

Owning a car costs \$9,000 a year

18th April, 2013



A new report from the American Automobile Association (AAA) says that the average car costs over \$9,000 a year to own and run. The AAA said that on average, the

cost of driving 23,000 km a year rose around two per cent last year. This cost includes fuel, maintenance, insurance and repairs. The report says the biggest increase in costs was for maintaining the car – things like oil changes, new air filters, and safety inspections. AAA manager Michael Calkins said: "As a vehicle gets older, you tend to encounter more significant repair costs." The second largest increase was for insurance. Americans pay an average of \$1,029 a year to insure their car.

The AAA's report noted that the cost of owning a car depended on its size. Owners of small cars would probably spend around \$7,000 a year to keep their car running, while 4WD owners would have to pay over \$12,000 a year for their gas guzzlers. Mr Calkins also said that people were keeping their car for a longer time before buying a new one. "The length of time people keep cars has been going up for the past several years," he said. This is probably because of the global recession. People are putting off buying such an expensive item until the economy improves. Calkins added: "The average age of the vehicle on the road now is 11.1 years....The quality of the cars is also improving."

Sources: USA Today / Auto World News

Writing

The world would be a better place without cars. Discuss

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

the average car / cost of driving / fuel / maintenance / insurance / repairs / safety / small cars / 4WDs / global recession / expensive items / quality of cars / improving

True / False

- The report on car ownership is from the Royal Automobile Club (RAC). T / F
- The report looked at the costs of driving a car 23,000 km a year. T / F
- The cost that increased most in the past year was maintenance. T / F
- Americans pay (on average) over \$1,000 a year on insurance. T / F
- Owners of small cars averaged just over \$5,000 in costs. T / F
- People who drove 4WDs paid an average of more than \$12,000 a year. T / F
- People are keeping their cars for a shorter time than before. T / F
- The average length of time people kept their car was 7 years. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. run | a. contains |
| 2. rose | b. delaying |
| 3. includes | c. likely |
| 4. inspections | d. maintain |
| 5. repair | e. worldwide |
| 6. noted | f. checks |
| 7. probably | g. getting better |
| 8. global | h. went up |
| 9. putting off | i. fixing |
| 10. improving | j. mentioned |

Discussion – Student A

- Is having a car good value for money?
- What would life be like without cars?
- Is it cheaper to use public transport for a year than running a car?
- Why do people love their cars so much?
- What do you think of the cost of car insurance?
- Do you think the cost of running cars will be cheaper in the future?
- Is insurance a waste of money?
- What are the best and worst things about cars?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. costs over \$9,000 a year | a. and safety inspections |
| 2. This cost includes | b. their car |
| 3. things like oil changes, new air filters, | c. for insurance |
| 4. The second largest increase was | d. guzzlers |
| 5. insure | e. fuel |
| 6. the cost of owning a car | f. recession |
| 7. gas | g. to own and run |
| 8. people were keeping their car | h. also improving |
| 9. global | i. depended on its size |
| 10. The quality of the cars is | j. for a longer time |

Discussion – Student B

- Should we ban big cars?
- Why do people who live in cities buy 4WDs?
- What's your favourite car (and why)?
- What could you buy for \$7,000 a year if you didn't have to run a car?
- Why do some people change their cars every few years?
- Is a car a luxury or a necessity?
- How can we reduce the number of cars on the road?
- What things must you have in a car?

Spelling

- American Automobile sointiAosca
- atecmennnia, insurance and repairs
- eftsya inspections
- you tend to crnnetoeu more
- tnicifnisag repair costs
- niseru their car
- ddepnede on
- blapbyro spend around \$7,000
- egnlht of time
- global eiseorscn
- until the onmcyeo improves
- The iutlyaq of the cars

Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. h	3. a	4. f	5. i
6. j	7. c	8. e	9. b	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Car owner

You are tired of spending money on your car. Tell the others three reasons why. You think everything should be cheaper – insurance, fuel, repair costs, etc. You also think your city should cut down traffic jams and make more parking spaces.

Role B – Repair shop owner

You are tired of people complaining about the cost of repairs. Tell the others three reasons why. You make almost no profit on repairing cars. Spare parts, oil, labour, etc. are all expensive. Tell everyone car repairs are good value for money.

Role C – Car maker CEO

You think cars are cheap. Tell the others three reasons why. You think that if people drove more carefully, their cars would last longer and insurance would go down. Also, people need to learn to make their own basic repairs. Car repair shops are very expensive.

Role D – Town planner

You think there are too many cars in towns. Tell the others three reasons why. You think there should be a limit on the size of cars – only small ones. You also think people should leave their cars at home instead of drive into towns. This will make the car last longer and reduce running costs.

Speaking – Car Features

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the most important at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------|-----------|
| • colour | • air con |
| • speed | • ABS |
| • air bags | • GPS |
| • music player | • 4WD |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.