1998-2002 Toyota Corolla - Spark Plug Replacement

1998-2002 Toyota Corolla | Moderate | 30-45 minutes | $10 DIY

TOOLS

16mm spark plug socket with extension
Ratchet 10mm socket (ignition coil bolts)
Spark plug gap gauge Torque wrench
Dielectric grease (optional) Compressed air or shop vacuum (to clean plug wells)
Gloves and safety glasses

PARTS

4 spark plugs (correct for 1ZZ-FE, pre-gapped 0.043 in / 1.1 mm) $10.00
Anti-seize compound (light coat on plug threads, optional) $5.00

STEPS

1. **Let the engine cool and remove the cover - Make sure the 1.8L 1ZZ-FE is completely cool** to protect the aluminum head threads. Remove the plastic engine cover if equipped to expose the four ignition coils on the valve cover.
2. **Disconnect the first ignition coil - Press the release tab on the coil's electrical** connector and pull it straight off. Remove the single 10mm bolt holding the coil, then twist and lift the coil out of its well.
3. **Blow debris out of the plug well - Before removing the plug, blast compressed air or** vacuum around the well to clear sand and grit. Any debris left here can fall into the cylinder once the plug comes out.
4. **Remove the old spark plug - Fit the 16mm spark plug socket with an extension down the** well and turn counterclockwise. Lift the old plug out and inspect its tip - a tan insulator nose indicates healthy combustion.
5. **Gap and install the new plug - Verify the new plug's gap is 0.043 inches with a gap** gauge, adjusting gently if needed. Thread the plug in by hand several turns to guarantee it is not cross-threaded, then torque to spec with the wrench.
6. **Reinstall the coil and connector - Push the ignition coil firmly back into the well until** it seats on the plug. Refit the 10mm bolt snugly and click the electrical connector back on until its tab locks.
7. **Repeat for the remaining three cylinders - Work through the other three coils and plugs** one at a time, keeping each coil with its original cylinder. Doing them one by one prevents mixing up connectors and dropping debris into open holes.
8. **Test-start and verify smooth idle - Refit the engine cover and start the Corolla. Listen** for a smooth, even idle with no misfire shake, and take a short drive to confirm power delivery feels normal under load.

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