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7 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR CAR CHILL THIS SUMMER

Ford Senior Master Technician Jim Twitchell answers some common AC questions—because sunny-day driving shouldn't make you sweat.

Question No. 1: Why is my AC blowing lukewarm air?

A: Your vehicle's cooling system can affect your AC performance. So first, make sure your car isn't overheating. Check the level of your radiator coolant, which helps cool your engine. If it's low, you may have a leak and should have your cooling system tested. Then look to make sure you haven't picked up something on the road—including but not limited to a plastic bag—that is sticking to the front of the car and obstructing airflow into the vehicle.

Question No. 2: Why is my AC making a clicking or rumbling sound?

A: Anytime you hear an odd noise, you'll want to have it checked out by your [local Ford Dealer Service Center](#). Rumbling may indicate a problem with a bearing in either the AC system or in another area of the vehicle. Clicking may indicate that the AC compressor is cycling on and off too quickly because of a refrigerant leak. Refrigerant—not to be confused with coolant—is a gas used to make your AC blow cold and should be added only by a trained technician.

Question No. 3: I see some cracks in a hose connected to my AC system. What should I do?

A: Hoses can develop cracks over time due to age, how often you drive, environmental conditions and whether you park inside or outside. Minor cracks in a hose could be the first sign of a leak in your closed AC system. Look for signs of moisture or dirt—grime from the road often accumulates on areas of the hose where moisture is present. Have your hose checked out at a [Ford Dealer Service Center](#).

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Question No. 4: I see some small puddles of fluid on the ground. Does this indicate an AC problem?

A: What color is the fluid? If the puddle is black, it's likely an oil leak. If it's colorful—orange, green or yellow—the coolant may be leaking. If it's clear, like water, the AC condenser may simply be dripping condensation. While condensation is not a problem, leaks should be checked out by a Ford technician.

Question No. 5: How do I test my AC's air temperature?

A: Some people simply use a standard thermometer to check the temperature of the airflow. When testing, use the center register, not the side registers. Please note that the humidity level outside can dramatically affect the AC air temperature, so you may want to measure the temperature several days in a row to account for fluctuating humidity. In the end, though, it's all about how you feel. Are you comfortable? Great. Do you suddenly sense that the AC isn't doing its usual job? Then it's time for a checkup.

Question No. 6: How can I get rid of the musty smell in my vehicle when I turn on the AC?

A: An odor can be caused by normal condensation that hasn't dried out in the evaporator core of the AC unit. If this moisture sits, it can develop a musty smell. Your [Ford Dealer Service Center](#) can deodorize your AC system from within the core to eliminate the odor.

Question No. 7: How can I make my AC's airflow stronger?

A: A dirty cabin air filter can sometimes cause weak AC flow. Air moves through this filter for both heating and air conditioning, so dust gradually accumulates and then the filter must be replaced. A visual inspection of the cabin air filter is part of Ford's [The Works Vehicle Checkup](#), which is generally recommended about every 5,000 miles. (Check your owner's manual for the recommendation for your model, make and year.) The checkup includes a synthetic-blend oil change, tire rotation and pressure check, brake inspection, multi-point inspection, fluid top-off, battery test, filter check, and belts/hoses check. With regular inspection and occasional maintenance of your AC system, you should be able to cruise through summer in total comfort.

By Kathy Sena