

Preparing to Drive

You should do the following checks and adjustments every day before you drive your car.

1. Make sure all windows, mirrors, and outside lights are clean and unobstructed. Remove frost, snow, or ice.
2. Check that the hood and trunk are fully closed.
3. Visually check the tires. If a tire looks low, use a gauge to check its pressure.
4. Check that any items you may be carrying with you inside are stored properly or fastened down securely.
5. Check the adjustment of the seat (see page [93](#)).
6. Check the adjustment of the inside and outside mirrors (see page [98](#)).
7. Check the adjustment of the steering wheel (see page [71](#)).
8. Make sure the doors are securely closed and locked.
9. Fasten your seat belt. Check that your passengers have fastened their seat belts (see page [15](#)).
10. Turn the ignition switch ON (II). Check the indicator lights in the instrument panel.
11. Start the engine (see page [179](#)).
12. Check the gauges and indicator lights in the instrument panel (see page [53](#)).

1. Apply the parking brake.
2. In cold weather, turn off all electrical accessories to reduce the drain on the battery.
3. Make sure the shift lever is in Park. Press on the brake pedal.
4. Without touching the accelerator pedal, turn the ignition key to the START (III) position. If the engine does not start right away, do not hold the key in START (III) for more than 15 seconds at a time. Pause for at least 10 seconds before trying again.
5. If the engine does not start within 15 seconds, or starts but stalls right away, repeat step 4 with the accelerator pedal pressed half-way down. If the engine starts, release pressure on the accelerator pedal so the engine does not race.

6. If the engine still does not start, press the accelerator pedal all the way down and hold it there while starting in order to clear flooding. As before, keep the ignition key in the START (III) position for no more than 15 seconds. Return to step 5 if the engine does not start. If it starts, lift your foot off the accelerator pedal so the engine does not race.

Starting in Cold Weather at High Altitude (Above 8,000 feet/ 2,400 meters)

An engine is harder to start in cold weather. The thinner air found at high altitude above 8,000 feet (2,400 meters) adds to the problem. Use the following procedure:

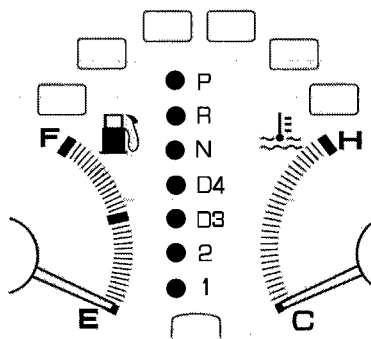
1. Turn off all electrical accessories to reduce the drain on the battery.
2. Push the accelerator pedal half-way to the floor and hold it there while starting the engine. Do not hold the ignition key in START (III) for more than 15 seconds. When the engine starts, release the accelerator pedal gradually as the engine speeds up and smooths out.
3. If the engine fails to start in step 2, push the accelerator pedal to the floor and hold it there while you try to start the engine for no more than 15 seconds. If the engine does not start, return to step 2.

Automatic Transmission

Your Acura's transmission has four forward speeds, and is electronically controlled for smoother shifting. It also has a "lock-up" torque converter for better fuel economy. You may feel what seems like another shift when the converter locks.

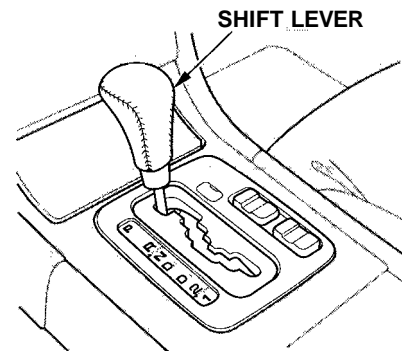
Shift Lever Position Indicator

This indicator between the fuel gauge and temperature gauge shows which position the shift lever is in.



The "D4" indicator comes on for a few seconds when you turn the ignition switch ON (II). If it flashes while driving (in any shift position), it indicates a possible problem in the transmission. Avoid rapid acceleration and have the transmission checked by an authorized Acura dealer as soon as possible.

Shift Lever Positions



The shift lever has seven positions. It must be in Park or Neutral to start the engine. When you are stopped in D4 D3, 2, 1, N or R, press firmly on the brake pedal, and keep your foot off the accelerator pedal.

Automatic Transmission

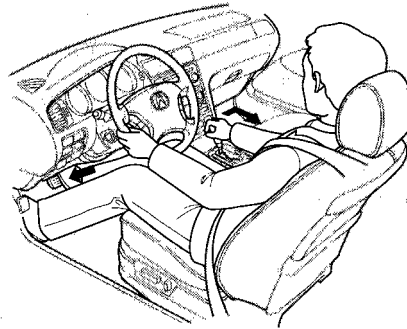
To shift from:	Do this:
P to R	Press the brake pedal.
N to R 2 to 1	Push down on the shift lever.
1 to 2 2 to D ₃ D ₃ to D ₄ D ₄ to N D ₄ to D ₃ D ₃ to 2 N to D ₄ R to N R to P	Move the lever.

