

Preparing to Drive

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

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 seat adjustment (see page 88).
6. Check the adjustment of the inside and outside mirrors (see page 91).
7. Check the steering wheel adjustment (see page 78).
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 14).

When you start the engine, check the gauges and indicators in the instrument panel (see page 51).

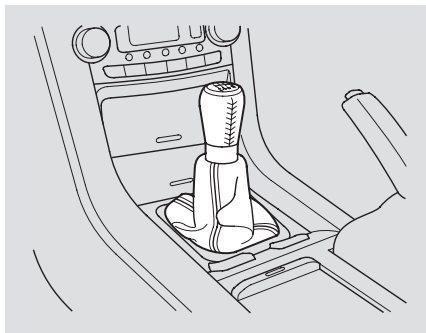
1. Apply the parking brake.
2. In cold weather, turn off all electrical accessories to reduce the drain on the battery.
3. *Manual Transmission:*
Push the clutch pedal down all the way.

Automatic Transmission:
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. Do not hold the key in START for more than 15 seconds at a time. If the engine does not start right away, 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 halfway down. If the engine starts, release pressure on the accelerator pedal so the engine does not race.
6. If the engine fails to start, press the accelerator pedal all the way down and hold it there while starting to clear flooding. If the engine still does not start, return to step 5.

NOTICE: *The engine is harder to start in cold weather. Also, the thinner air found at altitudes above 8,000 feet (2,400 meters) adds to this problem.*

6-speed Manual Transmission



The manual transmission is synchronized in all forward gears for smooth operation. It has a lockout so you cannot accidentally shift from fifth to Reverse instead of sixth (see page 180) while the vehicle is moving. When shifting up or down, make sure you push the clutch pedal down all the way, shift to the next gear, and let the pedal up gradually. When you are not shifting, do not rest your foot on the clutch pedal. This can cause your clutch to wear out faster.

Note: *The engine can be damaged if you inadvertently downshift into the wrong gear (for example, going from third gear at high rpms to second gear instead of upshifting to fourth gear; the rev limiter will not work in this situation).*

Come to a full stop before you shift into Reverse. You can damage the transmission by trying to shift into Reverse with the vehicle moving. Push down the clutch pedal, and pause for a few seconds before shifting into Reverse, or shift into one of the forward gears for a moment. This stops the gears so they won't "grind."

When slowing down, you can get extra braking from the engine by shifting to a lower gear. This extra braking can help you maintain a safe speed and prevent your brakes from overheating while going down a steep hill. Before downshifting, make sure the engine speed will not go into the tachometer's red zone in the lower gear.

WARNING

Rapid slowing or speeding-up can cause loss of control on slippery surfaces. If you crash, you can be injured.

Use extra care when driving on slippery surfaces.

Recommended Shift Points

Drive in the highest gear that lets the engine run and accelerate smoothly. This will give you the best fuel economy and effective emissions control. The following shift points are recommended:

Shift up	Normal acceleration
1st to 2nd	17 mph (27 km/h)
2nd to 3rd	27 mph (43 km/h)
3rd to 4th	36 mph (58 km/h)
4th to 5th	41 mph (66 km/h)
5th to 6th	44 mph (71 km/h)

Engine Speed Limiter

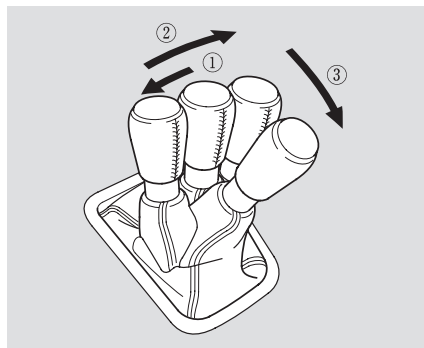
If you exceed the maximum speed for the gear you are in, the engine speed will enter into the tachometer's red zone. If this occurs, you may feel the engine cut in and out. This is caused by a limiter in the engine's computer controls. The engine will run normally when you reduce the RPM below the red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

Before downshifting, make sure the engine will not go into the tachometer's red zone.

