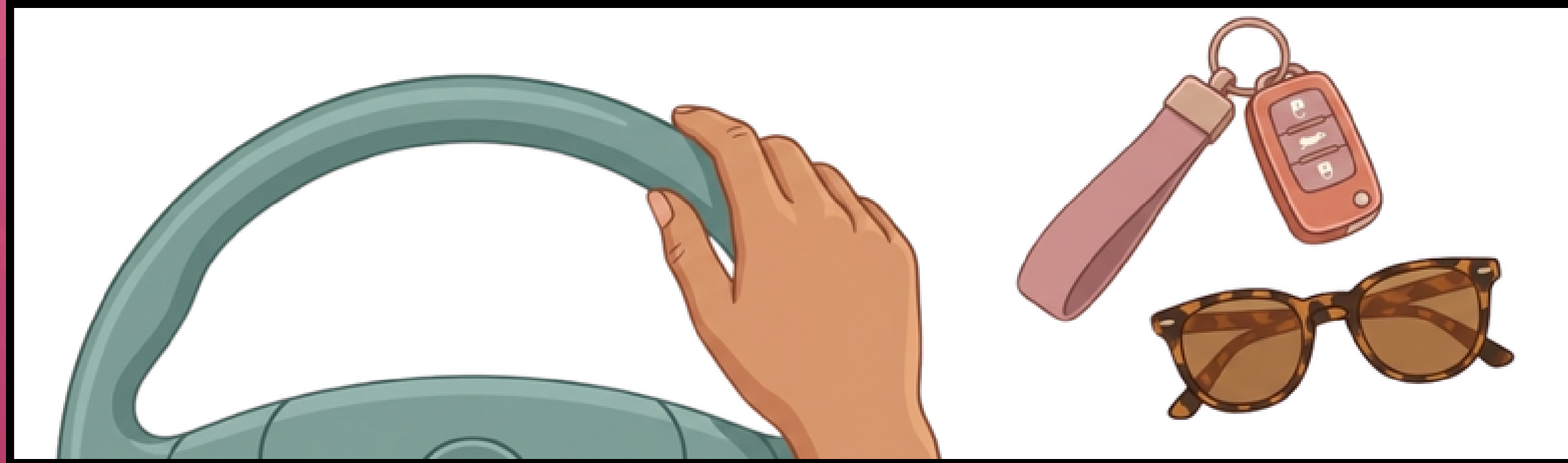


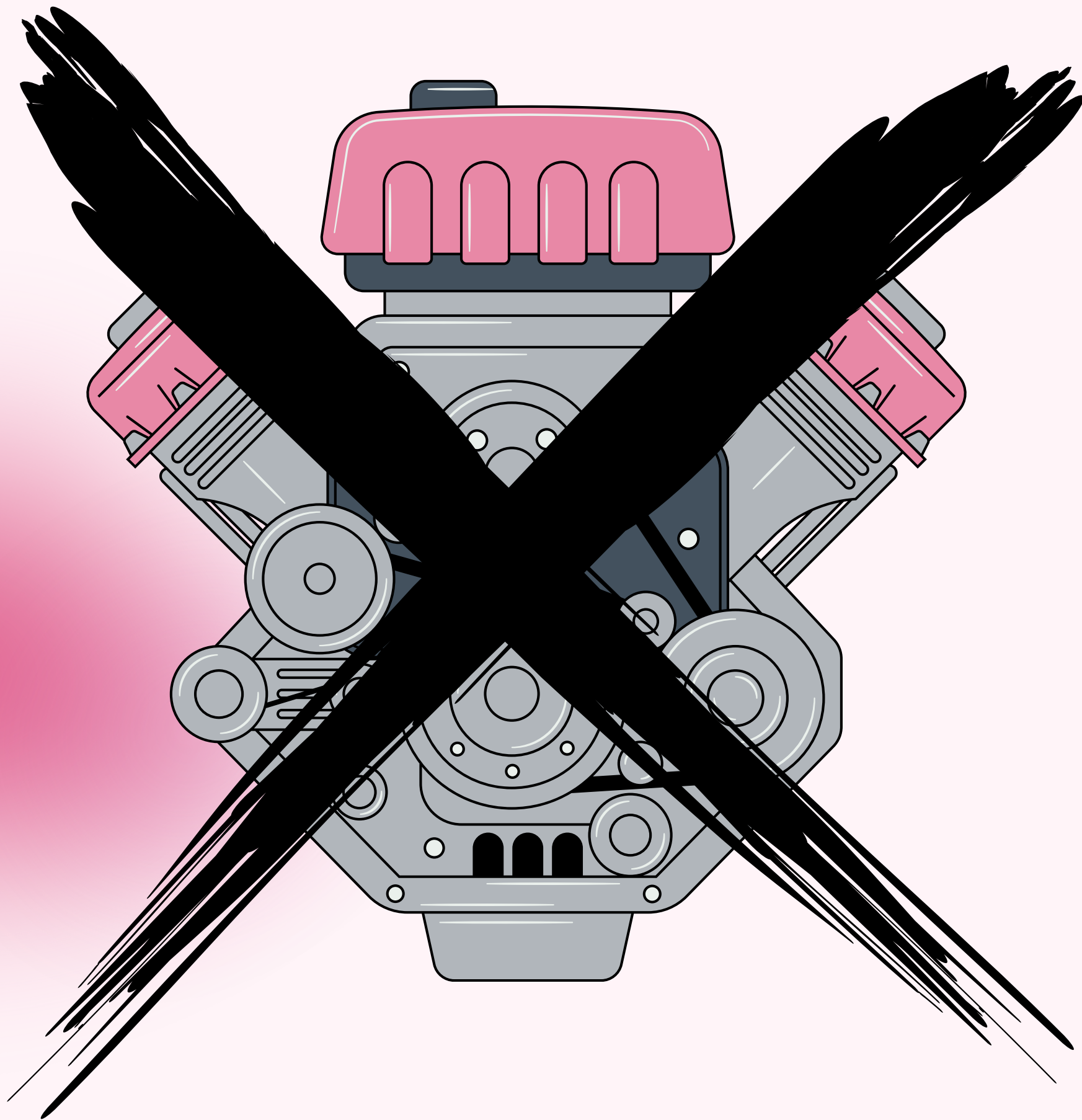
NO PANIC

Car Guide

For Women Who Have Stuff To Do and No Time For Tow Trucks



A no-panic, no-jargon guide to the **5 quick checks** every woman should know before her car starts acting like a dramatic toddler.



You don't need a mechanic degree.

You just need to know when your car is whispering,
whining, or screaming for help.

Because "I think it's always made that
noise" is not a maintenance plan.

