

Tips for Storing Your Hot Rod, Muscle Car or Collector Car

(Written by: Tom Wicks, Gold Eagle Co. Manager of Product Development)



When you plan to store your Hot Rod, Muscle or Collector Car during off-months, it is essential that you take a few extra precautions to ensure that it will be running the way you remember when you take it out next season. Following these simple steps will keep your Hot Rod/Muscle/Collector Car running its best and protect your investment for years to come.

Fill your Tank with Fresh Gas & Use STA-BIL® Fuel Stabilizer. Old gas in your tank breaks down over time, and leaving old gas in your Hot Rod/Muscle/Collector Car can lead to gummed-up or varnished fuel lines, carburetors, injectors. However, there are several disadvantages to draining old fuel as well. Draining fuel exposes the bare metal in the tank and fuel system to air and moisture that causes rust and corrosion, and can dry out gaskets and seals leading to leaks when the system is refilled. The best solution is to fill your fuel tank 95% full with FRESH fuel, and add STA-BIL® Fuel Stabilizer. STA-BIL® will keep your fuel fresh for up to 12 months. Make sure you read the directions carefully ... that little 10 ounce bottle will treat 25 *gallons* of fuel (use 1 ounce per 2.5 gallons).

Change your Engine Oil and even the Transmission Fluid. During the year, acids, dirt, and water can accumulate inside the engine oil and transmission fluid. Engine Oil acts like a garbage can or a "waste collector" for all the things that are created by combustion or are broken apart with high heat and friction. Any unburned fuel, unspent exhaust gases, or water vapor is trapped inside your engine. During storage, (a period of months), some of these chemicals eventually break down the viscosity of your engine oil, transmission fluid, and can even begin to corrode metal surfaces.

Lubricate Hood Latches and Door Locks using a dry lubricant like a graphite-based cable lube or Dri-Slide.

Remove your Battery, Disconnect the Cables or Attach a Battery Trickle or Tender Unit to the Battery. When it is not being used on a regular basis, a battery will gradually lose its charge. You can also use a Battery Tender, a small "smart" charger — it turns itself on and off as needed so that your battery never overcharges.

Tires: Keep your Tires out of Direct Sunlight. Rubber is sensitive to ultraviolet light, and prolonged exposure to UV light will cause tires to crack and split, and cause premature tire failure. This condition is known as "dry rot". Jack up the car and put it on "jack stands" to take the weight off your tires. Inflate your tires to their proper level. Underinflated tires can cause flat spots in your tires, shortening their usable life.

Clean Your Hot Rod/Muscle/Collector Car Thoroughly. Start when the engine is cool, and carefully remove all road grime, grease, tar, stains, and bugs from all painted surfaces, chromed parts, and wheels. Make sure you use good quality cleaners. Dry your Hot Rod/Muscle/Collector Car thoroughly, and apply a polish to all painted and exposed metal surfaces. This will protect your finish from color fade caused by UV light.

Store your Hot Rod/Muscle Car Inside, or Use a Car Cover. Protect your car from snow, ice, freezing rain, and wild temperature variances. When you can't store your Hot Rod/Muscle/Collector Car inside, make sure you get a Car Cover that is a form-fitting, breathable, long-term cover. The cover will keep dust off of your car and it will also keep the kids from playing on it. The price of a Hot Rod/Muscle/Collector Car cover is money well spent. If you are storing your Hot-Rod or Muscle Car inside, make sure the cover is designed for indoor storage and that it is made from a breathable material (like Gortex), or ask your auto parts or service store for the proper cover to fit your Hot Rod/Muscle/Collector Car.

Store your Hot Rod/Muscle/Collector Car in a Low-Traffic Area. Don't store your Hot Rod/Muscle/Collector Car in a location where anyone is likely to trip on it, tip it over, drop a tool on it, or dent it with a car door, or a dropped wrench.