Whenever you move the shift lever, slide it along the guide on the console.

Park (P) — This position mechanically locks the transmission. Use Park whenever you are turning off or starting the engine. To shift out of Park, you must press on the brake pedal and have your foot off the accelerator pedal. Move the shift lever to the right to shift out of the

Park position.

If you have done all of the above and still cannot move the lever out of Park, see Shift Lock Release on page [183](#).



To avoid transmission damage, come to a complete stop before shifting into Park. The shift lever must be in Park before you can remove the key from the ignition switch.

Reverse (R) — To shift to Reverse from Park, see the explanation under Park. To shift to Reverse from Neutral, come to a complete stop and then shift. Push down on the shift lever before shifting into Reverse from Neutral.

Neutral (N) — Use Neutral if you need to restart a stalled engine, or if it is necessary to stop briefly with the engine idling. Shift to Park position if you need to leave the car for any reason. Press on the brake pedal when you are moving the shift lever from Neutral to another gear.

CONTINUED

Automatic Transmission

Drive (D4) — Use this position for your normal driving. The transmission automatically selects a suitable gear for your speed and acceleration. You may notice the transmission shifting up at higher speeds when the engine is cold. This helps the engine warm up faster.

Drive (D3) — This position is similar to D4, except only the first three gears are selected. Use D3 when towing a trailer in hilly terrain, or to provide engine braking when going down a steep hill. D3 can also keep the transmission from cycling between third and fourth gears in stop-and-go driving.

For faster acceleration when in D3 or D4, you can get the transmission to automatically downshift by pushing the accelerator pedal to the floor. The transmission will shift down one or two gears, depending on your speed.

Second (2) — This position locks the transmission in second gear. It does not downshift to first gear when you come to a stop. Second gives you more power when climbing, and increased engine braking when going down steep hills. Use second gear when starting out on a slippery surface or in deep snow. It will help reduce wheelspin.

First (1) — To shift from Second to First, push down on the shift lever. With the lever in this position, the transmission locks in First gear. By upshifting and downshifting through 1, 2, D3 and D4, you can operate this transmission much like a manual transmission without a clutch pedal.

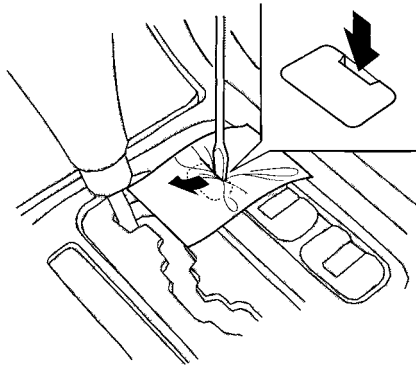
Engine Speed Limiter

If you exceed the maximum speed for the gear you are in, the engine speed will enter into the tachometer's red zone. If this occurs, you may feel the engine cut in and out. This is caused by a limiter in the engine's computer controls. The engine will run normally when you reduce the RPM below the red zone.

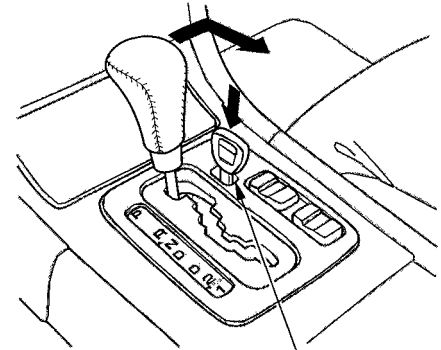
Shift Lock Release

This allows you to move the shift lever out of Park if the normal method of pushing on the brake pedal does not work.

1. Set the Parking brake.
2. Remove the key from the ignition switch.
3. Put a cloth on the edge of the Shift Lock Release slot cover next to the shift lever.
Use a small flat-tipped screwdriver or small metal plate (neither are included in the tool kit) to remove the cover. Carefully pry off the edge of the cover.



4. Insert the key in the Shift Lock Release slot.
5. Push down on the key and move the shift lever out of Park to Neutral.



SHIFT LOCK RELEASE SLOT

6. Remove the key from the Shift Lock Release slot, then reinstall the cover. Make sure the notch on the cover is on the right side. Depress the brake pedal and restart the engine.

If you need to use the Shift Lock Release, it means your car is developing a problem. Have the car checked by your Acura dealer.

Parking

Always use the parking brake when you park your car. The indicator on the instrument panel shows that the parking brake is not fully released; it does not indicate that the parking brake is firmly set. Make sure the parking brake is set firmly or your car may roll if it is parked on an incline.

Set the parking brake before you put the transmission in Park. This keeps the car from moving and putting pressure on the parking mechanism in the transmission — making it easier to move the shift lever out of Park when you want to drive away.

If the car is facing uphill, turn the front wheels away from the curb.

If the car is facing downhill, turn the front wheels toward the curb.

Make sure the parking brake is fully released before driving away. Driving with the parking brake partially set can overheat or damage the rear brakes.