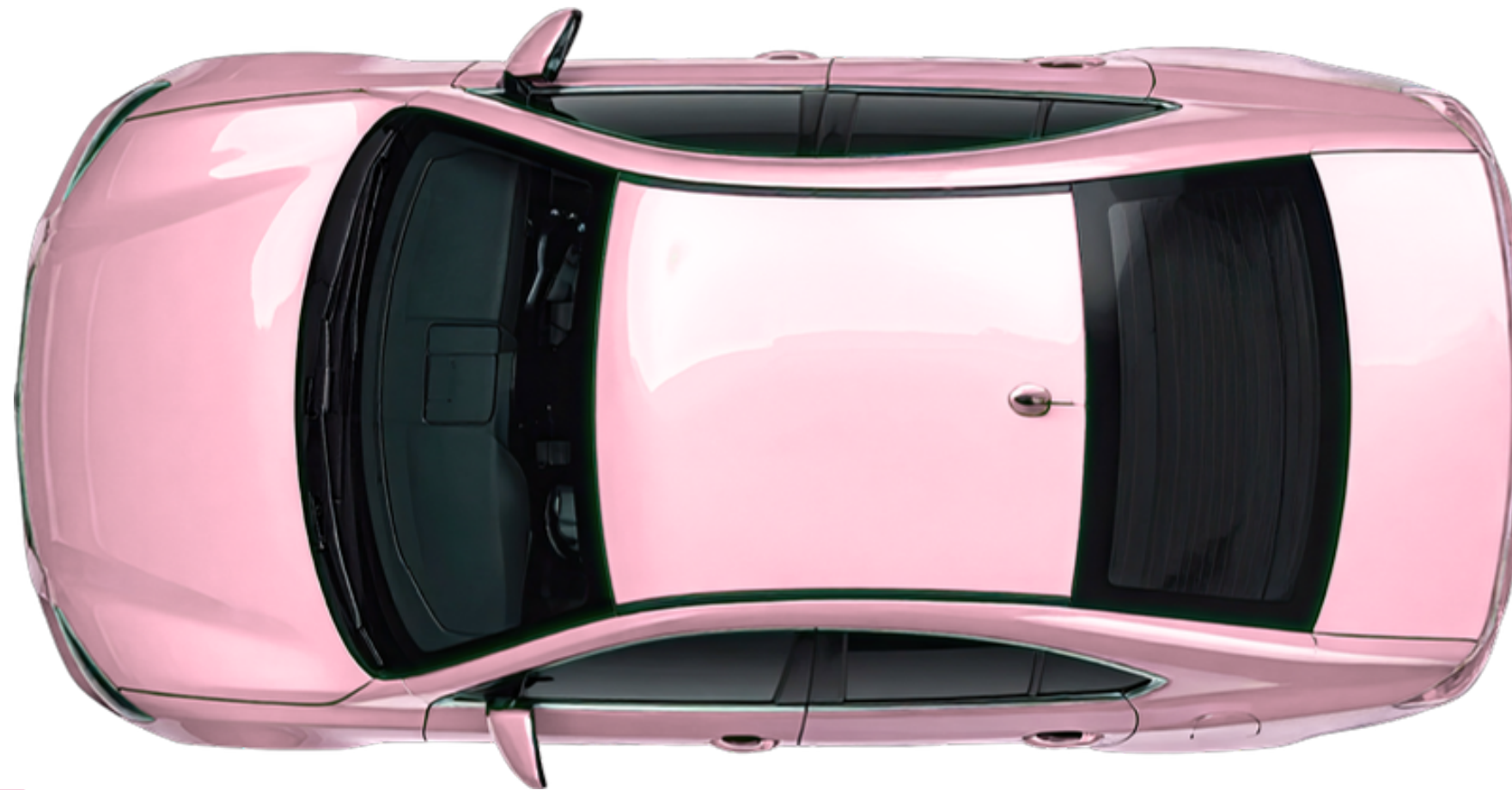
The 5-Minute “Is My Car Plotting Against Me?” Walkaround

1

Tires: Do any look low, squishy, cracked, bald, or suspiciously sad?

2

Ground: Any fresh puddles, leaks, or mystery fluids?
(Note: A/C water is usually not the villain; it's necessary).



3

Lights: Check headlights, brake lights, and blinkers.

