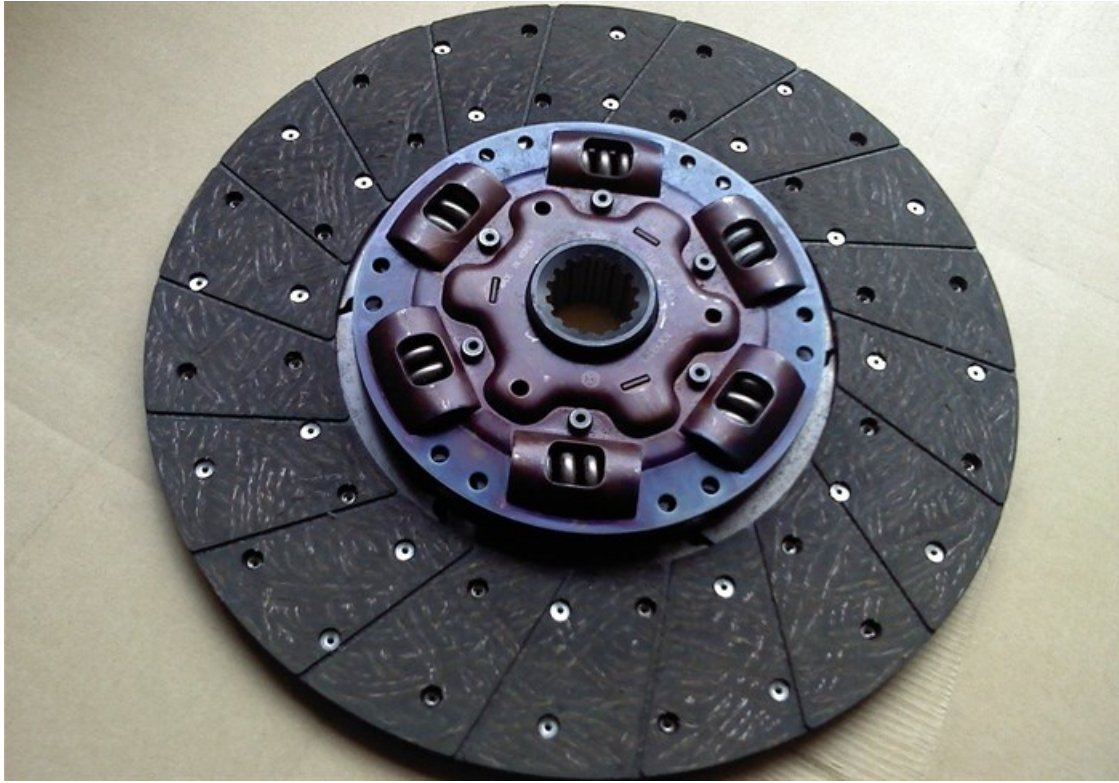


# 10 tips to help prolong the life of your clutch

Any learner driver can appreciate the frustrations of clutch control in a manual vehicle. Mastering this is however essential to becoming a capable driver and passing your driver's test - and, it is also an important part of keeping your clutch in good condition.



Source: [Unsplash](#)

Dewald Ranft, chairman of the Motor Industry Workshop Association (Miwa), confirms that apart from the quality of the installation, incorrect clutch control is the most common cause of a clutch burning out.

Other variables that play a role in the life expectancy of a clutch are general levels of vehicle maintenance, road conditions and the vehicle's normal labour load.

"This is why some people need clutch replacements after only a few thousand kilometres, while others drive with the same original clutch in their vehicle for 10 or even 20 years," says Ranft.

He explains that the clutch connects and disconnects the power from your engine to your wheels, via the gearbox. When you press down on the clutch, it disengages the engine from your wheels. This allows you to change gear.

In other words, you can't change gears when the clutch is raised. Unless you're in neutral, when you raise the clutch, it engages the power.

"Clutch control is about mastering this power transfer. It is particularly important for maintaining control of the car at low speeds. It allows you to do a number of things, such as change gear, pull off and drive in slow-moving, stop-start traffic," Ranft says.

"The clutch is subjected to constant friction, so it will wear out eventually. How long your car drives without having to replace the clutch depends entirely on the way you drive."

## **10 tips from Miwato help prolong the life of your clutch:**

1. Never regulate the vehicle's speed in heavy traffic conditions by means of clutch control. Instead, apply the park brake at traffic lights and select neutral until it's time to pull off.
2. Don't press the clutch pedal unnecessarily while driving or when the vehicle is stationary.
3. Allow the vehicle to warm up (reach normal operating temperature) before applying aggressive load to the driveline.
4. Keep the vehicle's revs per minute (rpm) as low as possible and the slip-time as short as possible when you pull off from a standstill.
5. Never pull off in a higher gear than first gear.
6. Do not overload. Avoid pulling heavy trailers.
7. Avoid launching the vehicle on an uphill or in muddy conditions if possible.
8. Maintain the condition of the hydraulic fluid by visiting your local MIWA workshop and filling up with the correct specified fluid according to the Original Equipment (OE) manufacturer.
9. Have the hydraulic system bled properly when gears are starting to grate during gear changes and have the system flushed every 40,000kms.
10. Only fit OE or quality aftermarket clutches.

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