Nine Reasons Toyota Vehicle Maintenance Matters

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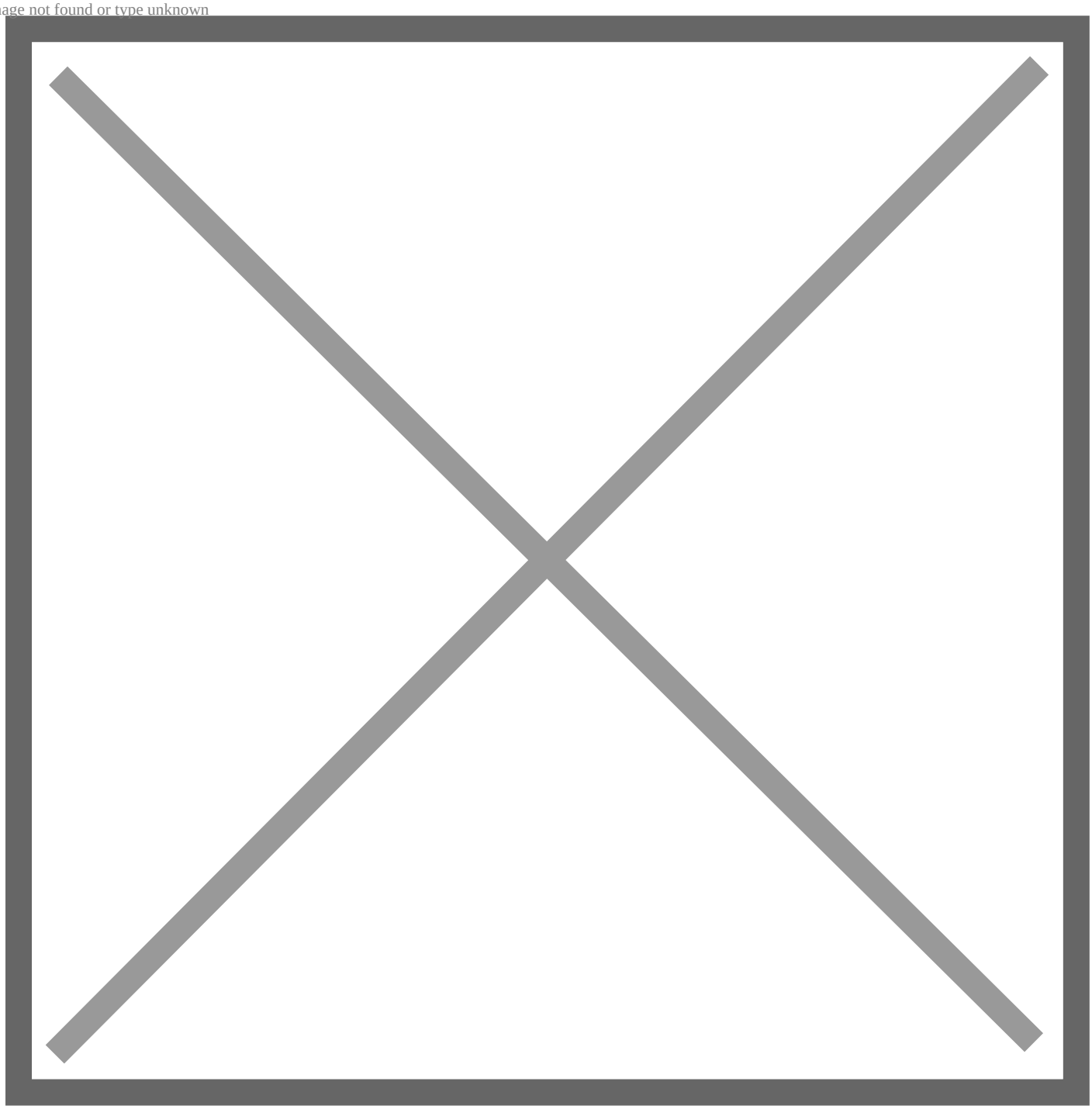


Keeping a vehicle well maintained is paramount for its long-term health and performance.

