

Wheels: *Patrick from Centerville writes by e-mail: “If I start with a full tank and you drive until it reads half I get almost 30 miles to the gallon. However, when the fuel level is low, I get only about 20 miles to gallon (MPG). What can cause my car to get good fuel economy when the tank is full and much lower when the fuel is low? What could be wrong with my car?”*

Halderman: I do not believe that your vehicle is getting lower fuel economy when the level of the fuel tank is higher but rather, it is a matter of how the fuel gauge is designed to work.

The industry method for fuel gauges is to keep the gauge reading high for a long period of time (they tried being very accurate and got all kinds of “poor fuel economy” complaints). Then empty has to be a lot higher (about 3+ gallons from empty) to keep owners from running out of fuel. Therefore, the fuel level will drop a LOT faster from half to empty than from full to half. Is this your concern?

