

# STRETCH

YOUR DOLLAR



## Maintaining Your Manual Transmission

A manual transmission is connected to the engine by a driver-operated clutch, and is usually operated by a pedal or lever, and a gear stick, in order to control torque transfer from the internal combustion engine to the transmission. Manual transmissions are characterized by gear ratios that can be selected by "locking" the selected gear pairs to the output shaft inside the transmission. A typical five-speed transmission applies one of five different gear ratios to the input shaft to produce a different RPM value at the output shaft. The clutch rides on the input shaft, which turns at the same speed as the engine. Manual transmissions typically use four to six forward gears and one reverse gear, although they have been built with as few as two and as many as eight gears.

Manual transmissions usually offer better fuel economy than automatics. Additionally, they require less maintenance and are easier to repair since they have fewer moving parts and are mechanically much simpler. When driven correctly by a skilled driver, manual transmissions also last longer than automatic transmissions. Manual transmissions also generally offer a higher selection of gear ratios: many vehicles offer a 5-speed or 6-speed manual, whereas an automatic would typically be a 4-speed.

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