the passengers of the car. It should be changed every two or three years, generally speaking, but could be more often if you drive in dusty environments, have sensitive allergies or live in a big city.

You can tell when it's time for a change when you have problems with your air conditioner or notice strange smells.

CHANGING THE AIR FILTERS

Both engine and cabin air filters are usually pretty easy to change and it may be a job you can do yourself.

The air filter for your engine is located under the hood. You should have instructions in your owner's manual for changing the filter, but here's a general guide. Start by finding the air filter box and open it

by releasing latches or tabs. Some boxes need a screwdriver or socket set, so have one handy in case you need it. Remove the old filter and any accompanying debris. Note how it went in so that you can put the new filter in the same way.

Install the new filter matching the direction and placement of the old filter. Close the housing and secure it how it was before. You're all done.

The cabin air filter is usually behind a car's glove compartment. You may need a screwdriver to access it. Some other models have the cabin air filter under the hood. See your owner's manual for instructions.

Remove the old filter and any debris. Clean out the housing and install the new filter in the direction of the old filter.

Air flow direction is usually marked by arrows on the filter. Reinstall the glove box and close everything up.

MAINTENANCE *Schedules*

While every make and model is different, here are some general rules for car maintenance, following a 30-60-90 maintenance schedule.

REGULAR MAINTENANCE

Change your oil and oil filter depending on your mileage, usually every 5,000, but maybe anywhere between every 3,000 and 10,000 miles. Check the engine oil on a regular basis, and keep an eye on your tires.

30,000 MILE MAINTENANCE

Your car shouldn't require any major repairs, but your air and fuel filters may need changing. The mechanic will probably check or change your oil and top off your fluids. Your technician should check and top off all your fluids as well as do an inspection of lights, tires and more.

60,000 MILE MAINTENANCE

This service should at least check and probably replace your battery, brakes and

Every car comes with a maintenance schedule outlined in the owner's manual. Following that timeline can keep your car running smoothly.

brake fluid, transmission fluid, coolant, brake rotors and more, along with air and fuel filters again. Your technician should check and top off all your fluids as well as do an inspection of lights, tires and more.

90,000 MILE MAINTENANCE

This is a pretty invasive service and includes the air and fuel filters as well as replacing power steering fluid, hoses, timing belts and spark plugs. Again, this will probably come with

an oil change as well as a multi-point inspection of all your vehicle's systems.

CAVEATS

While this is an example of a 30-60-90 schedule, each manufacturer has its own recommended schedule. Furthermore, how and where you drive is a huge factor in how often you need maintenance and what kind of maintenance you need.

Your best bet is to have a schedule but also to have a great relationship with a local automotive repair professional who takes a regular look at your car at least once every calendar year if they aren't handling regular oil changes and other maintenance for you.

Make sure to keep any receipts for service and warranty information so that you can look back and see when repairs and maintenance were done. This may help with a warranty repair later. Missing a service or having an incorrect service, however, may void your warranty altogether. Your dealer or auto repair professional can help you.

Don't miss your chance to advertise in the next issue!



Explore
Central Vermont

Buy 4 Issues and Save 20%

Call 802-479-0191 and ask for Kristi or Peter

The Times Argus | 47 N. Main St., Suite 200, Barre, VT

MON - THU: 7AM - 5:30PM FRI: 7AM-4PM



**SUMMER
STREET
AUTO**

Nick, Randy, Slade & Matt

Technicians

41 Pearl Street

Barre, VT 05641

Phone: 802-479-0928 Fax: 802-479-9003



Style, durability, and sustainability meet in our line of elegant outdoor dining furniture.

Crafted from up to 100% recycled plastic and designed to withstand all elements.

Available in dining, counter, & pub height, we have the perfect dining options for every outdoor space.



Where customers become friends SINCE 1999
wendellsfurniture.com

697 Hercules Drive
 Colchester, VT 05446

Next to Costco!
 (802) 861-7700