

BACK TO BASICS



TAKING CARE OF YOUR COMBAT VEHICLE IN HOT, DUSTY OR SANDY CONDITIONS TAKES A LOT OF *EXTRA* EFFORT.

THAT MEANS GOING *BACK TO THE BASICS* OF PM.



Clean Air

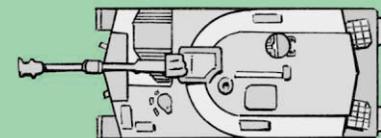
Make sure your air induction system is in good shape. That includes hoses, inlets, outlets, precleaners, and filter elements. Cracks, tears, holes and loose clamps let sand and dust get into engines.



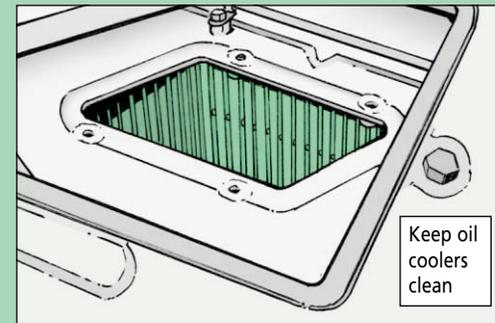
Pay attention to air restriction indicators. Clean air filter elements as often as necessary to keep engine performance high.

Park your vehicle with the engine compartment downwind. That allows the bulk of the vehicle to shield the engine from blowing sand or dust.

Keep engine compartment downwind



Keep all air-cooled surfaces—oil coolers and radiators—free of oil and grease. These surfaces transfer heat away from the oil and water inside as air flows past them. Oil and grease attract dust and sand like magnets. The heat can't escape, so engine and transmission damage are the result.



Clean Fuel

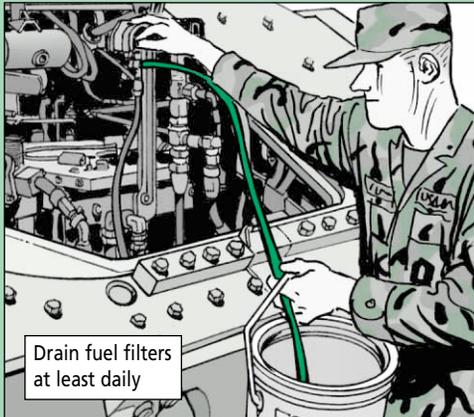
It's critical to keep fuel clean during refueling. Always wipe off the nozzle before refueling. If you suspect there's dirt inside the nozzle, flush it out or take the nozzle off and clean it. Keep the fuel nozzle capped when it's not in use.

Blow away loose dust and sand from the vehicle's fuel filler opening before removing the cap. When the fuel nozzle is in place, use a clean rag to close off any gaps between the nozzle and the fuel filler opening. That keeps blowing sand and dust from getting into the fuel tank. Close the fuel cap tight when you're finished.



No matter how careful you are, some dirt is going to get into the fuel system. That means draining the fuel filters to keep 'em from clogging.

Draining the fuel filters also gets rid of condensation that results from cool nights and hot days. You may need to drain fuel filters more than once a day to keep engine performance high, but they should always be drained at least once a day to keep water from diluting the fuel.



Clean Water

Use only clean water from a reliable source for filling radiators. Local water supplies often contain mineral deposits that will eventually clog up radiator cores.

If local water must be used, filter it through a clean cloth before adding it to a radiator. Then, clean and purge the radiator at the next opportunity.



Track Maintenance

Check the drive sprocket assembly, road-wheel mounting bolts, end connector bolts, track pin nuts, and centerguide bolts before, during and after operation. Sand, rocks and gravel tend to break or damage lube fittings and relief valves. Rough terrain causes hardware to work loose.



Never neutral steer in soft sand. That lets sand build up in the track assembly components and can result in a thrown track. Make fast turns wide. Keep short turns slow.

Pay attention to the tracks during at-halt inspections. Check track tension. Look for cracked end connectors and broken track pins.

Since you'll be lubing bearings much more often in sandy and dusty conditions, make sure you wipe away any excess lube when you're finished. Grease attracts sand, and the two combined can grind away metal.

Optics Care

Cover glass surfaces when they're not being used. Scouring and etching by sand and dust will ruin them. That's especially true for sighting and fire control equipment.

The buildup of dust on these surfaces can also degrade low-light vision. So keep surfaces as clean as possible using the specific cleaners called out in your TMs. Optical lens cleaning compound, NSN 6850-00-227-1887, can be used if your TM does not list one.

During dust or sandstorms, you might want to use self-clinging plastic film to cover optics between missions. NSN 8135-00-043-5331 gets a 100-ft roll of 11 1/2-in wide film.

