



TOP-UP ENGINE OIL

Full capacity is 3.7 litres, so we put in most of that, started the engine until the oil light went out, then topped-up using the dipstick to check the level. Oil grade for cold, moderate or hot climate should be 5W/30 Semi-synthetic (or in moderate climates you could use 10W/30 Semi-synthetic). Any oil used must be SJ/A1 classification. 




FLUIDS, CHASSIS AND BODYWORK

LIFT FRONT UNDER-BONNET SHIELD

Bit of a nuisance really having to remove yet another shield, this time under the bonnet, but we suppose those clever people at Toyota like to keep everything well protected. There are a series of fiddly little clips, which come undone when you press their centres in. These fasteners tend to pop out, so keep them to one side carefully! You need to lift this cover up at the side (but not necessarily remove it totally) to check the PAS reservoir level. 




CHECK POWER STEERING FLUID

The PAS fluid reservoir is located to the left of the under-bonnet area (as you look at it from the front) – and the reason we've given this a thumbs down is it's such a lot of effort to get to it (see above). Still you don't have to take the shield right off to see the Max/Min lines. After all that, our car had plenty already. Oh well – the PAS fluid to use is Dexron II, and the system takes 0.6 litres. 




CHECK FUEL BREATHERS

Make sure the seal on the fuel filler cap is still in good nick. As you unscrew the filler cap, you should be aware of pressure being released, which means fumes are still being sealed in. While you're about it, it's also worth cleaning out any dirt that may have got in around the filler neck. 




CHECK STEERING JOINTS

Getting under the vehicle, give the steering linkage joints a once over, and check for any play. Look for evidence of the bushes starting to suffer wear and tear, and also signs of corrosion etc. 




CHECK SUSPENSION JOINTS & DRIVESHAFT GAITERS

Do the same to the suspension joints and the driveshaft gaiters.  On the latter, look for tell-tale signs of oil or grease leaking from the transmission. Using something that isn't going to create scratches (like a socket spanner extension), see if you can find signs of play in any of the joints.



CHECK UNDERBODY

The service schedule says this is an item to check, but 'our' car has clearly been looked after well and probably garaged most of the time. Nevertheless, we looked at the floor-pan/chassis for signs of corrosion or damage and found none. The underbody sealant, such as it is, seemed fine too. 



CHECK HANDBRAKE LINKAGE

Make sure the linkage for the handbrake is free to operate correctly. A combination of road salt and no protective coating of oil had caused a bit of the dreaded corrosion here, so the springs, which disengage the handbrake system, were not in great shape. The main thing to check is that the system allows the pads to pull away from the discs fully and reaches the backstop on both sides of the car. 