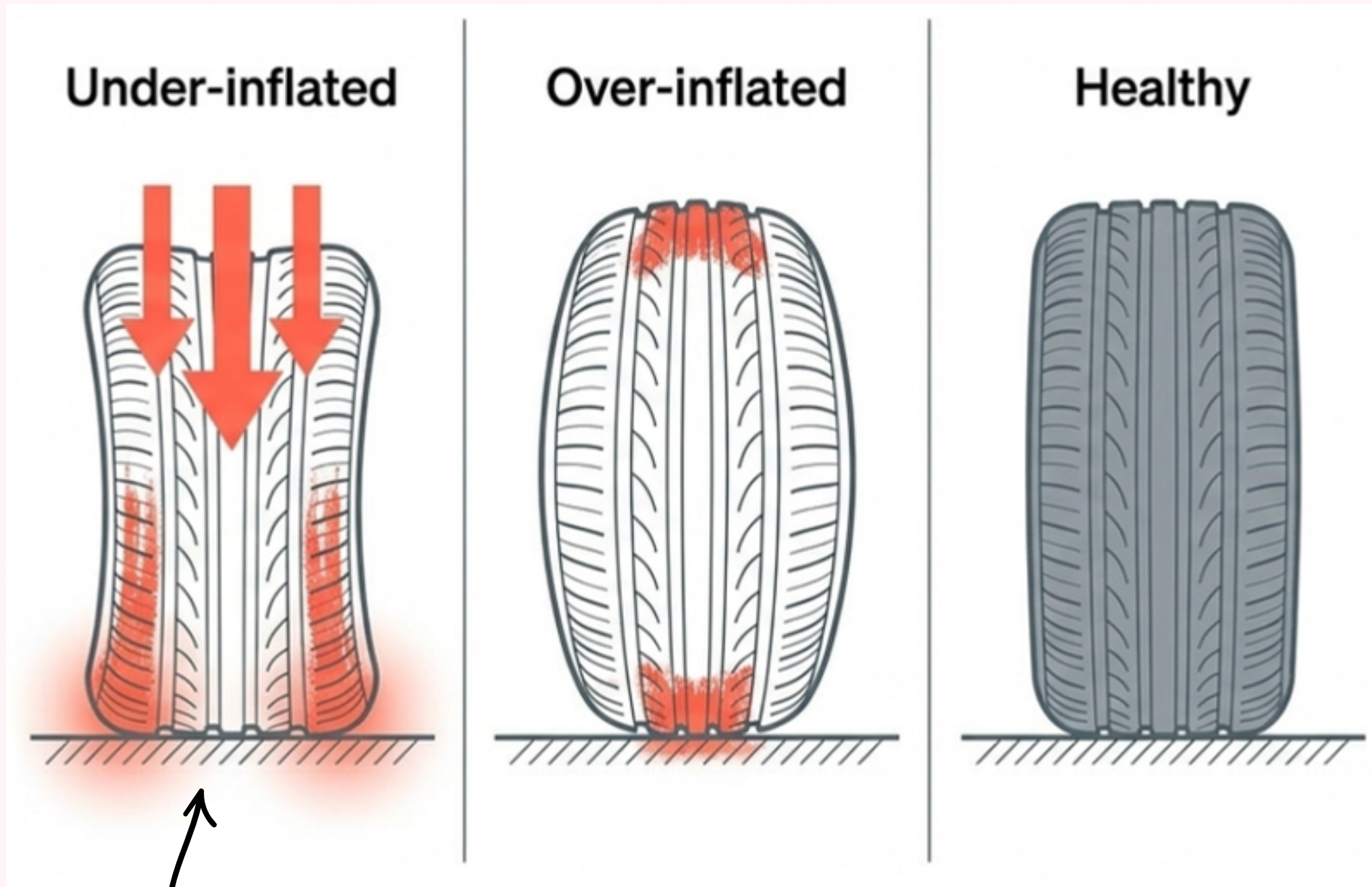
4

Windshield/Wipers: Can you see, or are your wipers just smearing yesterday's bug funeral?

5

Dashboard: Any new warning lights trying to get your attention like a toddler with a kazoo?

YOUR TIRES ARE CARRYING PRECIOUS CARGO



Squishy tire

Diagnostic Checklist:

