



Get Ready to Drive: Spring Prep for Your Corvette



Whether you've endured snow, rain or just colder weather, it's time to start thinking about long, warm days on the open road. Planning and preparation in the early days of Spring will save you headaches and delays when it's time to hit the road. Mid America Motorworks gives you some tips on getting your Corvette ready to come out of hibernation.

Tires

If you have not put your Corvette on positioning jacks, be sure to move it periodically to reduce the tendency to of flat spots forming on the tires. Check the inflation of the tires and the spare, and adjust to the recommended tire pressure. It's a good idea to oil the spare tire brackets, bolt and lock now to prevent rust and highway frustration in case you get a flat tire and are unable to loosen parts. Make sure your Corvette's jack and jack handle are also in place.

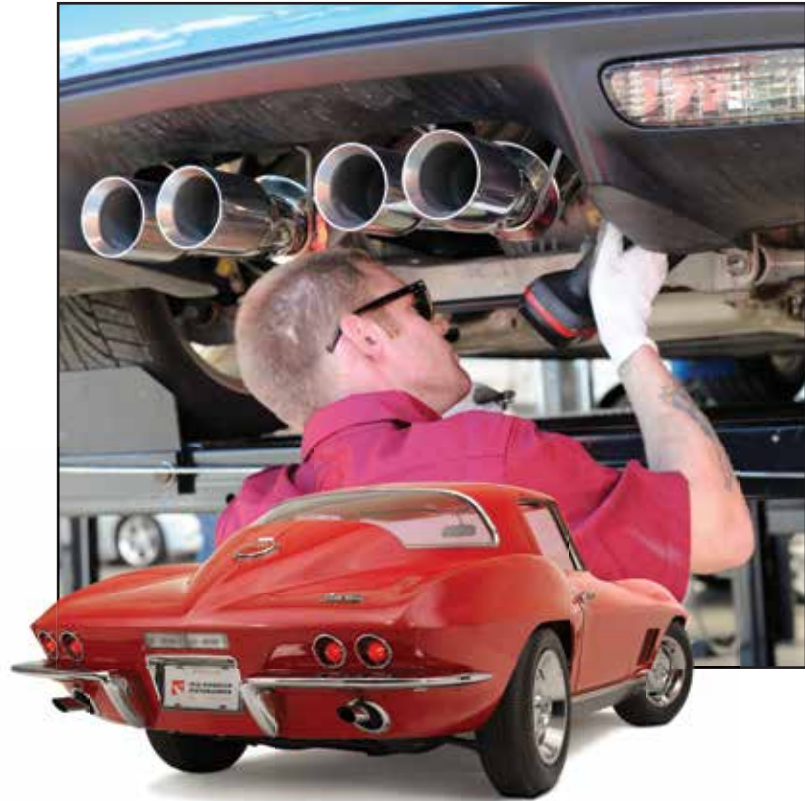




Exhaust

Periodically start the engine and allow your Corvette to warm up to full operating temperature every 30 days, if not more often. The exhaust system will be heated up and any accumulated moisture will be burned out of the engine while its running. In addition, oil will be distributed to reduce the tendency of rust on internal surfaces. Fuel will be moved through the carb or fuel injection, which reduces the tendency of these systems to clog up from gasoline deposits. Engine heat will also dry out any electrical connections that may have drawn moisture, preventing those mysterious shorts and electrical failures due to corrosion on connectors. If your Corvette is stored outdoors, be sure to check the air cleaner for rodent nests prior to start-up.

You should also check the hangers and clamps to see if they need to be tightened or replaced. On cars equipped with O2 sensors, these should be checked for buildup or corrosion. These are simple to replace and are essential to the performance of your car.



Brakes

If the roads are dry, try to drive your Corvette on a short trip or two. This will allow you to heat up the brakes and drive out any moisture. Pads may wear, but Corvette brakes rarely "wear out." Most of the time, brake system replacements are due to corrosion from moisture in the fluid. You can greatly extend the average life of the system by simply keeping the fluid fresh and moisture free.

Check the brake system. Examine brake calipers for leaks and pad condition. Be sure to check hoses and lines too. If the flex hoses look cracked or worn, be sure to get them replaced. The inner lining will often break down before the exterior wall fails. This can cause internal blockage and uneven braking. Now is a good time to bleed the brakes to remove old fluid and any water that may have entered the system. Don't forget to top up the master cylinder with fresh fluid.



Shocks

Take a look at the shocks. Are there any leaks or dented cylinders? How about the shock bushings? If these are cracked or worn, your Corvette's ride quality will suffer. While you are in this area, check the condition of the sway bar bushings and end link bushings. These must be in good shape in order for your Corvette to negotiate corners and curves as it was designed to do.





Battery

Be sure to check your battery. Clean the connections and give them a light coating of silicone grease to prevent corrosion. If your battery has caps, check the water level and add water as needed. Now is a good time to install a Battery Mat under the battery to neutralize any leakage or fumes. A trickle charger will keep the battery at full charge and will extend the life of the battery.



Interior

If you are not already using them, you may want to toss a few desiccant bags into the interior in order to remove any accumulated moisture. Mold and mildew can quickly damage an interior and a good looking ride should smell good, too!



Projects

Check your Corvette for items that need to be rebuilt or replaced prior to your first Spring cruise. Make a list of the Springtime projects you want to get done. Order the parts now to make sure that you have everything you need to complete the task. Now is the time to get that weak alternator or balky starter rebuilt. Check your service manual to see that you have all the necessary tools.



A little planning now will have your Corvette ready to roll out for miles of smiles.

