



Car Shakes When Braking — What It Is, and What It Costs

How real visits for shaking under braking 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	73.0%	\$223 – \$554	\$355
Brake rotors	63.6%	\$194 – \$447	\$303
Brake fluid	10.6%	\$106 – \$366	\$203
Brake caliper	7.9%	\$125 – \$359	\$221
Brake shoes	2.7%	\$145 – \$332	\$220
Wheel bearing / hub	2.2%	\$321 – \$623	\$445
Other, rarer causes	smaller shares — wheel balance, sticking calipers, worn suspension bushings	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

- **Steering wheel shake** — Shake you feel in the wheel points at the front rotors — they do most of the braking and warp first, especially after hard downhill use or an overtightened wheel.
- **Pulse in the pedal or seat** — A pulse felt in the pedal or through the seat with a steady wheel implicates the rear brakes instead — same cause, different axle.
- **Shake only at highway speed** — If the car also shakes without braking, wheel balance or suspension may be the real cause — braking just loads the same worn parts harder.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE SHOP

Expect a test drive and rotor measurement — pulsation is warped or unevenly worn rotors, front if you feel it in the wheel, rear if in the seat. Rotors alone fix it when pads are recent; usually pads come too. If the car also shakes without braking, ask for a balance check first.

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