



## How to recognize brake problems

**M**aintaining a vehicle is more than just a way to protect one's financial investment. Vehicle maintenance can protect against accidents and make the road safer for drivers and their passengers as well as their fellow motorists.

Fully functioning brakes are an important component of automotive safety. In its 2015 Crash Stats report, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said that brake-related problems accounted for 22 percent of crashes where vehicular failure was cited as the cause of the collision. Bad brakes are particularly notorious for rear-end collisions. Faulty, worn brake lines, antilock brake system malfunctions and worn brake pads and discs are some potential brake problems.

It is important that motorists learn to recognize the first symptoms of brake trouble so they can address issues before they put drivers, their passengers and other motorists at risk of accident or injury.

- **Unusual noises:** Screeching, grinding, rubbing, and high-pitched sounds are common indicators that brake pads, rotors and other parts of the braking system need attention. Worn pads can cause damage to other vehicle parts, resulting in more expensive repairs if they're not addressed promptly.

- **Pulling:** If the car pulls to one side when applying the brakes, this may indicate brake pad linings are wearing down unevenly. A brake adjustment may be necessary. Pulling also may be indicative of an object or debris caught in the brake fluid.

- **Less responsive:** If when pressing on the brake pedal the brakes just do not seem to be as effective as they once were, or it is necessary to press the pedal harder for the brakes to engage, there may be a brake fluid leak or an air leak. Check under the vehicle to see if any fluids are pooling.

- **Pungent odors:** Firestone Tire Company says a burning smell may be indicative of worn out brake pads and friction on the tires. Each of these issues require immediate attention.

- **Vibrations:** Certain vibrations may indicate brake issues. Rotors can become warped from metal-on-metal rubbing, potentially leading to a failure of the vehicle to brake properly. Vibrations also may indicate tires are misaligned. These problems can be



**DRIVERS MUST** address symptoms of a faulty braking system early on to reduce their risk of accidents.

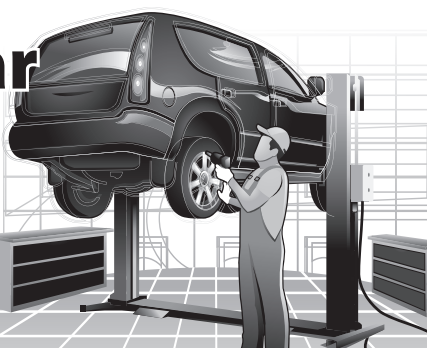
properly assessed by a trained mechanic. order helps drivers stop more readily and avoid collisions. Do not let potential brake problems go unchecked. Keeping brakes in good working

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# Classic car restoration for beginners

They're eye-catching, often exotic and always call to mind a bygone era. Classic cars are undeniably unique and their unrivaled automotive appeal has inspired legions of fans. That appeal also has compelled many to try their hand at classic car restoration.

Restoring a classic car can be a rewarding hobby, particularly the first time a vehicle emerges from its owner's garage and hits the open road. Car buffs interested in restoring a classic car of their own can consider various factors before they lift the hood on this challenging yet rewarding hobby.

### Time and Money

It's hard to know if a classic car restoration will cost owners more time or money, but restoration novices should expect to spend a lot of both as they work to restore a ride to its former glory. CarsDirect.com estimates that a restoration done by a professional shop can cost anywhere from \$40,000 to \$60,000, and that does not necessarily include the cost of the vehicle. If the financial commitment

raises an eyebrow, perhaps would-be car guys and gals should look away from the estimated time it takes to restore a classic car. CarsDirect notes that it can take around 1,000 hours for DIYers to restore a classic car. The excitement of restoring a classic car can quickly wear off if owners don't have enough time and/or money to keep the project going at a steady pace.

