How To Fix a Flat Tire, Step by Step Instructions

1) First, check your surrounding environment to make sure you are in a safe place with enough room to work, and check the road conditions and weather conditions, if applicable. If road/environment conditions are unsafe or there is insufficient room, call roadside assistance.

2) Put the car in park, remove keys, and exit the vehicle.

3) Check that you have all necessary tools and equipment: a spare tire, manual car jack, lug wrench or torque wrench. Not necessary but recommended are wheel wedges, a tire gauge and a tire inflator. If missing tools or equipment, call roadside assistance.

4) If you have wheel wedges, place them firmly against both wheels opposite the one that is flat. Alternatively, you can use bricks or large stones to keep the wheels immobile.

5) Gather your tools and place them for ease of access and safety

6) Remove the wheel cover if it has one.

7) Use the lug wrench or torque wrench to turn the lug nuts counterclockwise. Loosen the lug nuts but do not remove them yet.

8) Place the car jack under the vehicle frame, next to the tire that is flat.

9) Raise the car with the jack until the flat tire has approx. 6 inches of clearance off the ground. Do not place any part of your body under the vehicle during this process!

10) Remove the lug nuts and place them together in a safe place

11) Take hold of the tire with both hands and pull it towards you until it slides off the hub. Set the flat tire aside in a safe place.

12) Line up the spare tire and push it firmly into place.

13) Replace each lug nut, turning them clockwise to tighten. Tighten the lug nuts in a star pattern-move to the next nut across, rather than the one adjacent-to ensure the wheel mounts evenly.

14) Make sure the lug nuts and wheel are secure, but don’t completely tighten them while the wheel is still raised.

15) Lower the car so that the spare tire is resting on the ground.

16) Use the lug wrench to tighten the bolts, following the same star pattern as before. Push down on the wrench with your full body weight to ensure the lug nuts are very tight.

17) Replace the wheel cover, lower the jack and remove it.

18) Check the tire pressure using a tire gauge, if available.

19) If the tire needs more air, use a tire inflator, if available. If not, drive to the nearest gas station.

20) Once the spare tire is secure, put away all tools, equipment, and the flat tire, and drive to the nearest auto repair shop.