Parking Tips

- Make sure the moonroof and the windows are closed.
- Turn off the lights.
- Place any packages, valuables, etc., in the trunk or take them with you.
- Lock the doors with the key or the remote transmitter. Check the indicator on the driver's door to verify that the security system is set.
- Never park over dry leaves, tall grass, or other flammable materials. The three way catalytic converter gets very hot, and could cause these materials to catch on fire.

Your Acura is equipped with disc brakes at all four wheels. A power assist helps reduce the effort needed on the brake pedal. The ABS helps you retain steering control when braking very hard.

Put your foot on the brake pedal only when you intend to brake. Resting your foot on the pedal keeps the brakes applied lightly, causing them to build up heat. Heat build-up can reduce how well your brakes work. It also keeps your brake lights on all the time, confusing drivers behind you.

Constant application of the brakes when going down a long hill builds up heat and reduces their effectiveness. Use the engine to assist the brakes by downshifting to a lower gear and taking your foot off the accelerator pedal.

Check your brakes after driving through deep water. Apply the brakes moderately to see if they feel normal. If not, apply them gently and frequently until they do. Since a longer distance is needed to stop with wet brakes, be extra cautious and alert in your driving.

Brake Wear Indicators

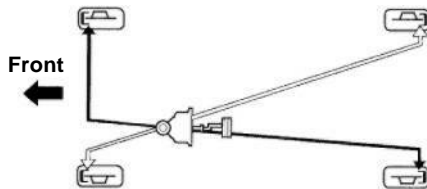
All four brakes have audible brake wear indicators. When the brake pads need replacing, you will hear a distinctive metallic "screeching" sound when you apply the brakes. If you do not have the brake pads replaced, they will begin screeching all the time.

Your brakes may sometimes squeal or squeak when you apply them lightly. Do not confuse this with the brake wear indicators. They make a very audible "screeching."

The Braking System

Brake System Design

The hydraulic system that operates the brakes has two separate circuits. Each circuit works diagonally across the car (the left-front brake is connected with the right-rear brake, etc.). If one circuit should develop a problem, you will still have braking at two wheels.



Anti-lock Brakes

Your car has an Anti-lock Brake System (ABS) as standard equipment. ABS helps to prevent the wheels from locking up and skidding during hard braking, allowing you to retain steering control.

When the front tires skid, you lose steering control; the car continues straight ahead even though you turn the steering wheel. The ABS helps to prevent lock-up and helps you retain steering control by pumping the brakes rapidly; much faster than a person can do it.

The ABS also balances the front-to rear braking distribution according to vehicle loading.

You should never pump the brake pedal, this defeats the purpose of the ABS. Let the ABS work for you by always keeping firm, steady pressure on the brake pedal as you steer away from the hazard. This is sometimes referred to as *"stomp and steer."*

You will feel a pulsation in the brake pedal when the ABS activates, and you may hear some noise. This is normal, it is the ABS rapidly pumping the brakes.

Activation varies with the amount of traction your tires have. On dry pavement, you will need to press on the brake pedal very hard before you activate the ABS. However, you may feel the ABS activate immediately if you are trying to stop on snow or ice.

Important Safety Reminders

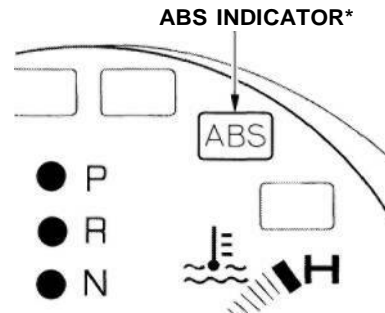
ABS does not reduce the time or distance it takes to stop the car, it only helps with steering control during braking. You should always maintain a safe following distance from other vehicles.

ABS will not prevent a skid that results from changing direction abruptly, such as trying to take a corner too fast or making a sudden lane change. Always drive at a safe, prudent speed for the road and weather conditions.

ABS cannot prevent a loss of stability. Always steer moderately when you are braking hard. Severe or sharp steering wheel movement can still cause your car to veer into oncoming traffic or off the road.

A vehicle with ABS may require a longer distance to stop on loose or uneven surfaces, such as gravel or snow, than a vehicle without anti-lock. Slow down and allow a greater distance between vehicles under those conditions.

ABS Indicator



* U.S. indicator shown

The ABS is self-checking. If anything goes wrong, the ABS indicator on the instrument panel comes on (see page 56). This means the anti-lock

function of the braking system has shut down. The brakes still work like a conventional system without anti-lock, providing normal stopping ability. You should have the dealer inspect your car as soon as possible if this light stays on after you start the engine, or comes on while driving.

CONTINUED

The Braking System

If the ABS indicator and the brake system indicator come on together, and the parking brake is fully released, the front-to-rear braking distribution system may also shut down.

Test your brakes as instructed on page [285](#) . If the brakes feel normal, drive slowly and have your car repaired by your dealer as soon as possible. Avoid sudden hard braking which could cause the rear wheels to lock up and possibly lead to a loss of control.

The VSA system indicator may come on along with the ABS indicator if there is a problem with the anti-lock brake system.