### The Car

Some car buffs may already envision which type of car they want to restore. Some may want to restore a classic Ford Mustang like the one they drove in high school, while others with a flare for automotive history might want to restore a 1930s classic. Whatever your preference, make sure you find a car that won't bust your budget. Even the initial cost to purchase the car from a local salvage yard can be deceiving. Some cars might only be affordable because they've experienced such extensive damage that the cost to restore them will be especially high. It's good to know what you're looking for as you begin to scour newspaper classified

ads or visit local salvage yards. But allow yourself some room for flexibility in regard to the type of car you're willing to restore. That can ensure you aren't breaking your budget right away or overcommitting yourself to a project that may prove beyond your range of abilities. Online car forums can be great places to get some insight into restoration, especially for beginners.

### The Project

In addition to determining which car to get and how much time and money you can realistically devote to the restoration project, car enthusiasts must determine which tools they'll need, where they're going to work on the project and the availability of discounted parts. Discounted parts can help offset considerable restoration costs, so access to a local seller or salvage yard can be a significant advantage. The internet has made finding parts easier, as resources like CheapAutoParts.com can be invaluable. A place to work also is a must-have, so garages may need to be outfitted to make projects more enjoyable. Tools also can be costly, though CarsDirect notes



that different steps in the process require different tools. That can make it easier to spread out the cost of buying new tools. Classic car restoration can be an engaging hobby. Novices are urged to learn as much about restoration as possible before they decide to fully commit to this potentially rewarding endeavor.



## Safety measures for winter drivers

Winter weather causes many people to retreat indoors until the spring thaw. However, for those who embrace the cooler temperatures or find that life must go on despite snow and ice, taking inventory of their vehicles is a must before the first snowflakes start to fall.

Tire care is an especially important area of vehicle maintenance. The tire experts at Michelin say that regular tires may be ineffective for winter driving. Summer tires are made from materials that are optimized for warm conditions. When the mercury drops, these same materials can harden, reducing their ability to grip the road. That lack of traction can be compounded by the presence of snow or ice. Even all-season tires, which are designed to be driven year-round, can be insufficient in severe weather conditions. Winter tires can help drivers safely navigate winter roadways.

Bridgestone Tires says that having the right snow tires matters when driving in winter weather conditions. It's important to look for tires that can disperse water sufficiently and also grip the road. Snow tires are designed to remain softer and more flexible to conform to the road better in cold conditions. Some winter tires are even studded to provide better traction.

Unfortunately, even the best winter tires cannot provide perfect traction on slippery roadways. That is why it is essential — in conjunction with the use of winter tires or snow chains — to

modify driving techniques to navigate safely.

- Drive slowly. Slow down on winter roads. Allow a greater distance for stopping than for dry conditions. Slippery conditions can make it more challenging to stop, and excessive speeds can make the situation worse.

- Shift into low gear. On hills, rely on low gears to maximize traction to travel up and down hills. This can minimize skids or sliding.

- Get the vehicle a tuneup. In addition to tires, be sure the braking system, battery and other major components of the vehicle are in good working order.

- Replace windshield wipers. Reduced visibility can compromise the safety of drivers and their passengers. Replace windshield wiper blades before winter arrives. Consider purchasing winter-rated windshield blades.

- Know how to recover from a skid. When skids occur on black ice or slush, drivers should take their feet off of the pedals and steer gently in the direction they want to go. As the vehicle regains traction, only then should the brakes or accelerator be applied.

Winter weather requires making some vehicle modifications, and drivers may want to alter the way they drive to be more safe on the road.

## Did you know?

Modern cars are technological marvels, and it turns out drivers may value tech over all else, including their choice of automaker. A 2017 study from Autotrader asked 1,000 participants an assortment of questions about technology and car buying. Roughly 60 percent of millennial car shoppers and more than 40 percent of baby boomers indicated they would switch vehicle brands just to get the technology features they want. Drivers are even willing to pay extra for their preferred tech. The Autotrader study found that the average shopper would pay an extra \$2,276 to get the right tech features.

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