6-speed Manual Transmission

Reverse Lockout

The 6-speed manual transmission has an electric lockout so you cannot accidentally shift from fifth to Reverse instead of sixth. If you cannot shift to Reverse when the vehicle is stopped:

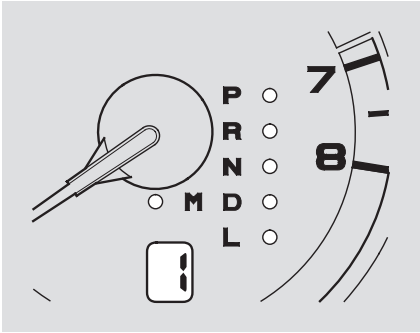


1. With the clutch pedal pressed, move the shift lever to the first/second gear side of the Neutral gate, then shift to Reverse.

2. If you are still unable to shift to Reverse, apply the parking brake and turn the ignition key to ACCESSORY (I) or LOCK (0).
3. Press the clutch pedal, and shift to Reverse.
4. With the clutch pedal still pressed, start the engine.

If you need to use this procedure to shift to Reverse, your vehicle may be developing a problem. Have the vehicle checked by your Acura dealer.

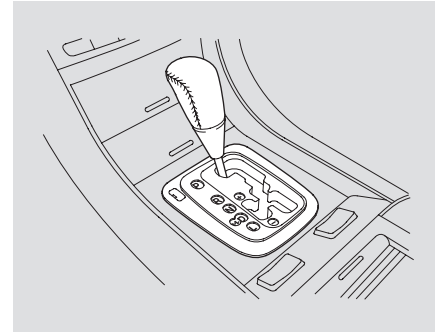
Shift Lever Position Indicators



These indicators on the instrument panel show which position the shift lever is in. The illuminated number next to the “L” indicator shows you the gear you have selected in the Sequential SportShift mode.

The “D” indicator comes on for a few seconds when you turn the ignition switch to 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 Acura dealer as soon as possible.

Shifting



To shift from any position, press firmly on the brake pedal. You cannot shift out of Park when the ignition switch is in the LOCK (0) or ACCESSORY (I) position.

CONTINUED

Automatic Transmission

To shift from:	Do this:
P to R	Press the brake pedal, then move the shift lever.
R to N N to D D to L L to D D to N N to R R to P	Move the lever.

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.

If you have done all of the above and still cannot move the lever out of Park, see **Shift Lock Release** on page 185 .

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) – Press the brake pedal to shift from Park to Reverse. To shift from Neutral to Reverse, come to a complete stop and then shift.

Your vehicle has a reverse lockout so you cannot accidentally shift to Reverse from Neutral or any other driving position when the vehicle speed exceeds 5–6 mph (8–10 km/h).

If you cannot shift to Reverse when the vehicle is stopped, press the brake pedal and slowly shift to Neutral, and then to Reverse.

If there is a problem in the reverse lockout system, or your vehicle's

battery is disconnected or goes dead, you cannot shift to Reverse. (Refer to Shift Lock Release on page 185).

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 the Park position if you need to leave your vehicle for any reason. Press on the brake pedal when you are moving the shift lever from Neutral to another gear.

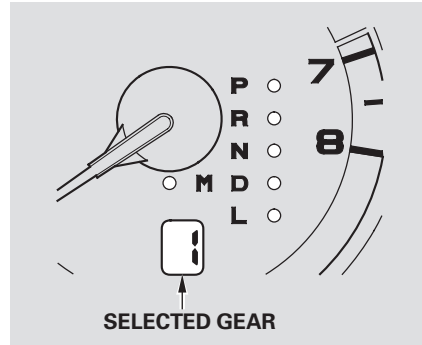
Drive (D) – Use this position for your normal driving. The transmission automatically selects a suitable gear for your speed and acceleration.

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

Low (L) – When you move the shift lever to this position, the transmission shifts to the lowest gear that can be selected without exceeding the engine redline. At normal speeds, it selects third gear. As the vehicle slows, it selects second gear at about 53 mph (85 km/h), and first gear at about 28 mph (45 km/h). Accelerating in first gear, the transmission upshifts to second gear at about 37 mph (59 km/h). You must move the shift lever to D for the transmission to upshift to third gear.