Some drivers don't realize just how much scheduled maintenance can affect a vehicle's longevity and performance — and that includes electrified vehicles (EVs), too, which also need routine care.

While EVs bypass oil changes, their systems, including the electric powertrain, brakes, cooling systems and fluids, still need expert attention to help ensure optimal operation and battery health.

Beyond routine checks like oil levels (for gasoline vehicles) and tire tread, a mechanic — especially a Toyota service professional — carefully inspects critical components, from suspension to the powertrain, pinpointing potential issues early to help prevent costly problems that might otherwise go unnoticed.

That's why drivers should schedule service appointments they might have otherwise been delaying.

Joe Clarke, the manager of Service Operations at Toyota Motor North America's (TMNA) corporate headquarters and a self-proclaimed "gear head," has dedicated his life to vehicles, starting at age 13. With nearly three decades in TMNA's service department, he's seen it all.

Here are his top tips for providing your vehicle with the care it deserves:

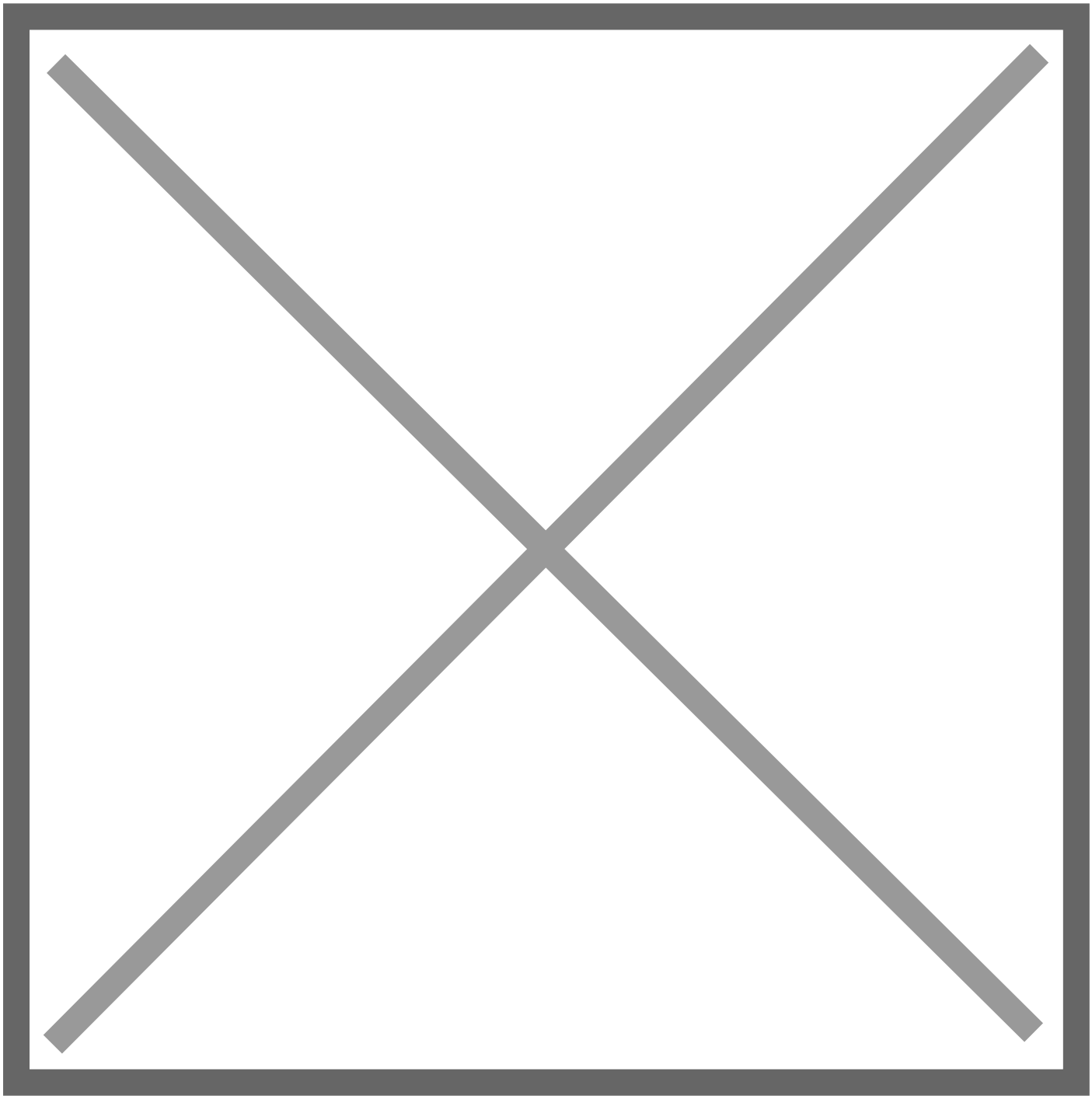
Don't Delay Service Appointments
Some Toyota drivers know the stickers left on their vehicle after service, but fewer realize the handwritten date marks the absolute latest they should wait for their next check-up.

