

MORE THAN FRESH AIR IN YOUR AIR-CON?

Most cars should be serviced every 10,000 miles or every year but did you know that an air-con service is not included in your car's regular service schedule? As with all things mechanical, the air-con system needs to be serviced regularly to keep it working at optimum performance. Bacteria and pollen build up means that there could be more than fresh air flowing from your air-con. A regular service will remove the nasty things that cause unwanted odours and worse.

WHY SERVICE YOUR AIR-CON?

REASON 1. CHECKING FOR LEAKS.

Your car's air-con system has to cope with a pretty hostile environment thanks to engine temperatures, travelling at speed and the daily encounters with pot holes and other road conditions. As a result the refrigerant gas leaks out of the air-con system over time. This gas is required to cool the air.

The system has flexible pipes and seals to absorb some of the vibrations from the road. It is through these seals and pipes that gas commonly escapes and an average system will lose around 10% of gas per annum.

Over time this leads to a less effective air-con system, as eventually the pressure will be reduced to a level whereby the system will not operate.

REASON 2. THE SYSTEM HAS NOT BEEN USED FOR A WHILE.

It is common for drivers not to use the air-con system during the winter months, and then the first time it is used in the summer, it doesn't work.

Most drivers don't know that the system must be used regularly to ensure that the seals are kept moist (this also helps stop the gas leaking out); this is because lubricating oil is mixed with the gas to keep the compressor unit running smoothly.

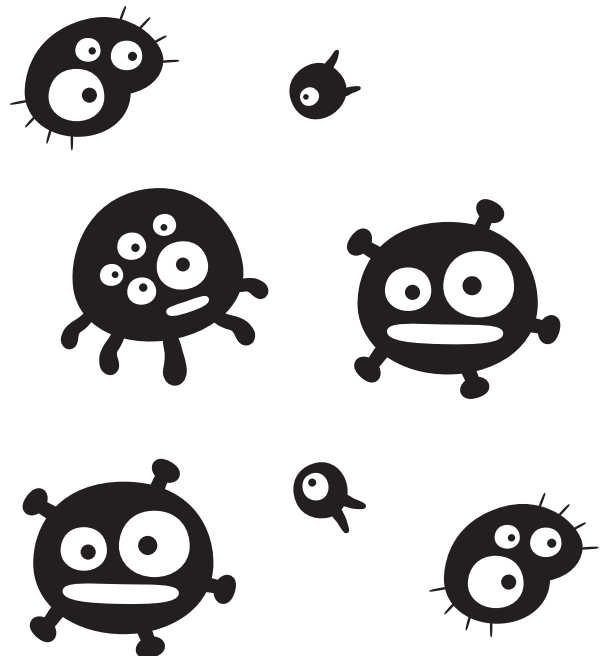
As with all oil it should be replaced at regular intervals. So, as part of the air-con service the system is drained under vacuum to remove the oil, gas and any moisture from the system. The system is then recharged with gas and new oil which will keep it running more efficiently and effectively.

REASON 3. BACTERIA BUILD UP.

Ever had that stale smell when you turn your air-con on for the first time in a while? This smell is usually associated with a dirty pollen filter and a build-up of bacteria in the air vents.

The pollen filter is a key component in the system. It filters incoming air before it enters the vehicle interior. These germs and bacteria have been linked with asthma and respiratory problems.

A regular service will include an antibacterial clean removing nasty odours and germs so that all you get when you turn on your air-con is fresh air.





WHAT IS AN AIR-CON RECHARGE?

DON'T CONFUSE AN AIR-CON SERVICE WITH AN AIR-CON 'RECHARGE'.

A recharge service is where the gas is topped up to the correct level. This is fine as an interim solution, but the ideal solution is to fully drain the system to remove moisture, renew the oil **and give the system an antibacterial clean.**

The recommendation is that every 2 years you should have your air-con serviced and the pollen filter replaced.

Your local HiQ Centre can give your air-con an antibacterial clean, check it for refrigerant leaks, change the lube oil and replace the pollen filter. All of which will keep your air-con in tip-top condition and you nicely refreshed.

Q. MY AIR-CON SMELLS FUNNY WHEN I SWITCH IT ON?

A. As your car gets older or when your air con system is used infrequently bacteria can collect in the system causing some very unpleasant odours. This problem can be solved by using an anti-bacterial treatment which destroys the bacteria growth and leaves your car smelling fresh again.

Q. MY AIR-CON NO LONGER FEELS COLD ENOUGH?

A. This is a sign that you need to have your air-con system recharged or serviced. This is not usually covered as part of your car's annual service but most car care centres will offer this at a reasonable cost.

Q. IS IT TRUE THAT RUNNING THE AIR-CON SYSTEM ALL YEAR ROUND HELPS MAINTAIN IT?

A. If you use your system regularly it helps to keep the system well lubricated and leak proof. This is because the refrigerant also carries an oil which helps to lubricate the system and the compressor, keeping seals and hoses from drying out and cracking which can in turn, cause the system to leak.

Q. THERE ARE NO PROBLEMS WITH MY AIR-CON, DO I NEED TO HAVE IT SERVICED?

A. Just as the other components of your car need servicing on a regular basis, your air-con system is the same. The compressor needs oil or it will seize, the filter collects debris and moisture which needs cleaning so it doesn't get blocked or stop working and the refrigerant gas needs recharging. All of these steps keep the system working efficiently and effectively so it's well worth having your system serviced regularly to enjoy the benefits.

**A few handy
FAQs for you.**



**WANT TO KNOW MORE?
CHECK OUT OUR HANDY
GUIDES TO CAR CARE OR
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL
HIQ CAR CARE EXPERT.**