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# Easy Ways To Modernize Your 10-Year-Old Vehicle

(NAPS)—New cars offer the latest in infotainment, safety and convenience but what if you aren't in the market for a new ride? Fortunately, there are many aftermarket products that can add value to a car you've already paid off, and are often more advanced than factory-installed features on the road today.

"The aftermarket offers an array of options for car and truck owners," said Chris Kersting, president and CEO of the Specialty Equip-

ment Market Association (SEMA). The trade association represents the \$33 billion automotive specialty equipment industry that includes thousands of products that are available to enhance a vehicle's styling, performance, comfort and convenience. "Install these items into your older vehicle and you'll have all the latest technologies to enhance your driving—and your passengers'—experience."

## Bluetooth Integrating

Wireless functionality from your phone and other devices is an easy way to add convenience and, most importantly, a safer hands-free experience to your daily drive. The simplest and least expensive option is a stand-alone universal Bluetooth kit that works with any car stereo and comes with a small speaker and microphone. This option does not require any modifications but is limited to hands-free calling only.

## A New Receiver/Head Unit

The best option for adding Bluetooth calling and streaming is to purchase a new stereo with this technology built in. If music is your major motivation, you won't have to retire your old CDs, as there are plenty of units that still offer a disc player as well as a USB port to connect with your phone or with a portable drive for MP3/WMA playback, and an auxiliary input for universal connectivity.

correct speaker wire for peak performance. Heads Up Display (HUD) Aftermarket Heads Up Display (HUD) units mount to the dashboard in front of the steering wheel and project data onto a transparent screen or a transparent film mounted on the windshield in your line of sight. This allows you to receive turn-by-turn navigation, vehicle speed information, and lane guidance instructions while keeping your eyes on the road.

## Sound

Now that your trusty transportation has some new hands-free audio features, it's probably time to upgrade the sound quality in your ride. Go for speakers that fit in your car's pre-existing mounts, and add an amplifier and subwoofer for a clear and dynamic audio experience. Make sure you match your new speakers to the

## Portable Navigation Device

Smartphones offer plenty of navigation options, but the latest portable navigation devices (PND) go beyond simple driving directions. PNDs offer voice command, spoken direction, large screens, and real-time traffic updates. Many units even search points of interest from Yelp, Google, Trip-Advisor and more.

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## Blind Spot Monitoring

Relatively new even in the latest vehicles, blind spot monitoring systems detect cars that may be out of your line of sight. The kit relies on two front and two rear sensors mounted to the bumper that work together to detect a vehicle in your blind spot, and an LED display inside your vehicle lights up on the appropriate side when one is detected. An audible alarm will then sound if you then signal and intend to change lanes.

## Rearview Camera

Rearview cameras help drivers see what is behind them when the car is in reverse. A complete setup includes a camera mounted to the rear of the vehicle, a receiver, and a display mounted on the dashboard. Major manufacturers of aftermarket head units offer camera add-on packages to their receivers with in-dash display, and some GPS units offer the add-on as well, making the update inexpensive and easy to install.

## Vehicle Tracking & Telematics

There are a few products that offer detailed information about your vehicle via real-time notifications from your smartphone, including driving habits, fuel, engine and battery monitoring, and engine trouble code translation. The device will even send mobile alerts when the car arrives at a certain location, travels beyond a preset GPS "fence" or exceeds a specified speed limit... ideal for anyone who wants to

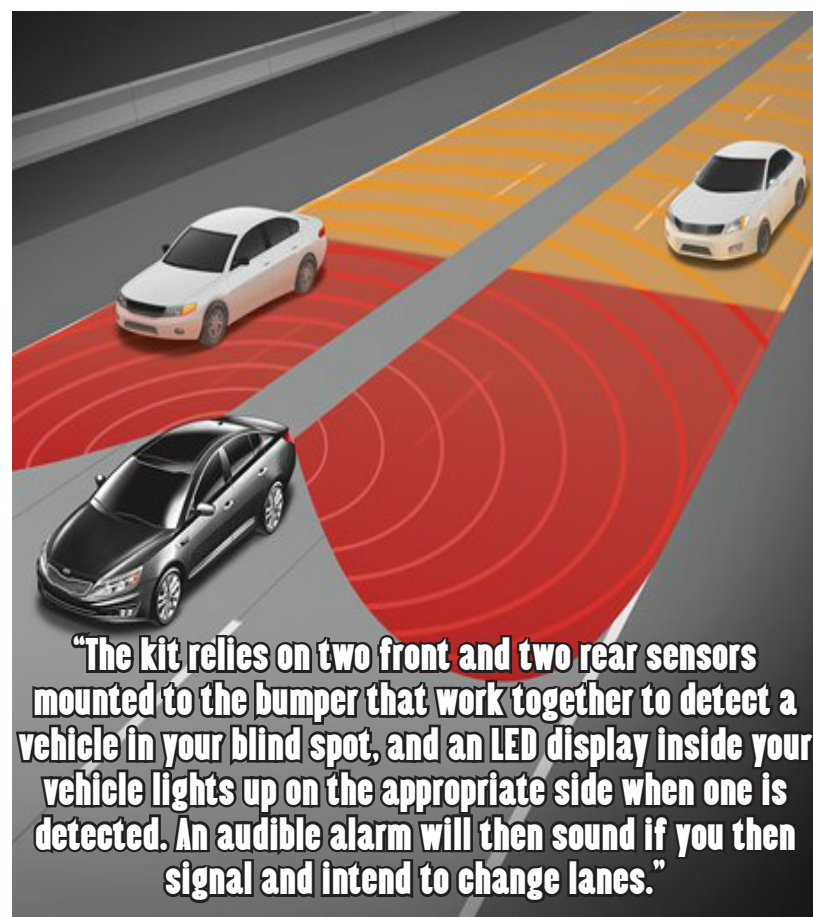
keep tabs on their 10-year-old car when others are behind the wheel.

