



Car Stalls or Dies While Driving — What It Usually Is

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

Sensor or alternator

Roughly one in five of all these visits end in one of these two

Sensor **\$180 – \$433**

Alternator **\$302 – \$563**

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

THE FIX INVOLVED	SHARE OF THESE VISITS*	TYPICAL COST†	MEDIAN
Sensor	14.8%	\$180 – \$433	\$287
Alternator	11.1%	\$302 – \$563	\$414
Fuel filter	10.8%	\$134 – \$436	\$256
Spark plugs	10.8%	\$170 – \$474	\$296
Car battery	10.4%	\$140 – \$314	\$206
Fuel pump	10.0%	\$380 – \$829	\$600
Module / actuator	4.3%	\$254 – \$696	\$413
Ignition coil	4.3%	\$184 – \$402	\$269
Distributor	4.1%	\$242 – \$533	\$388
Other, rarer causes	smaller shares — fuel filters, throttle bodies, idle valves, ignition switches, wiring	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

- **Dies and restarts after sitting** — Stall-then-restart after a rest is a classic overheating fuel pump or failing crank sensor pattern — components that quit hot and recover cool.
- **Battery light before the stall** — If a battery warning preceded the stall, the alternator likely quit and the car ran the battery flat — the fix is the charging system, not the engine.
- **Stalls at idle only** — Dying at stoplights but running fine at speed points at idle-control: throttle body carbon, vacuum leaks, idle-air valves.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE SHOP

Stalling is intermittent by nature, so expect a scan for stored codes plus a test drive or fuel-pressure check — and be ready for a second visit if it won't act up in the shop. Fuel delivery and crank or cam sensors lead these outcomes. A shop that replaces a part without reproducing the stall is guessing; ask what the test showed.

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.