

# Moak

Continued from Page 3A

using this feature might make the driver and front-seat passengers comfortable, it can make rear-seat passengers hotter.

» **Turn off stop/start mode.** Some newer vehicles have a system that stops the engine when idling, to cut down on fuel use and emissions. Olsen suggests turning it off, because it can make the compressor stop

running, making your car hotter when stopped or in stop-and-go traffic.

» **Clean the filter.** A dirty cabin air filter can reduce the efficiency of your system. If your filter is easily accessible, clean it often.

And as for the age-old debate about whether using the air conditioner uses more gas than riding with the windows open, most expert sites I consulted noted, "it depends."

Conventional wisdom says the air conditioner uses more gas, and that's usually true. Car and

Driver did a study in 2008 in which it tested this theory and recommended turning the air conditioner off and opening the windows (at lower speeds) to save a few miles per gallon. But at higher speeds, the engine is running faster, making the system use less fuel. Automotive site Edmunds.com notes, "in our experience, it's not worth the argument because you won't save a lot of gas either way. So just do what's comfortable."

Contact Bill Moak at [moakconsumer@gmail.com](mailto:moakconsumer@gmail.com).