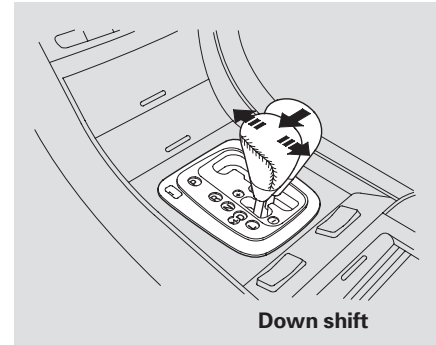
Sequential SportShift Mode – With the shift lever in “D” position, you can select the Sequential SportShift Mode to shift gears much like a manual transmission, but without a clutch pedal.

To enter the Sequential SportShift Mode, move the shift lever further to the driver’s side. To return to “D,” move the shift lever to the passenger’s side.



When you move the shift lever from “D” to the Sequential SportShift mode, the display shows the selected gear.

In Sequential SportShift mode, each time you push forward on the shift lever, the transmission shifts to a higher gear. Pull back on the lever to downshift. The number of the gear selected is displayed on the instrument panel.



When you accelerate away from a stop, the transmission will start in first gear and then automatically upshift to second gear. You have to manually upshift between second and fifth gears. Make sure you upshift before the engine speed reaches the tachometer’s red zone. The transmission remains in the selected gear (5, 4, 3). There is no automatic downshift when you push the accelerator pedal to the floor.

CONTINUED

Automatic Transmission

The transmission may automatically downshift from the higher gear to the lower gear under these conditions:

Driving on level roads and downhill

To shift from	Speed range
4 → 3	under 18 mph (29 km/h)
5 → 4	under 38 mph (60 km/h)

Driving uphill

To shift from	Speed range
4 → 3	under 41 mph (65 km/h)
5 → 4	under 47 mph (75 km/h)

Downshifting gives you more power when climbing, and provides engine braking when going down a steep hill.

The transmission will also shift automatically as the vehicle comes to a complete stop. It will downshift to first gear when the vehicle speed is under 9 mph (15 km/h).

If you try to manually downshift at a speed that would cause the engine to exceed the redline in a lower gear, the transmission will not downshift. The gear indicator will flash the number of the lower gear several times, then return to the higher gear.

If the vehicle speed slows to below the redline of the selected lower gear position while the indicator is flashing, the transmission will downshift and the display will show the selected lower gear.

The table shows the speed ranges for upshifting and downshifting.

To shift from	Speed range
1 → 2	over 0 mph (0 km/h)
2 → 3	over 9 mph (15 km/h)
3 → 4	over 18 mph (29 km/h)
4 → 5	over 37 mph (60 km/h)

To shift from	Speed range
3 → 2	under 63 mph (102 km/h)
4 → 3	under 97 mph (156 km/h)
5 → 4	under 149 mph (240 km/h)

Starting in Second Gear

When you are in Sequential Sportshift mode, and the vehicle is stopped, push forward on the shift lever to shift to second gear. You will see “2” in the display. Starting out in second gear will help to reduce wheelspin in deep snow or on a slippery surface.

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

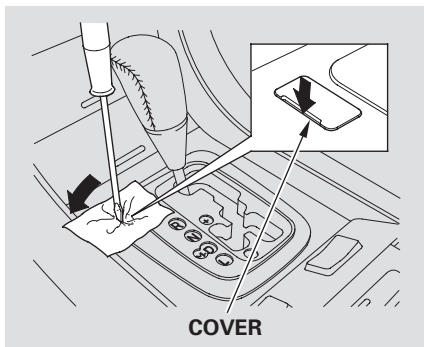
This allows you to move the shift lever out of Park if the normal method of pushing on the brake pedal does not work. This procedure is also used to release the Reverse Lockout.