Ideally, they should schedule service at least a few weeks in advance of the date on the sticker. How often depends on the vehicle, driving conditions (see more below), and several other factors.

The absence of oil changes is one of the primary maintenance distinctions between EVs and gas vehicles. However, this often may lead to the misconception that EVs require less frequent service. Scheduled inspections are needed for both gas and EVs to help vehicle longevity and performance.

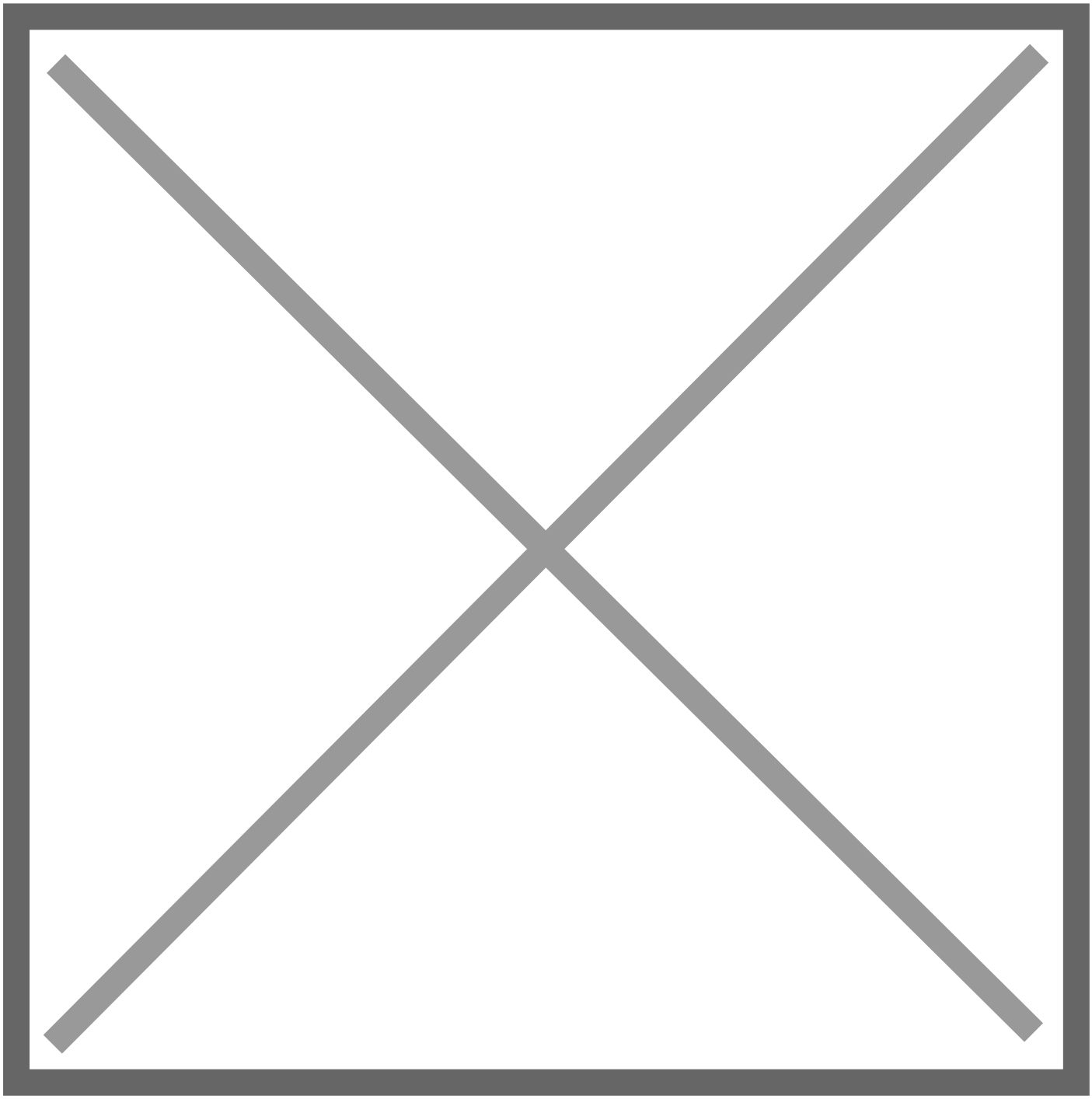
Drivers should check their maintenance guides, usually found along with their vehicle manuals to refer to scheduled maintenance dates. Toyota owners can access their manuals and warranties on the Toyota website.