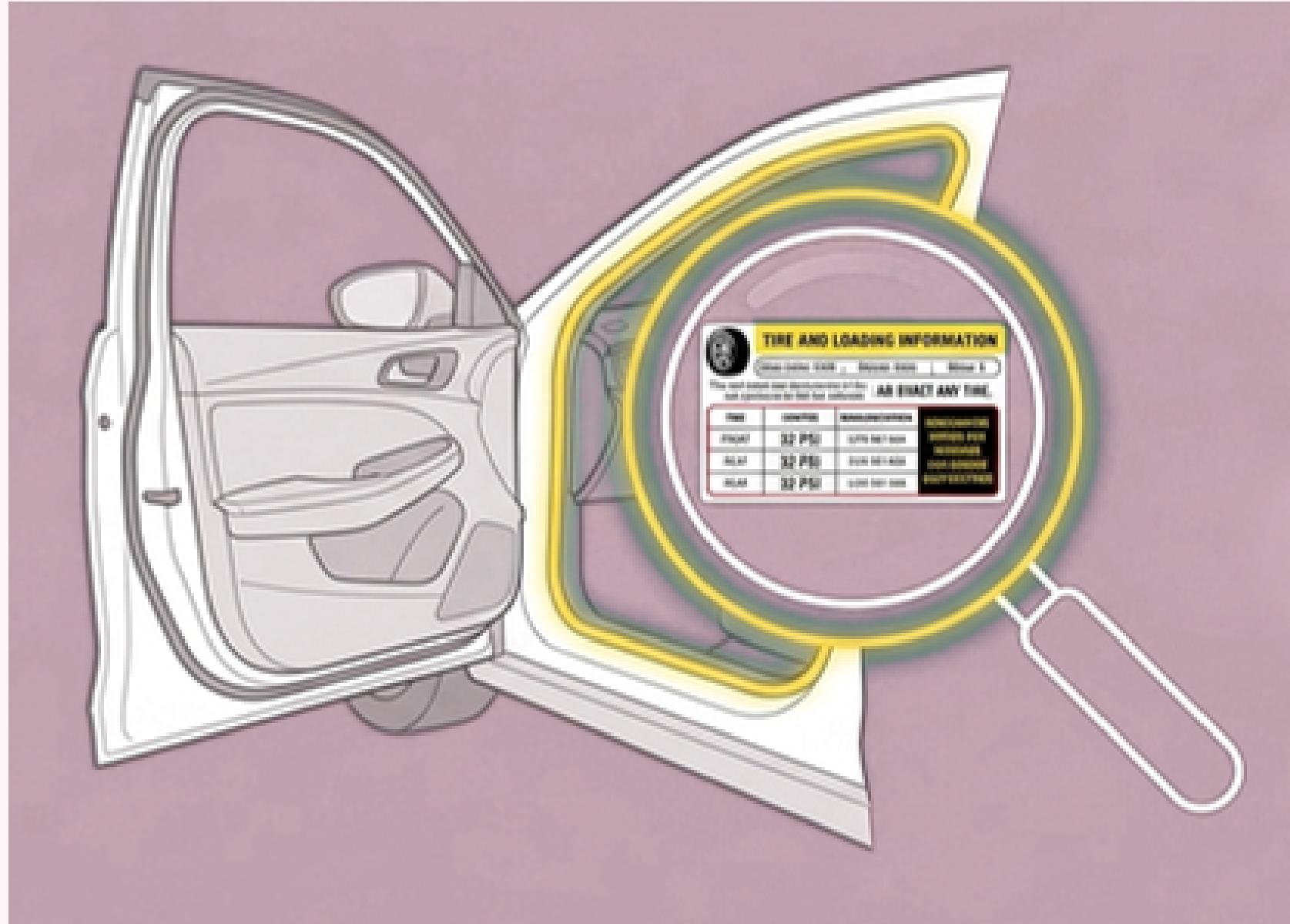
Check for:

- Nails or screws
- Cracks
- Bulges / bubbles
- One tire looking lower than the rest
- Uneven wear
- Steering wheel vibration



A tire should look round and confident — not like it gave up during tax season.

PSI: NOT A BOY BAND, ACTUALLY IMPORTANT



PSI = Pounds per Square Inch — aka, how pumped up your tire is. Literally.

Where to find the right pressure: 

Driver-side door sticker OR the owner's manual. (Never rely on the tire sidewall).