To learn more about products and accessories to modernize your car or truck, visit [www.semaignited.com](http://www.semaignited.com).

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# Don't Forget To Replace Your Vehicle's Brake Hardware

(NAPS)—Brakes are a critical component for maintaining vehicle safety. Whether it's trying to stop your vehicle on an icy, snow-packed road or slowing down on a rain-soaked highway, properly functioning brakes are key to maintaining control of the vehicle.

However, brake wear can compromise vehicle performance and, ultimately, threaten vehicle safety. AAA en-

courages motorists to have a certified technician inspect their brakes to ensure they are ready for whatever Mother Nature has to offer.

John Nielsen, director, AAA Auto Repair and Buying Services, noted that there are several warning signs that motorists should closely monitor to identify and resolve brake wear before it can impact vehicle safety.

"Often, the first sign of worn brakes is a brake pedal that seems to require more pressure to stop the vehicle. Scraping, squeaking or chirping noises that come from the wheels when the brakes are applied are other signs of potentially excessive brake wear. A car that pulls to the left or right when the brakes are applied could also mean trouble," Nielsen said.

He further advis-

es consumers to ask for an annual brake inspection when taking their vehicle into an auto repair shop for service.

According to Chris Miller, Product Development Engineer, of International Brake Industries (IBI), consumers should ask their technician to also inspect their vehicle's brake hardware in order to ensure that their vehicle receives a complete brake job. Miller explained that brake noise is the No. 1 cause of dissatisfaction and complaints about brake systems. Brake noise is usually caused by the vibration of components

that are not properly installed and secured—typically, it's not the fault of brake pads or shoes, but it can more likely be caused by worn-out brake hardware. He added that, like most mechanical parts, brake hardware will wear out over time and can't function if the parts are corroded or stretched. If brake hardware is worn, it can even cause newly installed brake pads to wear out prematurely, reducing the life span of the pads and shoes.

Brake hardware—including clips, bolts, rubber bushings, rubber seals and

springs—is integral to the proper operation of the vehicle's entire braking system. "It's very common for drivers to leave an auto repair shop with newly replaced pads and shoes, but still experience brake noise because their brake hardware was not replaced," Miller said. "We have a simple message for consumers: For a few extra dollars, you can protect your investment in brake pads and shoes and ensure optimum performance by also replacing your vehicle's brake hardware."

To reduce brake noise and drag

(that is, brake pad friction, which can affect fuel economy), IBI recently introduced the new line of QuietGlide® brake clips. QuietGlide brake clips feature a coating of vulcanized rubber on one side to reduce brake noise and a low-friction PTFE coating on the other side of the clip to reduce drag. By installing new QuietGlide brake clips, consumers are truly receiving a complete brake job—ensuring smoother, quieter riding brakes and extending the life of their brake pads and shoes.

For more information, visit [www.complete-brakejob.com](http://www.complete-brakejob.com).

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# GIVE YOUR CAR OR TRUCK THE MAKEOVER IT AND YOU DESERVE

(NAPS)—Longing for the days when you felt good about driving your car, truck or SUV? With the average new-car price over \$30,000, there are many reasons to hang on to the one you have. But maybe the one you have seems a bit too tired to keep. What your car needs is a makeover.

A little nip-tuck, new shoes and a few shiny accessories can make your vehicle exciting again without breaking the bank. Consumers spend more than \$33 billion annually to personalize their vehicles, according to the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA), the trade organization representing the automotive aftermarket industry.

"The possibilities are tremendous. You'd be amazed how just a few hundred dollars of accessories can completely change and enhance a vehicle's

looks or performance," said Chris Kersting, SEMA president and CEO.

Here are a few things for a great vehicle makeover:

## WHEELS & TIRES:

One of the easiest and most cost-effective ways to freshen up the look and improve the safety, comfort and performance of any vehicle is to get new "shoes"—a set of custom wheels and specialty/performance tires.

There are literally thousands of combinations to choose from. Start at a local tire shop or specialty wheel store where they can tell you what fits your vehicle and budget,

present some options and do the installation.

## MOBILE ELECTRONICS:

Another way to make your vehicle cool and more fun to drive is to install some

modern mobile electronics. Today's selection of car audio equipment, navigation systems, backup cameras and more is broad and can fit a range of budgets. Plus, they can be



Great Ideas for Father's Day!