1. Set the Parking brake.
2. Make sure the ignition switch is in the LOCK (0) position.

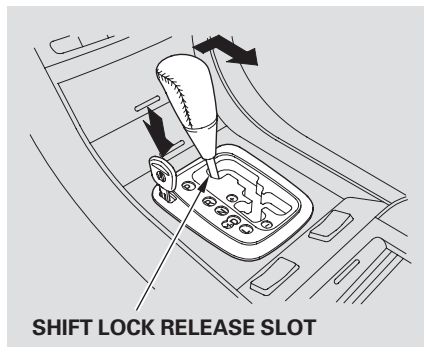
To release the Reverse Lockout, make sure the ignition switch is in the ACCESSORY (I) position.

CONTINUED

Automatic Transmission



- 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 a metal fingernail file to remove the cover. Carefully pry on the edge of the cover.



- Insert a key into the Shift Lock Release slot.
- Push down on the key and move the shift lever out of Park to Neutral.

To release the Reverse Lockout, move the shift lever from Neutral to Reverse, then to Park.

- 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. Press the brake pedal, and restart the engine.

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

Always use the parking brake when you park your vehicle. Make sure the parking brake is set firmly or your vehicle may roll if it is parked on an incline.

If your vehicle has an automatic transmission, set the parking brake before you put the transmission in Park. This keeps the vehicle from moving and putting pressure on the parking mechanism in the transmission.

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.
- Never park over dry leaves, tall grass, or other flammable materials. The hot three way catalytic converter could cause these materials to catch on fire.
 - If the vehicle is facing uphill, turn the front wheels away from the curb. If you have a manual transmission, put it in first gear.
 - If the vehicle is facing downhill, turn the front wheels toward the curb. If you have a manual transmission, put it in reverse gear.
 - 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.

Braking System

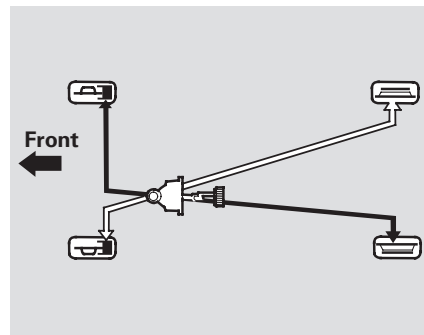
Your Acura is equipped with disc brakes at all four wheels. A power assist helps reduce the effort needed on the brake pedal. The ABS helps you retain steering control when braking very hard.

Resting your foot on the pedal keeps the brakes applied lightly, builds up heat, and reduces their effectiveness. 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 taking your foot off the accelerator and downshifting to a lower gear.

Check the 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. Be extra cautious in your driving.

Braking System Design



The hydraulic system that operates the brakes has two separate circuits. Each circuit works diagonally across the vehicle (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.

Brake Wear Indicators

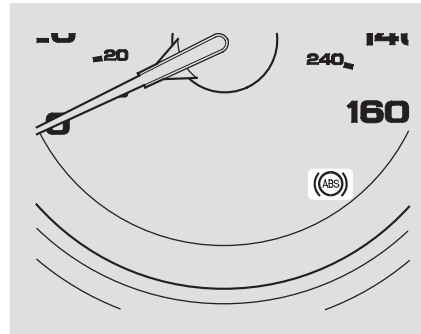
If the brake pads need replacing, you will hear a distinctive, metallic screeching sound when you apply the brake pedal. If you do not have the brake pads replaced, they will screech all the time. It is normal for the brakes to occasionally squeal or squeak when you apply them.

The Anti-lock Brake System (ABS) helps prevent the brakes from locking up and helps you retain steering control by pumping the brakes rapidly, much faster than a person can do it.

You should never pump the brake pedal. Let the ABS work for you by always keeping firm, steady pressure on the brake pedal. This is sometimes referred to as “stomp and steer.”

You will feel a pulsation in the brake pedal when the ABS activates, and may hear some noise. This is normal: it is the ABS rapidly pumping the brakes. On dry pavement, you will need to press on the brake pedal very hard before the ABS activates. However, you may feel the ABS activate immediately if you are trying to stop on snow or ice.

