



## How to Change a Tire

### Introduction

You're driving along, thinking of all the projects on your to-do list, when, suddenly, you hear that telltale "*flup-flup-flup*" sound coming from outside your car. What do you do? Is it the road? You listen closer: "*flup-flup-flup...*" You feel your car drag. Your palms start to sweat. You've got yourself a flat tire. First thing first: **DO NOT** brake or turn quickly. Pull over to a safe spot. Safety First! You know you've got a spare tire in your trunk, but what to do with it – you're clueless. Don't fret! Help is here in this simple, easy-to-follow lesson that will get your tire changed within 15 to 30 minutes.

### Gear:

- Wheel wedges
- Lug wrench
- Jack
- Your car's owner's manual
- A 2x6-inch wood block piece
- Tire air gauge

## **Shopping Recommendations**

If you do not have wheel wedges, a lug wrench, a jack, or a tire gauge, it's a good idea to get these items and keep them in your car, along with your car's owner's manual, a rain poncho, and a flashlight.

## **Instructions**

1. Once you've found a safe spot to stop your car, turn on your hazard lights and put your car in "Park".
2. If you've got wheel wedges, place them either in front of or behind your tires to keep your car from rolling. If the flat tire is in the front, for instance, then place the wedges behind the rear tires.
3. If your tire has one, remove the hubcap to get to the lug nuts. If not, you're ready to loosen the lug nuts with your lug wrench by turning the wrench counterclockwise. This step takes some elbow grease, so don't be afraid to use force to get them loose! Don't remove the nuts completely; loose is fine, using about a ½" or ¼" turn of the lug wrench.
4. Position your jack beneath the vehicle frame alongside your flat tire. Your car may have plastic underneath, so look for the exposed metal area; that's where you want to place your jack. Follow your car's owner's manual on how to position your jack, then safely lift the car. Keep your body away from the underside of your vehicle for safety! This is where the wood block comes in handy, as you can place this block beneath the jack to prevent it from becoming unbalanced.
5. Raise the vehicle until your flat tire is roughly 6 inches off the ground. Again, keep yourself safely out from beneath the car!
6. Remove lug nuts, remove flat tire, and place spare tire on the lug bolts, making sure they stick out through the rim.
7. Once this is done, tighten the lug nuts by hand as tight as you can. You will tighten them with the wrench once the car is lowered.
8. Lower the car with the jack until the spare tire touches the ground - but not so much that the full weight of the vehicle is on the spare tire. Now tighten the lug nuts as

tight as you can with the lug wrench. Time to apply more elbow grease! You don't want that tire going anywhere!

9. Lower the vehicle completely and remove the jack. If the hubcap from your flat fits the spare, then put it onto the spare tire. Check the air pressure of the spare tire using your tire gauge. If the tire needs pressure, drive slowly to a service station. Do not drive long distances or at fast speeds on a spare tire. The spare is only to be used until you can get your flat tire fixed or replaced entirely.
10. Put away the jack, the flat tire, lug wrench, air pressure gauge, etc. inside your trunk.

### **Notes, Tricks, and Tips**

- When all else fails, make sure you have roadside assistance, provided either by your insurance or auto clubs like AAA.
- Keep up with your tire maintenance. Get the air pressure checked regularly
- Make certain your tires are inflated correctly

### **Further Study**

Be prepared! Here are some links from reputable sources to further your car maintenance practices:

- <https://www.bridgestonetire.com/tread-and-trend/drivers-ed/how-to-change-a-flat-tire>
- <https://www.allstate.com/tr/car-insurance/car-maintenance-tips.aspx>
- <https://www.kbb.com/car-news/top-10-car-care-tips/>
- <https://driving-tests.org/beginner-drivers/how-to-change-tires/>