## WINDOW TINT

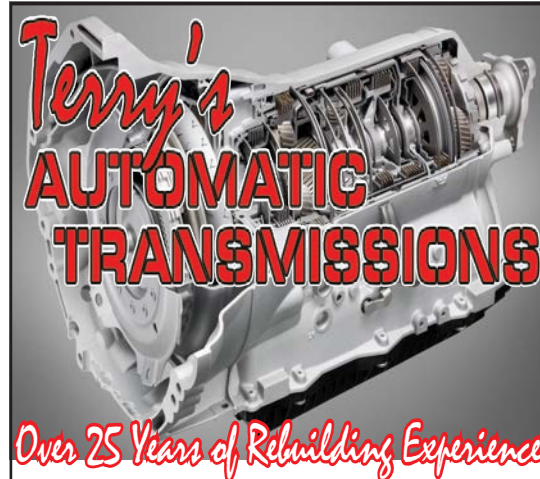
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installed on just about any vehicle and instantly make the drive more convenient.

## LED LIGHTING:

Once the domain of clunky and inefficient incandescent bulbs, accessory lighting has moved to LED technology with nearly limitless applications. Fog lights, driving lights, work lights and even interior lights are now available in compact LED format, which uses less energy, emits less heat and can be many times brighter.

## RUNNING BOARDS:

If you're feeling like your truck

or SUV has gotten taller since you've owned it, it probably means you're just a little less excited about climbing in and out of it. A set of running boards under the doors can make ingress and egress more comfortable and elegant.

Don't like the look? There are running boards that can automatically extend and retract for a clean look and great functionality when needed.

## BED

## ORGANIZERS:

There's a lot of space in a pickup truck bed

and not all of it is needed all the time. Bed organizers have roll-out drawers and load-carrying tops to keep cargo safe and organized.

## SUSPENSION PARTS:

Like anything that happens gradually, springs and shocks often wear out almost imperceptibly, allowing for less control. A fresh set will get your ride feeling like new and help you drive safer. If you choose, you can even install upgraded models for better-than-new ride and handling.

## ENGINE PERFORMANCE:

There are several ways to make improvements to your engine. "Bolt-on" parts let your engine breathe easier for increased power and efficiency. If you're really serious, you may want to consider having a supercharger installed to increase horsepower significantly. There are kits for many popular cars and trucks, especially V-8s.

## RESTYLING:

Improving your vehicle's looks goes beyond custom wheels. There are plenty of companies

that make cosmetic body kits that, when properly installed, can make your vehicle look sportier or more aggressive.

## WRAPS:

If the paint on your car is worn out, consider getting it wrapped. Several companies offer hundreds of color and pattern options that are a good alternative to having your car resprayed. The best thing is, they're durable, removable and affordable, so you can change them as often as you like.

## CAR CARE:

You'd be amazed at how much you can improve and protect the appearance of your vehicle with a good, old-fashioned deep cleaning and polishing. Automotive cleaners, soaps and waxes are available for all surfaces and materials and can be purchased at auto parts stores nationwide.

"It never ceases to amaze me how innovative this industry is," said Kersting. "If you can think of a product you'd like to have, it's likely available. Visit your local auto custom retailer or go online to find the products you want. And if it's not available now, it soon will be!"

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# Get The Most From Your Car's AC Year-Round

(NAPS)—It may seem surprising to some, but the road to a healthy vehicle air-conditioning system in the summertime—begins in the wintertime. That's because in addition to cooling your vehicle, one of your air conditioner's primary functions is to remove humidity from inside your vehicle, and it works especially well when you need to remove fog from the windshield to improve visibility.

It is, therefore, a good idea to run the defrost mode of the air conditioner once a week for 10 minutes—even when it's cold outside—to help maintain the system and prevent mildew and musty odors. Helpful Hints Here are more tips to help you get more mileage out of your air conditioner—so you don't lose your cool.

• Because refrigerant gas can slowly leak from the system, have your air-conditioning system inspected and, if needed, recharged by a trained technician about every

two years in the spring—before the weather really heats up.



**"Slightly lower the windows on hot days to reduce heat buildup in a parked car. Your air conditioner works by removing heat and humidity, so the cooler the interior, the easier and faster the A/C can do its job."**

• Consult your owner's manual to see how your system works. With today's automatic systems, the quickest cooldown comes by setting the temperature as low as it will go at first, then adjusting it later.

• Newer models have cabin air filters that clean the air entering the heating and air-conditioning system. Check your owner's manual for location and replacement interval.

• If possible, slightly lower the windows on hot days to reduce heat buildup in a parked car. Your air conditioner works by removing heat and humidity, so the cooler the inte-

rior, the easier and faster the A/C can do its job.

doors to vent the hot air before turning on the system.

the "outside" air mode.

Serious air-conditioning issues should be addressed by a professional service facility with the proper tools, training and parts. For example, ACDelco Professional Service Center Program technicians have access to top-quality ACDelco

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