ABS Indicator



If the ABS indicator comes on, the anti-lock function of the braking system has shut down. The brakes still work like a conventional system, but without anti-lock. You should have the dealer inspect your vehicle as soon as possible.

Important Safety Reminders
ABS does not reduce the time or distance it takes to stop the vehicle; it only helps with steering control during braking.

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.

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 vehicle 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.

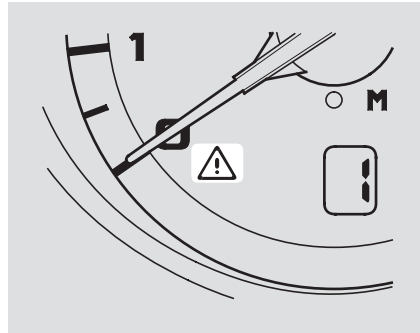
Vehicle Stability Assist (VSA) System

The Vehicle Stability Assist system helps to stabilize the vehicle during cornering if the vehicle turns more or less than desired. It also assists you in maintaining traction while accelerating on loose or slippery road surfaces. It does this by regulating the engine's output, and by selectively applying the brakes.

When VSA activates, you may notice that the engine does not respond to the accelerator in the same way it does at other times.

In manual transmission models, if the VSA system is off and you accelerate from a stop, the vehicle may pull, and it may take extra effort to return the steering wheel to center.

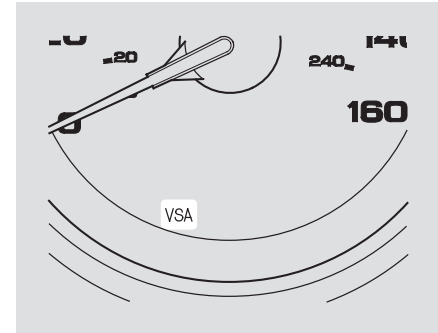
VSA Activation Indicator



The VSA system cannot enhance the vehicle's driving stability in all situations and does not control your vehicle's entire braking system. It is still your responsibility to drive and corner at reasonable speeds and to leave a sufficient margin of safety.

When VSA activates, you will see the VSA Activation indicator blink.

VSA System Indicator



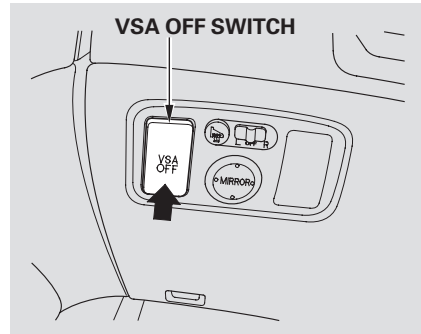
If the VSA system indicator comes on while driving, pull to the side of the road when it is safe, and turn off the engine. Reset the system by restarting the engine. If the VSA system indicator stays on, or comes back on while driving, have the VSA system inspected by an Acura dealer.

Vehicle Stability Assist (VSA) System

If the indicator does not come on when the ignition switch is turned to ON (II), there may be a problem with the VSA system. Have an Acura dealer inspect your vehicle as soon as possible.

Without VSA, your vehicle will have normal braking and cornering ability, but it will not have VSA traction and stability enhancement.

VSA Off Switch



This switch is under the left vent. Press it to turn the Vehicle Stability Assist system on and off.

When VSA is off, the VSA activation indicator comes on as a reminder. Pressing the switch again turns the system back on.

VSA is turned on every time you start the engine, even if you turned it off the last time you drove the vehicle.

VSA and Tire Sizes

Driving with varying tire or wheel sizes may cause the VSA to malfunction. When replacing tires, make sure they are the same size and type as your original tires (see page [224](#)).

Deactivate the VSA system if you need to drive with the compact spare tire installed (see page [230](#)).

If you install winter tires, make sure they are the same size as those that were originally supplied with your vehicle. Exercise the same caution during winter driving as you would if your vehicle was not equipped with VSA.

Towing a Trailer

Your vehicle is not designed to tow a trailer. Attempting to do so can void your warranties.