

How to Communicate for The Best Automotive Repair Service

Today's cars, trucks, and sport-utility vehicles are high-tech marvels with digital dashboards, oxygen sensors, electronic computers, etc. They run better, longer, and more efficiently than vehicles in the past. Although, when it comes to maintenance and repairs, some things don't change. Whatever type of automotive repair facility you patronize good communication between the customer and the shop is important.

The following tips should help save you money by speeding up diagnostic time:

- Do your homework before taking your vehicle in for repairs or service.
- Read the owner's manual to learn about the vehicle's systems and components.
- Follow the manufacturer recommended service schedules. A qualified auto repair shop can perform manufacturer recommended service. You don't have to take your vehicle to the dealer for these services.
- Keep a log of all repairs & service. A good repair facility will keep those records for you

It makes sense that you know your car better than anyone else. You drive it every day and know how it feels and sounds when everything is right. So don't ignore its warning signals.

- Use all of your senses to inspect your car frequently. Check for:
 - Unusual sounds, odors, drips, leaks, smoke, warning lights, gauge readings.
 - Changes in acceleration, engine performance, gas mileage, fluid levels.
 - Problems in handling, braking, steering, vibrations.
- Note when the problem occurs.
 - Is it constant or periodic?
 - When the vehicle is cold or after the engine has warmed up?
 - At all speeds? Only under acceleration? During braking? When shifting?
 - When did the problem first start?

Professionally run repair establishments have always recognized the importance of communications in automotive repairs.

- Once you are at the auto repair shop, communicate your findings.
- Be prepared to describe the symptoms. (In larger shops you'll probably speak with a service writer/service manager rather than with the technician directly.)
- Carry a written list of the symptoms that you can give to the tech or service manager.
- Resist the temptation to suggest a specific course of repair. Just as you would with your physician, tell where it hurts and how long it's been that way, but let the technician diagnose and recommend a remedy.
- Ask as many questions as you need. Do not be embarrassed to have procedures explained so you understand them completely
- Don't rush the service writer or technician to make an instantaneous diagnosis. Ask to be called and apprised of the problem, course of action, and costs before work begins.
- Before you leave, be sure you understand all shop policies regarding service costs, guarantees, time of completion and acceptable methods of payment.

Leave a telephone number where you can be reached.