



Engine Cranks But Won't Start — What It Is, and What It Costs

How real visits for a crank-no-start ended at independent shops across the US — the part actually replaced, how often, and what it cost when it was the only fix.

Fuel pump or fuel filter

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

Fuel pump **\$380 – \$829**

Fuel filter **\$134 – \$436**

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

THE FIX INVOLVED	SHARE OF THESE VISITS*	TYPICAL COST†	MEDIAN
Fuel pump	36.8%	\$380 – \$829	\$600
Fuel filter	26.0%	\$134 – \$436	\$256
Spark plugs	11.2%	\$170 – \$474	\$296
Distributor	9.7%	\$242 – \$533	\$388
Car battery	8.9%	\$140 – \$314	\$206
Module / actuator	8.3%	\$254 – \$696	\$413
Sensor	8.3%	\$180 – \$433	\$287
Relay	6.1%	\$107 – \$280	\$174
Ignition coil	5.9%	\$184 – \$402	\$269
Other, rarer causes	smaller shares — crank sensors, cam sensors, timing, security systems	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

- **Fuel first** — The fuel pump is the classic crank-no-start finding, and it often telegraphs: dying at highway speed before the final no-start, starting after long cranking, or starting when the tank is full but not low.
- **Spark second** — Plugs, coils, and — on older engines — the distributor carry the ignition share of these visits.
- **Starts briefly, then dies** — Catching for a second and dying is its own clue — commonly the security system rejecting the key, an idle-control fault, or fuel pressure that bleeds off.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE SHOP

Cranking proves the battery and starter — expect the shop to check fuel pressure and spark next, in that order. Fuel pumps and filters lead these outcomes; plugs and coils follow. If the quote is a fuel pump, ask whether the tank must come down or there's an access panel: that's the labor fork.

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.