

SECTION 6

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND CARE

Vehicle maintenance and care

[Maintenance requirements](#) 354

[General maintenance](#) 355

[Does your vehicle need repairing?](#) 357

[Emissions Inspection and Maintenance \(I/M\) programs](#) 358

For scheduled maintenance information, please refer to the “Scheduled Maintenance Guide” or “Owner’s Manual Supplement”.



Maintenance requirements

Your Toyota vehicle has been designed for fewer maintenance requirements with longer service intervals to save both your time and money. However, each regular maintenance, as well as day-to-day care, is more important than ever before to ensure smooth, trouble-free, safe, and economical drivings.

It is the owner's responsibility to make sure the specified maintenance, including general maintenance service, is performed. Note that both the new vehicle and emission control system warranties specify that proper maintenance and care must be performed. See "Owner's Warranty Information Booklet" or "Owner's Manual Supplement" for complete warranty information.

General maintenance

General maintenance items are those day-to-day care practices that are important to your vehicle for proper operation. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that the general maintenance items are performed regularly.

These checks or inspections can be done either by yourself or a qualified technician, or if you prefer, your Toyota dealer will be pleased to do them at a nominal cost.

Scheduled maintenance

The scheduled maintenance items listed in the "Scheduled Maintenance Guide" or "Owner's Manual Supplement" are those required to be serviced at regular intervals.

For details of your maintenance schedule, read the "Scheduled Maintenance Guide" or "Owner's Manual Supplement".

It is recommended that any replacement parts used for maintenance or for the repair of the emission control system be Toyota supplied.

The owner may elect to use non-Toyota supplied parts for replacement purposes without invalidating the emission control system warranty. However, use of replacement parts which are not of equivalent quality may impair the effectiveness of the emission control systems.

You may also elect to have maintenance, replacement, or repair of the emission control devices and system performed by any automotive repair establishment or individual without invalidating this warranty. See "Owner's Warranty Information Booklet" or "Owner's Manual Supplement" for complete warranty information.

Where to go for service?

Toyota technicians are well-trained specialists and are kept up to date with the latest service information through technical bulletins, service tips, and in-dealership training programs. They learn to work on Toyotas before they work on your vehicle, rather than while they are working on it.

You can be confident that your Toyota dealer's service department performs the best job to meet the maintenance requirements on your vehicle—reliably and economically.

Your copy of the repair order is proof that all required maintenance has been performed for warranty coverage. If any problems should arise with your vehicle while under warranty, your Toyota dealer will promptly take care of it. Again, be sure to keep a copy of the repair order for any service performed on your Toyota.

What about do-it-yourself maintenance?

Many of the maintenance items are easy to do yourself if you have a little mechanical ability and a few basic automotive tools. Simple instructions for how to perform them are presented on page 359 in Section 7.

If you are a skilled do-it-yourself mechanic, the Toyota service manuals are recommended. Please be aware that do-it-yourself maintenance can affect your warranty coverage. See "Owner's Warranty Information Booklet" or "Owner's Manual Supplement" for the details.

General maintenance

Listed below are the general maintenance items that should be performed as frequently as specified. In addition to checking the items listed, if you notice any unusual noise, smell or vibration, you should investigate the cause or take your vehicle to your Toyota dealer or a qualified service shop immediately. It is recommended that any problem you notice be brought to the attention of your dealer or the qualified service shop for their advice.



CAUTION

Make these checks only with adequate ventilation if you run the engine.

IN THE ENGINE COMPARTMENT

Items listed below should be checked from time to time, e.g. each time when refueling.

Washer fluid

Make sure there is sufficient fluid in the tank. See page 386 in Section 7-3 for additional information.

Engine coolant level

Make sure the coolant level is between the "FULL" and "LOW" lines on the see-through reservoir when the engine is cold. See page 370 in Section 7-2 for additional information.

Radiator, condenser and hoses

Check that the front of the radiator and condenser are clean and not blocked with leaves, dirt, or insects. See page 371 in Section 7-2 for additional information.

Battery electrolyte level

Check the battery condition by the indicator color. See page 382 in Section 7-3 for additional information.

Brake fluid level

Make sure the brake fluid level is correct. See page 371 in Section 7-2 for additional information.

Engine oil level

Check the level on the dipstick with the engine turned off and the vehicle parked on a level spot. See page 368 in Section 7-2 for additional information.

'06 Rav4_U (L/O 0601)

Exhaust system

If you notice any change in the sound of the exhaust or smell exhaust fumes, have the cause located and corrected immediately. (See "Engine exhaust cautions" on page 281 in Section 2.)

