

**WHEELS:** *Paul from Bellbrook writes by e-mail: "My soccer mom daughter recently purchased a 2002 Honda Odyssey with 180,000 miles. While it was at a good price, I'm concerned about its maintenance history. The interior was quite unkempt, which makes me suspect that the previous owner was also not diligent about routine oil changes. I hear some valve train noise and see some smoke on startup. Here's my question. Should I use the specified SAE 5W-20 oil, or go to a 5W-30 or 10W-30 based on my assumption of increased wear due to lack of proper maintenance? Also, what is your opinion on the "high mileage" oils being offered? I note that they do not have the "energy conserving" logo.*  
*Thanks."*

**Halderman:** Thanks for writing. I think using a high mileage oil is a wise move considering the conditions. Using SAE 5W-30 is also a good move and I doubt that this will result in any measurable loss in fuel economy. I normally do not recommend the use of high-mileage oils because they often contain higher levels of additives that can cause the catalytic converter to deteriorate. With that many miles and possible lack of proper maintenance, I assume that engine wear has occurred. Using a higher viscosity engine oil will help reduce the exhaust smoke and oil consumption. The use of a high-mileage oil can also help because these oils usually contain extra additives such as esters, to swell the seals thereby reducing oil used through valve stem seals.