Keep Close Tabs on The Tires



Some EVs may wear tires much faster than gasoline vehicles due to their high torque and heavy regenerative braking, reducing tire lifespan. That’s why inspection is recommended every 5,000 miles.

Skip DIYs When it Comes to EVs



When it comes to EVs, always refer to certified professionals. So, anytime you pop the hood, you don’t want to mess with any of the high voltage wiring if you don’t have the proper training. If you’re not BEV or hybrid certified, you should not touch anything high voltage.

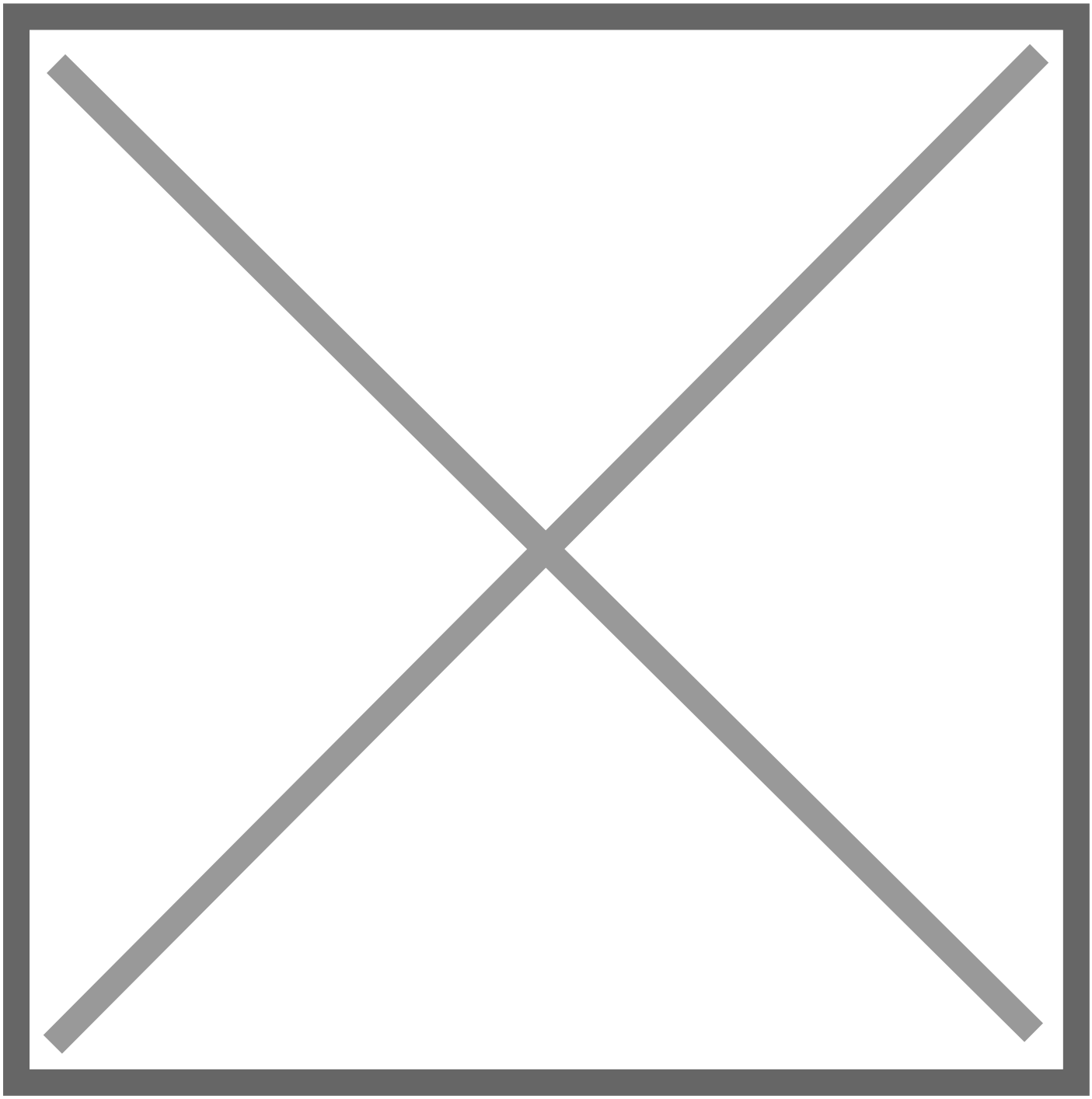
Pay Attention to the Little Things

A squeak under the hood, a small puddle in a parking spot, or an A/C that’s not quite cold may seem minor, but they can be early signs that something is off. Catching these issues early can often help prevent a bigger, more expensive repair later.

Don’t Overlook the Big Things

If small issues can become costly later, big ones can too. So, if you notice basic functions aren’t working right — like the accelerator or unusual loud noises — have a service professional check it out right away. If something seems off by sight, sound or smell, don’t wait to have it checked.

Vehicles Driven on the Adventurous Side May Need Some Extra TLC



**Off-roading is inherently dangerous. Abusive use may result in personal injury or vehicle damage.*

Drivers have different habits and more adventurous drivers may need to get their vehicles maintained more often. For example, a Toyota 4Runner used off-road or a Toyota GR86 taken to the track may need more attention than a Toyota Sienna used for daily errands.

Check the vehicle manual's excessive use section and talk with a service professional during routine visits to identify what needs closer inspection.

