

Checking Fluids

Practical skills

The five fluids to check, how often, and what each colour tells you.

Reservoirs are colour-coded and marked in most modern cars.

Fluid	Check	Note
Engine oil	Monthly	Dipstick, cold, level ground
Coolant	Monthly	Never open hot
Brake fluid	Monthly	A falling level means wear or a leak
Screen wash	As needed	Use proper fluid, not water
Power steering	Occasionally	If not electric
Gearbox oil	Per schedule	Often sealed for life

Never open a hot coolant cap. The system is pressurised and releases scalding steam. Wait until it is cool to touch.