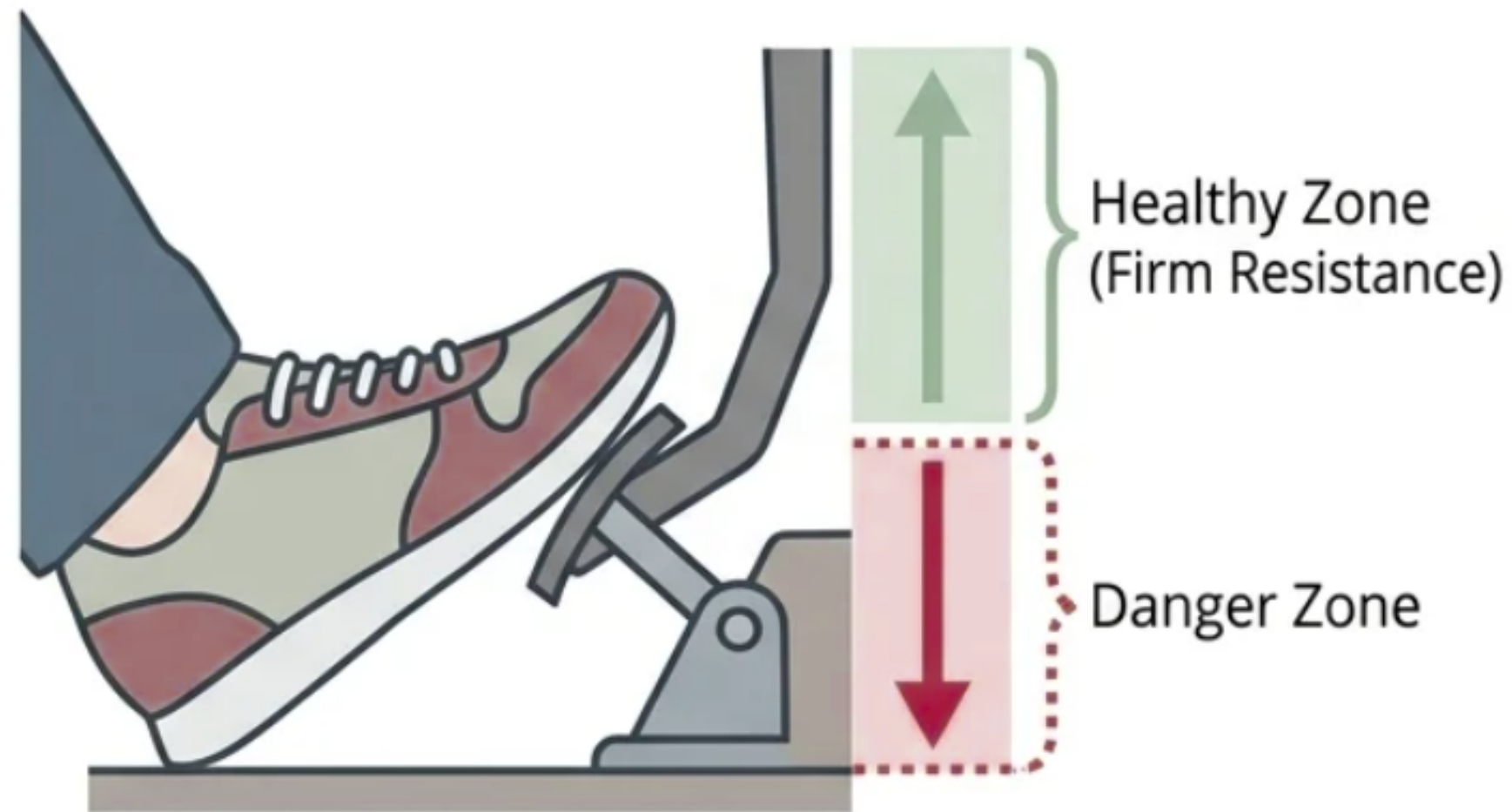
When to check: 

When tires are cold, before long trips, when the temperature changes, when one looks low, or when your dashboard light starts being needy. Callout text: Safety Rule: Your tire pressure light (TPMS) is helpful, but your eyeballs still need to clock in for work. Visually inspect them.

