

Ethanol Q&A

Q: What is E10?

A: E10 Unleaded is gasoline with 10 percent ethanol. It can be used in any gas-powered car.

Q: Does E-10 make engines run hotter?

A: No. The ethanol in E-10 Unleaded actually helps keep your engine cooler, since the ethanol in the fuel combusts at a lower temperature. In fact, many high-powered racing engines use pure alcohol for that very reason.

Q: Is E-10 bad for fuel injectors?

A: No. Ethanol and E-10 Unleaded have never contributed to burning or fouling of port fuel injectors. Some components in gasoline, such as olefins, have been identified as causing deposits that can foul injectors. Because ethanol burns 100% and leaves no residue, it can't contribute to the formation of deposits. The ethanol in E-10 actually helps fuel injectors cleaner-helping improve engine performance. It does not increase corrosion, nor will it harm any seals or valves.

Q: Does E-10 cause vapor lock?

A: No. Vapor pressure specifications of gasoline continue to be lowered by state and federal statute, virtually eliminating the vapor lock problems that were reported in the past. The vapor pressure of gasoline is set by state law, and is lower in the spring and summer than in the fall and winter. Vapor lock usually occurs when a winter grade of gasoline formulated for cold weather starts is used under summer-like conditions. (Remember: 90% of E-10 Unleaded is gasoline, so the formulation of the base gasoline has a dramatic effect on performance.) Also, all major auto manufacturers now have in-tank fuel pumps which are not subject to vapor lock like the older in-line fuel pumps.

Q: Does E-10 plug fuel lines?

A: No. Today occurrences of plugged fuel filters are virtually non-existent. The cleansing nature of E-10 can actually keep your fuel system cleaner and lead to improved performance. In the case of dirty fuel systems, contaminants and residues that have been deposited by previous gasoline fills can be loosened. That residue can get caught in the fuel filter. In older cars, especially those made prior to 1975, replacing the filter solves the problem, and once your fuel system is clean, your car's performance should improve as well.

Q: Does 10% ethanol reduce gas mileage?

A: No. Many variables affect fuel economy, including seasons, the weather, the state of your car, road grade, tire pressure, and the use of air conditioners. Most drivers using E10 see an increase or no difference in fuel economy.

Q: Why do some auto mechanics tell people not to use E-10?

A: A mechanic who says not to use E-10 simply does not have correct information—particularly since every major automaker in the world approves the use of 10 percent ethanol fuel.

Q: Can E-10 be used in older cars?

A: The formulation of gasoline has changed dramatically over the past few years without affecting the performance of older cars. Many older cars were designed to run on leaded gasoline, with the lead providing necessary octane for performance—and the lead oxides that were formed during combustion provided a cushion that reduced wear on non-case-hardened valve seats. When lead was phased out of gasoline, oil companies added chemicals to raise the octane rating—and other additives to replace the "lubrication" value of lead. The ethanol in E-10 raises octane in gasoline by three points using a natural, renewable additive that works well in older engines.

Q: Can I use E10 in small engines?

A: YES! E-10 is perfectly acceptable in lawn mowers, snowmobiles, and other small engines. Manufacturers of this equipment know that more than 40% of the gasoline sold across the U.S. contains oxygenates such as ethanol, so they've made certain that their engines perform on these clean-burning fuels. E-10 may be used anywhere that unleaded gasoline is used—from ATVs to chainsaws, from lawn mowers to personal watercraft. Virtually every small engine manufacturer approves the use of E-10 in its equipment.

Q: What is E85 and Can I Use It?

A: E85 is the term for fuel blends of 85 percent ethanol and just 15 percent gasoline. E-85 fuel can be used in flexible fuel vehicles that are designed to use any combination of gas and ethanol up to 85 percent ethanol. Today there are over 6 million FFVs on the road made by several leading manufacturers. Visit www.e85fuel.com to see if you have an FFV and to find E85 fueling locations.