

Hypermiling?

This is the recent trend as gas prices soar. Hypermiling is trying to get maximum fuel efficiency from your car as humanely possible. There are many techniques used to achieve this goal and some have reported getting 100+ mpg with average cars by using these techniques. Don't tell your local police about many of these techniques or you'll be getting to know them too well by spending time in the slammer! 😊 The obvious tricks are to modify your ride by overinflating your tires, get all the weight you can out of your ride (most just take junk out of the trunk, extremists tear the cars apart and leave essentially just the front seat 😊), remove roof racks, bubbles, tow hitches, or any other device that ruins aero dynamic efficiency, get a fuel consumption display if your ride doesn't have one, lights off during the day, close the sunroof, windows up, air conditioning off, etc. Common sense says don't do the illegal or extreme modifications, just be reasonable about it and get the dead bodies out of your trunk! 😊

Now the real impact comes from the way driving techniques are applied. The basic concept is to maximize physics by doing anything possible and never waste your kinetic energy (the rolling mass of the car once it gets going.) Most of these techniques are very dangerous, some downright stupid but all of them combine to provide extreme efficiency. Here we go with the driving techniques – draft the big trucks, start off and accelerate very slowly, time the lights so you never stop, use your momentum to get you to over the next hill, coast downhill, shut off the vehicle downhill, stay on the flats (Not in New England!), travel only on well maintained roads, avoid traffic, avoid lights and stop signs, keep your speeds steady, time gas station visits, never idle, don't use drive thru businesses, “crawl” rather than start and stop in urban settings, drive shoeless, etc. This is mostly craziness but common sense dictates that if you just drive carefully, slowly and avoid hard acceleration you'll get the best mileage your vehicle is capable of offering. For those who try to apply hypermile driving techniques, they may get great fuel economy, but are causing extreme dangers and may end up hurting someone or landing in the legal frying pan! 😊

When it comes to your money the Hypermiling technique is applicable and popular with many people. Financial hypermiling is when people don't worry about planning their finances at all and just live life, trying to squeeze every little bit out of their finances. They spend all of their earnings and then borrow to spend even more, don't save a nickel, and when something goes wrong they're not prepared to handle it and end up losing their ride, their home or their sanity. This is financial hypermiling – living beyond your means and trying to get something out of what it wasn't designed to do. The current mortgage, real estate and credit dilemmas we face today are the result of this irresponsible financial behavior.

The right thing to do is live well below your means, save the first 20% of your income by paying yourself first, invest that savings wisely and protect yourself, your income and your assets from catastrophe. If you follow this prescription you'll have a happy, financially stress free life and a wonderful future. This plan allows for contingencies so when something goes wrong, you're prepared to deal with it and it'll just change your savings for a short time, which you'll recover from quickly. How are you living financially? I hope it's not too hyper! ☺ Mike Chadwick can be contacted at 860 489 8880 or mike@fiscalwisdom.com

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