

## The Preventive Maintenance Series

Mike Dawson

The following is a list of items I suggest checking before taking a trip (or after buying a car). Remember that even long trips are usually less than the mileage between a single oil change. Serviced properly, your Corvair will cruise to all of this summer's events and back - and be happier for it!

1. All Corvairs roll on four sets of wheel bearings and they all can be repacked. Check & lube the 2 or 4 U-joints. Check front end parts and lube the fittings (install missing ones).
2. Have tires balanced and aligned if necessary. Before trips, check all five tire pressures and tighten lug nuts with the tool you use to change a tire.
3. Check or change all fluids: oil, transmission, differential, brake fluid, washer fluid and battery level (if possible). Synthetic Powerglide fluid is a very good idea, and with regard to oil, remember that our air cooled engines run hotter and have greater tolerances than newer cars. A higher number viscosity oil such as 20W50 or SAE30 is recommended.
4. Check the oil pressure sending unit and change this inexpensive item if you do not know its history.
5. Check the engine tune, and include cleaning the crankcase vents. Check the breaker plate in the distributor, lube the distributor cam and inspect the electrical connections such as the primary coil wires, alternator wires (no generators allowed) and multi-connectors. Check carburetor inlet nuts for leaks.
6. Check the battery date, cable ends, ground cable mount and check the overall charging system with the lights and accessories on maximum.
7. REMOVE the belt and check the condition of the entire length. Spin all three pulleys and lube anything questionable. Tools are available to grease the fan and idler bearing.
8. Check all running lights, check the fuse block for rust, check the large multi-connector in early model engine compartments on the left side (by-pass the 10 gage wire), and check warning light operation.
9. If air conditioned, blow out the condenser, check the mounts, the belt, check the evaporator drain. Remove the lower shrouds for better cooling.
10. Check the harmonic balancer, and if it is original, replace it! Be sure to check the fuel pump mount, it can work loose. To be safe with the increasing ethanol addition you should have a new version of the mechanical pump or an electric pump. If you already have an electric pump, check the pre-filter.
11. Lube your late clutch cable ball and look for frayed cable between the two pulleys under the dash on early models – also check parking cables in the same area.
12. Check brakes; wheel cylinders, shoes, master cylinder (push rod leak under the dash), and most important, the steel and rubber lines. Give your car the “stomp test” in the driveway. Steel lines above the gas tank and next to the transaxle are the most prone to rust, with tunnel lines next.
13. Be aware of any speedometer error you may have and know your oil consumption rate. Test drive 15 minutes on the highway on a hot day, pack up and head out!

Spares and tools? My favorites would be a belt, a new fuel pump, one rocker arm with pushrod and valve cover gasket, one 30 amp fuse, a set of points and condenser, oil as required, tools for these items, and a CORSA Travel Roster (Cell phone and credit card are assumed to be permanent contemporary companions).

There are other tech articles in this series that could help you address many of the above items.