

Storage Preparation Checklist

There are a couple of reasons why you would want to keep your car in a self-storage unit. Have you recently bought a new vehicle, but have no room for it at your home? Maybe you didn't plan on taking in a relative's car while they are out of town and you need to ensure that it is kept safe. Whatever the case may be, car self-storage is the best way to protect your automobile from the elements and the possibility of theft. Here are a few things you should do before you bring your vehicle in for safekeeping.

Make sure you have all the important paperwork

Before you do any transporting, take a minute to make sure that the vehicle's insurance card, title and license are all up to date.

Vehicle storage does have a few requirements:

- Automobiles must be in running condition or loaded on a trailer.
- You will be asked to show registration and/or title.
- Depending on the state, vehicle storage tax will vary.

PREP YOUR CAR FOR STORAGE:

Clean the vehicle

You don't want your car to attract any more dirt, dust or grime than it should while it is sitting in storage.

- Wash the outside of the car thoroughly.

Once the outside is taken care of, you can start cleaning the interior of the car.

- Remove food and drinks.

Food or natural fibers from plants and other biodegradable items will decay while your car sits in storage for days, weeks or months at a time, so be sure to empty your vehicle of any food remnants from long road trips or driving the kids to after-school activities.

Engine care

- Check your car's oil before putting the vehicle in storage.
- Open the hood and check your oil dipstick to see if you need new oil.
- If the car needs oil, lift it on either jacks or ramps.
- Let the car heat up to warm the engine oil

- Assemble your tools: new engine oil, new filter, oil pan to catch drained oil, a socket wrench and a flash light. Consult your owner's manual to identify the type of oil and filter your car needs.
- Open the hood and remove the oil cap on top of the engine.
- Find the oil pan. It's under your car and looks like a flat metal pan, usually located closer to the engine than the transmission. There should be a bolt or a plug toward the bottom. This is called the oil plug. Once you remove this, dirty, used engine oil will begin to flow.
- Place the oil pan and old newspapers directly under the plug to catch the falling oil.
- Deposit the new engine oil.

Storage Preparation Checklist (cont.)

Battery care

- Keep the battery charged with an automatic car battery charger.
- First, find the model that matches your car battery. Check the owner's manual for this information.
- Read the charger manual to make sure you know how to properly use it.
- Remove each battery cable, taking off the negative (black) first and then the positive (red).
- Check that the charger is not plugged in and its power is off.
- Connect the positive charger cable (usually red) to the positive (+) battery terminal. Do the same with the negative (black) cable and negative (-) terminal.
- Setting the charger low will send a trickle charge. A high setting will quickly energize the battery.
- Do not touch the cables while the cell is charging.
- After the battery is full, disconnect the cables starting with the negative terminal

Other tips:

- Fill up all the tires to prevent flat spots.
- Place a weatherproof cover over your car for added protection.
- Don't use the parking brake while the car is in storage. There's a chance the rotors will fuse to the brake pads.

What kind of storage unit do you need?

- What sizes are available?

Compact and small cars should fit in a 10'x15' space. Full size cars would require at least a 10'x20' space. 10'x25' or 10'x30' may sometimes be necessary if there are other accessories that will need to be stored with it. For all SUVs and trucks, you should measure the height of the car if you are considering an indoor storage unit.
- Outdoor open or covered Unit?

Covered units add extra protection against the elements. As with indoor units, you will need to choose a space with enough depth of your car.
- Is the unit climate controlled or covered? Do I need climate controlled?
- What fits my budget?

Consult a rental unit service center for more information.

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