

TOYOTA OWNER'S MAINTENANCE CHEAT SHEET

Real service intervals — including the ones Toyota doesn't publish · All models 2010 to today

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SECTION 1 — STANDARD INTERVALS

What Toyota recommends (and our take)

SERVICE	INTERVAL	NOTES
Engine Oil — Synthetic 0W-20	5,000 mi / 6 mo	Toyota says 10k, but 5k protects better in real-world driving
Engine Oil — Conventional 5W-30	5,000 mi / 6 mo	Older pre-2012 models. Don't exceed 5,000 miles.
Engine Air Filter	30,000 mi	Inspect at 15k. Replace earlier if you drive in dusty conditions.
Cabin Air Filter	15,000 mi / 12 mo	Whichever comes first. Often forgotten — affects HVAC efficiency.
Tire Rotation	5,000 mi	Every oil change. Uneven wear shortens tyre life by 30–40%.
Brake Inspection	Annual	Visual pad check + rotor thickness. Critical in mountain driving.
Coolant — Toyota Pink SLLC	100,000 mi first change	Then every 50,000 mi. Old coolant turns acidic and attacks aluminium.
Spark Plugs — Iridium Standard	60,000 mi	Most 4-cyl engines: Corolla, Camry 2.5L, RAV4, Prius
Spark Plugs — Iridium Long-Life	120,000 mi	V6 engines: 3.5L Camry, Highlander, Sienna, Tundra 3.5L
Wiper Blades	12 mo / as needed	Replace annually before winter season regardless of condition.

SECTION 2 — THE INTERVALS TOYOTA DOESN'T TELL YOU

These are not in the owner's manual. Skipping them causes the most expensive failures.

SERVICE	TOYOTA SAYS	WHAT TO ACTUALLY DO
Automatic Transmission Fluid (WS)	"Lifetime Fill" — never change	Change at 60,000 mi. Every 30,000 mi after. This is the #1 cause of avoidable transmission failure.
Brake Fluid	No published interval	Flush every 2 years or 30,000 mi. Absorbed water lowers boiling point and corrodes ABS module internals.
Rear Differential Fluid	Severe use only: 30,000 mi	Every 30,000 mi if you tow, go off-road, or carry heavy loads regularly. Every 60,000 mi otherwise.

SERVICE	TOYOTA SAYS	WHAT TO ACTUALLY DO
Front Differential Fluid (4WD)	Severe use only	Same as rear diff. 4Runner, Tacoma, Land Cruiser, FJ — do this every 30k.
Transfer Case Fluid	60,000 mi severe	Every 30,000–60,000 mi on any 4WD model. Neglecting it destroys the transfer case silently.
Inverter Coolant (Hybrids/PHEVs)	100,000 mi first change	First change at 100k, then every 50k. Separate from engine coolant. Prius, RAV4 Hybrid, Highlander Hybrid.
Power Steering Fluid (non-EPS)	No interval	Flush every 50,000–60,000 mi. Degraded fluid causes rack-and-pinion wear. EPS models: no service needed.
Manual Transmission Fluid	45,000 mi	Change at 30,000 mi for longevity. Tacoma manual, older Corolla — Toyota MTF only, not gear oil.

SECTION 3 — MODEL-SPECIFIC ALERTS

Known issues and extra maintenance requirements by model

2AZ-FE Engine (2.4L)

2007–2011 Camry · 2006–2012 RAV4 · 2009–2015 Venza

Known oil consumption defect. Check oil level every 1,000 miles — not every service interval. Carbon walnut blasting may be needed after 120,000 miles if EGR system is present.

Tacoma 4WD / 4Runner / FJ Cruiser

2010–present · All 4WD variants

Front diff: 30k · Rear diff: 30k · Transfer case: 60k. Add/torque rear diff drain bolt annually if you go off-road — known to vibrate loose. A-TRAC and crawl control do not substitute for fluid maintenance.

Tundra / Sequoia — 5.7L (3UR-FE)

2007–2021 · All configurations

Most durable V8 Toyota made. Change rear diff fluid every 30,000 miles if towing regularly. Timing chain tensioner inspection at 150,000 miles — rattles on cold start are an early warning. Secondary air injection system common failure after 100k.

Prius — All Generations

2010–present · NHW20 / ZVW30 / ZVW50 / TNGA

No traditional ATF — eCVT uses its own fluid, change at 100,000 mi. Inverter coolant is a separate system — flush at 100k. 12V battery failure is the most common breakdown cause; replace at 5–6 years.

Land Cruiser 100 / 200 Series

2003–2021 · All markets

All four differentials (front, center, rear) + transfer case every 30,000 miles. Budget \$300–\$400 per full diff service. The 4.7L and 4.5L V8 engines are bulletproof if this is done. Neglecting it is the only way to kill them.

RAV4 / Highlander Hybrid

2006–present · All hybrid variants

Engine coolant and inverter coolant are separate — do not confuse them. Inverter coolant change at 100,000 mi, then every 50k. Rear electric motor on AWD-e models has its own fluid — check it at 60k (often skipped by dealers).