Safety Rule: Your tire pressure light (TPMS) is helpful, but your eyeballs still need to clock in for work. **Visually inspect them.**

MY DAD ALWAYS SAID: ***YOU GOTTA STOP !***

The Sinking Brake Pedal



If your brake pedal starts sinking toward the floor, that is not your car "being quirky." That is **serious**. Get it checked. (Front brake pads usually wear faster than back pads).

Watch/Listen/Feel for:

- Pulling to one side when braking
- Vibration when braking
- The pedal going soft or low

Brakes are not the place to 'manifest abundance.' You need actual brake pad left.

WHEN YOUR BRAKES START SINGING THE SONG OF THEIR PEOPLE

The Loved Brake Rotor



The Unloved Brake Rotor



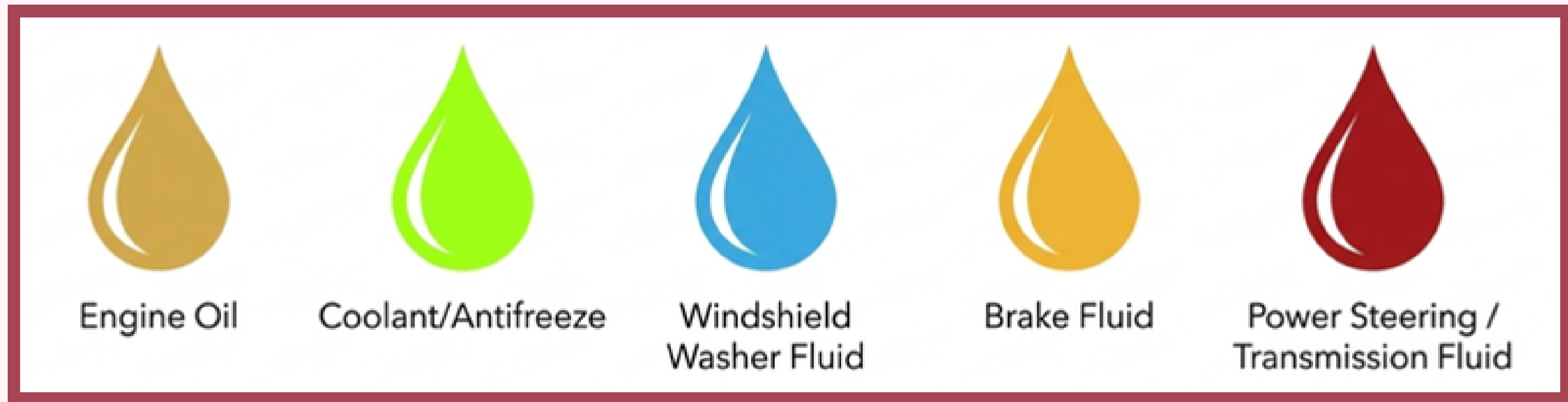
Less than 1/32 inch
Rivets begin
scraping on Rotor

DANGEROUSLY worn

The Sounds of Trouble: Scraping, grinding, metal-on-metal, or loud squealing that sounds like your car joined a haunted orchestra.

The Rule: Don't keep driving for three more weeks while turning the radio up. Your radio is not a repair strategy.

Fluids: Because your Car Is Thirsty, Dramatic, and Expensive



Note: Many modern cars have closed systems and there is no way for you to check fluid levels;
Check your manual for instructions on checking fluids.

Never open a hot radiator or coolant cap. Hot coolant is not a facial. It is a trip to Urgent care.

THE “KAZOO TODDLER” DASHBOARD INDEX

Informational	 	Just letting you know a system is on.
Action Needed Soon	  	The car is asking for attention. Don't panic, but schedule a check.
Pull Over Now	  	Stop driving immediately. Serious danger to the engine or you.

