STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Oil Change SOP

Document no.	SOP-AUT-002
Revision	1.0
Owner	Shop Manager
Effective date	September 15, 2026
Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To make sure every oil change uses the correct oil type and quantity for the vehicle, the filter and drain plug are properly sealed, and the vehicle leaves free of leaks.

2. Scope

Applies to conventional and synthetic oil changes on passenger vehicles and light trucks. Vehicle lift operation in detail is covered by a separate SOP.

Definitions

Oil life monitor	A dashboard indicator that estimates remaining oil life and must be reset after a change.
Drain plug torque spec	The manufacturer-specified tightness for the drain plug, used to avoid stripping or leaking.
Crush washer	A soft gasket under the drain plug that deforms to seal on tightening and is often replaced at every oil change.

3. Responsibilities

Technician	Performs the oil change, verifies specifications, and checks for leaks before releasing the vehicle.
Service Advisor	Confirms the customer's requested oil type and communicates any additional recommendation found during the service.
Shop Manager	Maintains oil disposal compliance and resolves any comeback related to a prior oil change.

RACI matrix

Activity	Technician	Service Advisor	Shop Manager
Verify correct oil type and capacity	R/A	C	I
Drain oil and replace the filter	R/A	-	I
Refill and reset the oil life monitor	R/A	-	I
Check for leaks before release	R/A	I	I

Activity	Technician	Service Advisor	Shop Manager
Dispose of used oil and filter	R	-	A

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Shop management system with vehicle specifications
- Correct grade and quantity of oil
- Replacement oil filter
- Crush washer or drain plug gasket
- Torque wrench
- Used oil collection container and filter recycling bin

Personal protective equipment

- Nitrile gloves
- Safety glasses

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Verify oil type and capacity** Look up the manufacturer's specified oil grade and capacity for the vehicle in the shop management system before starting. **Checkpoint:** Oil grade and quantity are confirmed against the manufacturer's specification before draining begins.	Technician	☐
5.2	**Raise the vehicle on the lift** Raise the vehicle on the lift at the manufacturer's designated lift points, following the shop's vehicle lift safety procedure.	Technician	☐
5.3	**Locate and remove the drain plug** Position the drain container under the oil pan, remove the drain plug, and let the oil fully drain. **Warning:** Engine oil can be hot after a recent drive; allow it to cool or handle with care to avoid burns.	Technician	☐
5.4	**Inspect and replace the drain plug seal** Inspect the drain plug threads and crush washer, and replace the washer or gasket if it shows wear or damage.	Technician	☐
5.5	**Replace the oil filter** Remove the old oil filter, lightly oil the new filter's gasket, and install the new filter hand-tight per the manufacturer's instructions.	Technician	☐
5.6	**Torque the drain plug to spec** Reinstall the drain plug and tighten it to the manufacturer's torque specification using a torque wrench. **Warning:** Overtightening the drain plug can strip the pan threads; always use a torque wrench rather than tightening by feel.	Technician	☐
5.7	**Lower the vehicle and refill** Lower the vehicle and refill the engine with the correct grade and quantity of oil using a funnel to avoid spills.	Technician	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.8	**Reset the oil life monitor** Reset the vehicle's oil life monitor following the manufacturer's procedure for that make and model.	Technician	☐
5.9	**Start the engine and check for leaks** Start the engine, let it idle briefly, and check under the vehicle and around the filter and drain plug for any sign of leaking. **Checkpoint:** No visible leak at the drain plug or filter before the vehicle is released to the customer.	Technician	☐
5.10	**Check the oil level and top off** Turn off the engine, wait a few minutes, then check the dipstick level and top off if needed to reach the correct mark.	Technician	☐
5.11	**Record the service and mileage** Record the oil type, quantity, filter used and current mileage in the shop management system and on a reminder sticker if used.	Technician	☐
5.12	**Dispose of used oil and filter** Pour used oil into the designated recycling container and place the used filter in the filter recycling bin, following local regulations.	Technician	☐
5.13	**Road test and final check** Take the vehicle for a short road test to confirm normal operation, then do a final visual check for leaks before returning it to the customer.	Technician	☐

6. Quality checks

- Oil grade and quantity match the manufacturer's specification on every service.
- Drain plug is torqued to specification using a torque wrench, not tightened by feel.
- No leak is present at the drain plug or filter before the vehicle is released.
- Oil life monitor is reset on every applicable vehicle.

7. Records

- Service record with oil type, quantity and mileage
- Used oil and filter disposal log
- Torque spec reference sheet
- Reminder sticker or next-service notice

8. KPIs

- Average time per oil change
- Comeback rate for leaks after an oil change
- Percentage of services with correct oil type verified before draining
- Used oil recycling volume per month

9. Common mistakes

- Skipping the torque wrench and tightening the drain plug by feel.
- Forgetting to replace the crush washer or gasket when it shows wear.
- Not resetting the oil life monitor after the service.
- Releasing the vehicle without running the engine to check for leaks first.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Ilia Pirozhenko

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

This is a template. Adapt it to your organization, equipment and local regulations before use.