



Diagnosis Brief
what this complaint usually turns out to be

Brief FDB-0e3668d3aaab

Issued September 2, 2026

Data as of July 2026

fixdozer.com/symptoms/noise-while-driving/

Noise While Driving — What It Usually Is

How real visits for a driving noise ended at independent shops across the US — the part actually replaced, how often, and what it cost when it was the only fix.

Wheel bearing / hub or brake pads

About a third of all these visits end in one of these two

Wheel bearing / hub **\$321 – \$623**

Brake pads **\$223 – \$554**

typical cost when it was the only fix
(parts + labor)

THE FIX INVOLVED	SHARE OF THESE VISITS*	TYPICAL COST†	MEDIAN
Wheel bearing / hub	19.4%	\$321 – \$623	\$445
Brake pads	18.0%	\$223 – \$554	\$355
Serpentine belt	13.8%	\$120 – \$292	\$182
Brake rotors	12.1%	\$194 – \$447	\$303
Drive belt	8.1%	\$111 – \$321	\$185
CV axle / driveshaft	7.8%	\$211 – \$612	\$355
Water pump	5.4%	\$261 – \$651	\$394
Power steering	5.2%	\$142 – \$510	\$289
Sway bar	4.6%	\$154 – \$369	\$240
Other, rarer causes	smaller shares — exhaust heat shields, brake hardware, CV joints, tire noise	varies	—

*Share of visits whose repair involved this part; combined repairs count toward each part, so shares overlap and don't add to 100%.

†Middle half of real invoices when this was the only fix — parts + labor, all vehicle types.

WHICH ONE IS YOURS? LISTEN FIRST

- **Hum or growl that rises with speed** — Speed-proportional hum is the wheel-bearing signature — it changes when you swerve gently, loading one side then the other.
- **Squeal from the engine bay** — A squeal at startup or with the A/C on is belt territory — the serpentine belt or its tensioner — one of the most common and least expensive findings.
- **Grinding tied to braking** — If the noise changes when you touch the brake pedal, it's a brake-noise visit — see the brake outcomes, where pads and rotors dominate.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE SHOP

Where and when the noise happens is the diagnosis — expect a road test with the technician and a lift inspection. Speed-related hums are wheel bearings; belt squeals live in the engine bay; grinding tied to the pedal is brakes. Ask the shop to reproduce the noise before replacing anything.

ABOUT THIS DATA · HOW TO USE THIS BRIEF

Vehicles **all makes and models, US fleet**

Data confidence **High** — *large sample, stable shares*

Records through **July 2026**, refreshed continuously

Source **paid invoices from independent US repair shops**

Take it to the shop. It tells you what the likely answers are and what each one should cost — so when the diagnosis comes back, you already know whether the number fits. Vehicle-specific price reports for the common fixes are on fixdozer.com.

NOT A DIAGNOSIS This brief describes how other owners' visits for a driving noise ended. Your vehicle, its history and the shop's testing decide yours. FixDozer does not perform repairs and receives nothing from shops.

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