



Brakes Grinding — What It Means, and What It Costs

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

Brake pads or brake rotors

Nearly half of all these visits end in one of these two

Brake pads **\$223 – \$554**

Brake rotors **\$194 – \$447**

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

THE FIX INVOLVED	SHARE OF THESE VISITS*	TYPICAL COST†	MEDIAN
Brake pads	92.7%	\$223 – \$554	\$355
Brake rotors	68.2%	\$194 – \$447	\$303
Brake caliper	23.6%	\$125 – \$359	\$221
Brake shoes	5.8%	\$145 – \$332	\$220
Wheel bearing / hub	2.8%	\$321 – \$623	\$445
Brake drum	2.2%	\$86 – \$379	\$174
Wheel cylinder	2.1%	\$135 – \$323	\$209
Other, rarer causes	smaller shares — dust shields, wheel bearings, stones in the rotor	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

- **Why grinding costs more than squealing** — Squealing is the wear indicator saying 'soon'; grinding means 'now'.
- **Grinding on one corner** — If one wheel grinds, drags, or smells hot, a sticking caliper is the likely reason the pads died early on that side — and it shows up in these outcomes attached to the pad-and-rotor jobs it caused.
- **Grinding from the rear** — On vehicles with rear drums, the same story plays out as shoes and drums.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE SHOP

Grinding means metal on metal — expect the wheels off and a thickness check, and expect rotors on the quote: the grinding ruined them. Ask whether one axle or both and whether a caliper is dragging (a common reason pads wore early on one side). Don't wait on this one; every stop costs more.

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 grinding brakes ended. Your vehicle, its history and the shop's testing decide yours. FixDozer does not perform repairs and receives nothing from shops.