

What Should I Do If I Need Car Repairs?



Does the repair shop need to give me an estimate?

If the cost of repairs is more than \$25, the shop should not begin work on your car until you have been given an estimate and give permission for them to work on your car.

Get an estimate in writing. Some repair shops will not put an estimate in writing unless you ask them to. Ask.

The shop should give you a form to sign, showing whether you chose to get an estimate in writing or verbally. This form should also say when the shop should finish making repairs.

If the actual cost of repairs is 10% of the estimate or much higher than \$25 (if it was originally less), the repair shop needs to get your permission before they do that work.



What other things can the repair shop charge me for?

Sometimes repair shops charge you for keeping your car on their property while they are waiting for parts or to make repairs. If they are going to do this, they must tell you first.

A sign posted in the shop saying that there will be storage fees is one way of telling you this. Keep your eyes open for signs like this.

The shop must also tell you in advance if there are any other charges or fees for inspections, work done, disassembly, reassembly, or partial work. When in doubt about extra charges, ask.



What must a repair shop do?

A repair shop must:

- Give you copies of any papers you sign or initial.
- Offer to return to you all parts they took out of your car.
- Give you an itemized list of all repairs and services performed on your car.



What things can a repair shop not do?

It is against the law for a car repair shop to:

- Charge you for repairs or services that you did not give them permission to do.
- Tell you repairs were necessary when they are not.
- Tell you repairs were made when they were not.
- Charge you for repairs they did not make.
- Tell you your car is dangerous when it is not.
- Substantially underestimate the cost of repairs or services to your car.



How can I choose a repair shop?

You should always shop around. Make calls and check out prices of different repair shops to see who can give you the best deal.

Go to the shop and look around. Ask questions. Do not assume that a shop has certified mechanics or can do the kind of work you need done. Ask to see licenses and certifications. Make sure the shop will honor any warranty you have on your car

Ask about warranties on work done at the shop and parts installed by the shop. Do not assume that they will fix work or replace parts they have just installed if something goes wrong. If there is a warranty on parts or labor, it should be in writing

Ask for recommendations from friends and family. If a repair shop treated them poorly or well, chances are they will do the same to you

Contact the Better Business Bureau and the Ohio Attorney General's Office to see if any complaints have been filed about the shop you are thinking about using.



What should I do if I have problems?

If a repair shop does not make the repairs it promises, take the car back to the shop and ask them to fix it.

If they will not fix it or try to charge you to fix it, contact the Ohio Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division by calling (800) 282-0515. You should also talk to a lawyer.

**The information on this flyer is not legal advice.
If you are seeking representation or legal advice, please contact SEOLS.
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