



CAR CARE CORNER

How To Pick An Auto Repair Facility

(NAPSI)—Automotive experts recommend 10 things drivers should consider when selecting a repair shop:

- 1. Facility Type:** When evaluating full-service auto repair shops, drivers have three basic choices:
 - Dealerships—They're very familiar with the cars they sell, have factory-trained technicians and are aware of the latest technical service bulletins and special service advisories.
 - Independents—Quality non-dealer repair shops may be slightly less expensive, and their customers are more likely to deal directly with the owner or technician. This makes it easier to develop relationships with the people who service the cars.
 - Specialists—Some independent shops specialize in and are experts on certain vehicles or systems.
- 2. Appearance:** A clean, well-organized repair facility reflects attention to detail and an effort to maintain a professional image.
- 3. Amenities:** The facility should have a comfortable waiting area and clean restrooms.
- 4. Technicians:** The facility should have qualified technicians who get ongoing training. Look for certifications from the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) or vehicle manufacturers.
- 5. Equipment:** A good repair shop has up-to-date service equipment and Internet access to repair information—or an on-site service information library of CD/DVD ROMs.
- 6. Reputation:** Time in business can be a good indicator of repair shop quality. Check with the Better Business Bureau and state department of consumer affairs or Attorney General's office for any consumer complaints.
- 7. Discounts:** Quality repair shops that offer discounts on needed services are an excellent way to stretch repair dollars. Drivers who pay for repairs with a credit card may want to consider the AAA Member Rewards Visa card. Points earned can be redeemed for vouchers good towards auto repairs. More information is at AAA.com/creditcard.
- 8. Warranty:** Quality shops offer at least a 12-month/12,000-mile parts and labor warranty on their work.
- 9. An AAA Approved Auto Repair (AAR) sign:** The nearly 8,000 AAR facilities include dealer, independent and specialty repair shops. Every AAR facility undergoes a thorough investigation, and the shops are visited quarterly, reinspected every year and monitored for customer satisfaction. AAA members receive a free maintenance inspection, written estimates, a 12/12 warranty, dispute resolution and often other discounts. Learn more at AAA.com/repair and AAA.com/discounts.
- 10. Test-Drive the Repair Shop:** Visit the shop for a minor service. While you wait, evaluate the shop using the criteria above.

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