INSIDE THE VEHICLE

Items listed below should be checked regularly, e.g. while performing periodic services, cleaning the vehicle, etc.

Lights

Make sure the headlights, stop lights, tail lights, turn signal lights, and other lights are all working.

Service reminder indicators and warning buzzers

Check that all service reminder indicators and warning buzzers function properly.

Steering wheel

Check that it has the specified free play. Be alert for changes in steering condition, such as hard steering or strange noise.

Seats

Check that all seat controls such as seat adjusters, seatback recliner, etc. operate smoothly and that all latches lock securely in any position. For folding-down rear seatbacks, check that the latches lock securely.

Seat belts

Check that the seat belt system such as buckles, retractors and anchors operate properly and smoothly. Make sure the belt webbing is not cut, frayed, worn or damaged.

Accelerator pedal

Check the pedal for smooth operation and uneven pedal effort or catching.

Brake pedal

Check the pedal for smooth operation and that the pedal has the proper clearance. Check the brake booster function.

Brakes

In a safe place, check that the brakes do not pull to one side when applied.

Parking brake

Check that the lever has the proper travel and that, on a safe incline, your vehicle is held securely with only the parking brake applied.

Automatic transmission "Park" mechanism

On a safe incline, check that your vehicle is held securely with the selector lever in "P" position and all brakes released.

OUTSIDE THE VEHICLE

Items listed below should be performed from time to time, unless otherwise specified.

Fluid leaks

Check underneath for leaking fuel, oil, water or other fluid after the vehicle has been parked for a while. If you smell fuel fumes or notice any leak, have the cause found and corrected immediately.

Doors and engine hood

Check that all doors and back door operate smoothly and all latches lock securely. Make sure the engine hood secondary latch secures the hood from opening when the primary latch is released.

Tire inflation pressure

Check the pressure with a gauge every two weeks, or at least once a month. See page 372 in Section 7- 2 for additional information.

Tire surface and wheel nuts

Check the tires carefully for cuts, damage or excessive wear. See page 374 in Section 7- 2 for additional information. When checking the tires, make sure no nuts are missing, and check the nuts for looseness. Tighten them if necessary.

Tire rotation

Rotate the tires according to the maintenance schedule. (For scheduled maintenance information, please refer to the "Scheduled Maintenance Guide" or "Owner's Manual Supplement".) See page 376 in Section 7- 2 for additional information.

Does your vehicle need repairing?

Be on the alert for changes in performance, sounds, and visual tip-offs that indicate service is needed. Some important clues are as follows:

- Engine missing, stumbling, or pinging
- Appreciable loss of power
- Strange engine noises
- A leak under the vehicle (However, water dripping from the air conditioning after use is normal.)
- Change in exhaust sound (This may indicate a dangerous carbon monoxide leak. Drive with the windows open and have the exhaust system checked immediately.)
- Flat-looking tire; excessive tire squeal when cornering; uneven tire wear
- Vehicle pulls to one side when driving straight on a level road
- Strange noises related to suspension movement
- Loss of brake effectiveness; spongy feeling brake pedal; pedal almost touches floor; vehicle pulls to one side when braking
- Engine coolant temperature continually higher than normal

If you notice any of these clues, take your vehicle to your Toyota dealer as soon as possible. It probably needs adjustment or repair.



Do not continue driving with the vehicle unchecked. It could result in serious vehicle damage and possibly personal injury.

Emissions Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) programs

Some states have vehicle emission inspection programs which include OBD (On-Board Diagnostics) checks.

The OBD system monitors the operation of the emission control system. When the OBD system determines that a problem exists somewhere in the emission control system, the malfunction indicator lamp comes on. In this case, your vehicle may not pass the I/M test and need to be repaired. Contact your Toyota dealer to service the vehicle.

Even if the malfunction indicator lamp does not come on, your vehicle may not pass the I/M test as readiness codes have not been set in the OBD system.

Readiness codes are automatically set during ordinary driving. However, when the battery is disconnected or run down, the codes are erased. Also, depending on your driving habits, the codes may not be completely set.

Also, if the malfunction indicator lamp had come on recently due to temporary malfunction such as a loose fuel tank cap, your vehicle may not pass the I/M test.

The malfunction indicator lamp will go off after taking several driving trips, but the error code in the OBD system will not be cleared unless about 40 trips or more are taken.

If your vehicle does not pass the I/M test even the malfunction indicator lamp does not come on, contact your Toyota dealer to prepare the vehicle for re-testing.