For the people in the back - if engine light is FLASHING, get off the road, turn off car, and call tow truck

Your Car Has Conversations. Some Are Screams.

What You Notice	What It Might Mean	What To Do
High-pitched squeal when turning	Low power steering fluid or belt issue	Check fluid / get inspected
Grinding brakes	Worn pads or rotors	Schedule repair quickly
Pulling to one side	Tire pressure, alignment, or brake issue	Check tires, then mechanic
Lights dimming	Battery or alternator issue	Get charging system checked
Harder to start	Battery, starter, or tune-up issue	Get it checked before it strands you

If your car is making a new noise and you solve it by saying, "**Hmm**," that is not diagnosis. That is denial with eyebrows.

Your Glovebox Should Not Just Contain Napkins and Emotional Support Ketchup Packets

The “**I Refuse to Be Helpless**” Kit. Ensure your Owner’s manual is actually in the vehicle, not living its best life in a junk drawer at home.



A granola bar in your car can't fix your alternator, but it can keep you from becoming feral while waiting for help.

The “Don’t Panic – I Packed Snacks” Kit

A Flashlight

Use it to check under the hood, inspect tires, find dropped items, change a tire at night, and make yourself visible if you’re stuck after dark. Your phone flashlight is fine for emergencies, but your phone battery has bigger responsibilities — like calling for help.

A Warm Blanket

Crucial for staying comfortable and safe if you are waiting for a tow truck in cold weather.

Granola Bars (or non-perishable snacks)

As noted on the previous page, having food won't fix your alternator, but it will keep you from turning feral while waiting for help.

First Aid Kit

A basic kit with bandages, antiseptic wipes, and pain relievers for minor scrapes or emergencies.

The Owner’s Manual

This needs to live in the glovebox, not a junk drawer at home, so you can easily reference warning lights and fluid types.



Jumper Cables (or a Portable Jump Starter)

To get your battery going again without needing to wait for a tow truck.

Bottled Water

Important for hydration if you are stranded for a long period, especially in the heat.

Reflective Triangles or LED Road Flares

To ensure other drivers can clearly see your car if you are pulled over on a dark or busy shoulder.

Tire Pressure Gauge

To easily check if a tire is under-inflated, over-inflated, or healthy (as shown in your tire diagrams).

A Basic Tool Kit

A simple set with a multi-tool or screwdrivers and pliers for very minor fixes.

Phone Charger / Power Bank

A dedicated, fully charged power bank ensures you can always call for help, even if your car battery is completely dead.

Duct Tape

A temporary fix for a surprisingly large number of loose parts (like a dragging bumper) just to get you safely to the mechanic.

How to Talk To a Mechanic Without Feeling Like Fresh Meat at the Deli Counter



A good mechanic will explain the repair. A sketchy one will act like you asked him to translate ancient scrolls.

Your No-Panic Quick Checklist



Every Time You Drive: Do the 5-Minute Walkaround (scan tires, check the ground for puddles, ensure lights work).



Once a Month: Check your tire pressure (PSI) with a gauge while the tires are cold.



When Warning Lights Appear: Cross-reference the “Kazoo Toddler” dashboard index. Green is okay, yellow means schedule, red means pull over.



When You Hear a New Noise: Turn down the radio and actually listen. Note what you were doing (turning, braking, accelerating) so you can tell the mechanic.



Remember—you are in control.



Your Car Confidence Era Has Officially Entered the Chat. 🚗 ✨

You did it. You now know more about keeping yourself safe on the road than most drivers out there. Save this guide to your phone, print a copy for your car, and start doing your weekly walkarounds. You've got this, and you never have to feel helpless about your car again.

Keep the confidence rolling. Follow Ladies' Car Care Clinic online for more no-panic, hands-on car tips, advice, and a community of women who are done being intimidated by weird noises and repair counters.



You may not be a mechanic, but you're officially harder to scare at a repair counter.

~Deborah Starr

Keep the confidence rolling.

Follow Ladies' Car Care Clinic on Facebook
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