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## How to check your engine oil

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### **Remember - Check engine oil - it could really save you a fortune !!**

Think of the oil in your engine like the blood in your veins.

It is essential and without it your body and your engine will die.

Regularly checking your oil level will help maintain the engine and make it last longer.

It is quite literally a 30 second job that can save you a lot of hassle.

### **So how do I check my engine oil level ?**

1. Ensure that your engine is warm and has not been running for a while. This will mean that all the oil has settled to the bottom of the engine and that you are getting a true reading.
2. Locate the oil dip stick. This will be under the bonnet, in the engine bay and usually at the front of the engine.



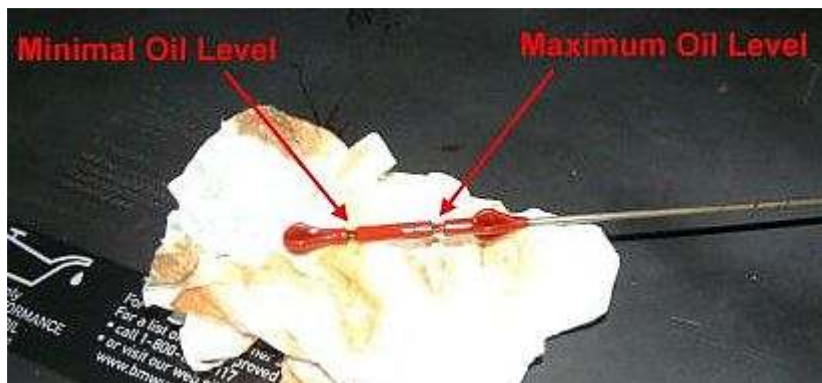
You can see in the photo above that the dipstick handle on this car is yellow and is circular. Not all dipstick handles are like this, however there is an effort on more modern cars to ensure that stuff that needs regular checking is coloured yellow. However, on older vehicles the dipstick handle could be any colour or shape. I've had Red, Green, Black and some have been circular, hooked or just sleeved.

3. Ensure that you have a clean rag to hand and then pull the dipstick handle in an upwards direction. You will notice that underneath the handle is a long strip of metal with markings on the end. These markings show the maximum and minimum levels for the oil.



4. Give the dipstick a wipe and remove all the oil and then slide it back into the tube from where it was removed. This will clean the dipstick so that you get a correct oil level reading. Ensure that the dipstick is pushed all the way down or you will get a false reading.

5. Pull the dipstick out again and look to see how much of the end is covered with oil.



Ideally, the oil should have reached up to the maximum mark on the dipstick. However anywhere in between the maximum and minimum levels is OK.

It typically takes 1 litre of oil to take the oil level from minimum to maximum, however this value can be different for each car so it is a good idea too check the exact figure in your [Haynes Manual](#) if you have one.

6. If the oil level is OK then put the dipstick back in making sure it is

pushed all the way down. Now you can feel happy that your engine has plenty of life-blood.

### **My oil level is LOW, what do I do ?**

If you are concerned that your engine oil is low (perhaps you are going on a long journey) or it has fallen below that minimum level on the dipstick then you need to 'top-up' your engine oil.

We have written a short article on topping up your engine oil, it is not a difficult job so here it is ; [Article - How to top up your engine oil](#)

### **How often should I check my engine oil ?**

There is no straight forward answer, it depends on how often you use your car and how many miles you travel.

If you use your car every day to travel a long distance to work, you should be checking your engine oil level more often that your gran who only uses her car a few times per week.

### **Check out this video :**

The online version of this PDF includes useful video clips. It can be found at ;

[www.carbasics.co.uk/how\\_to\\_check\\_your\\_engine\\_oil.htm](http://www.carbasics.co.uk/how_to_check_your_engine_oil.htm)

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