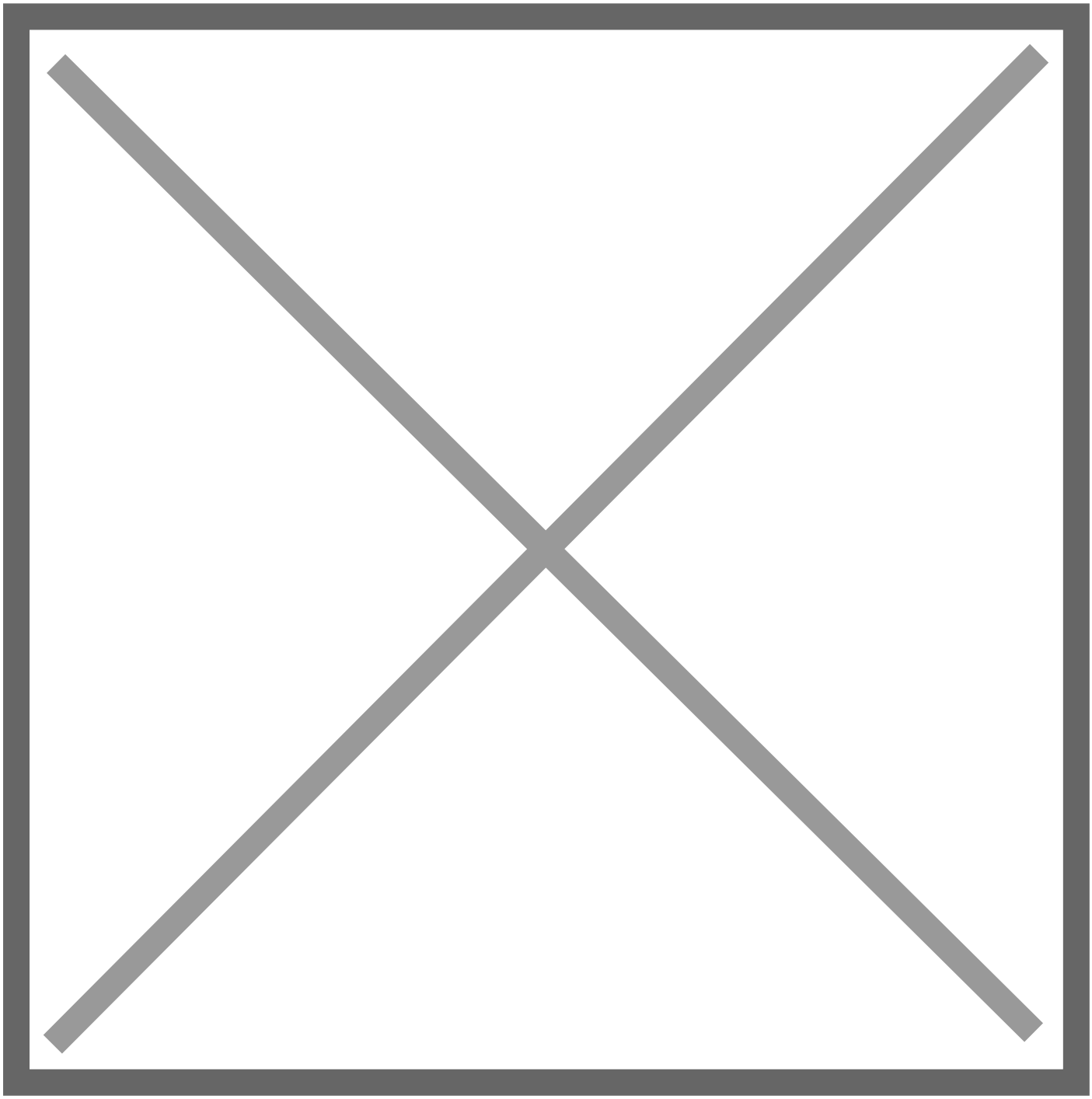
Frequent towing, rough or dirt roads can be considered extreme driving conditions. Short trips in a cold climate are also considered extreme driving conditions because the engine may not get to operating temperature, which may cause the oil to thicken and perform ineffectively.

Watch Tire Pressure to Cut Fuel Costs

Regular maintenance can save you money over time, but one benefit you may notice right away is better fuel economy. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, simple maintenance like keeping tires properly inflated can improve fuel economy by 6%.

If you drive a lot, that could add up to hundreds of dollars in savings each year. It's just one more reason to stay on top of regular service.

Maintain Your Vehicle to Boost its Resale Appeal



When it’s time to part with their current vehicle, drivers will want the strongest possible resale price. To help make that happen, maintenance is key.

In some cases, a well-cared-for vehicle can even be in better shape than one with fewer miles. Whether it’s going to a dealership through a program like Toyota Certified Used Vehicle or passed along to a family friend, the difference between a vehicle that’s been maintained and one that hasn’t often becomes clear after a quick test drive around the block.

Some Routine Vehicle Care Tips

- Test exterior lights monthly
- Check for adequate tire pressure and tread depth
- Change oil and oil filter on schedule
- Check for battery corrosion
- Replace windshield wipers
- Keep fluids at proper levels
- Wash vehicle regularly and apply wax
- Listen for unusual brake noise and inspect regularly
- Adhere to scheduled maintenance intervals for AC and all ventilation filters