



Brake Pedal Soft or Sinking to the Floor — What It Is, and What It Costs

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

Brake fluid or brake line

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

Brake fluid **\$106 – \$366**

Brake line **\$130 – \$339**

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

THE FIX INVOLVED	SHARE OF THESE VISITS*	TYPICAL COST†	MEDIAN
Brake fluid	58.4%	\$106 – \$366	\$203
Brake line	40.5%	\$130 – \$339	\$207
Brake pads	21.6%	\$223 – \$554	\$355
Brake caliper	17.3%	\$125 – \$359	\$221
Master cylinder	15.3%	\$163 – \$426	\$273
Brake rotors	14.5%	\$194 – \$447	\$303
Brake hose	13.2%	\$124 – \$317	\$200
Wheel cylinder	12.4%	\$135 – \$323	\$209
Brake shoes	9.7%	\$145 – \$332	\$220
Other, rarer causes	smaller shares — ABS units, proportioning valves, brake boosters	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

- **Pedal sinks with a visible leak** — Fluid at a wheel or along the frame means a rusted steel line, a cracked hose, a weeping caliper, or a wheel cylinder — the dominant family in these outcomes.
- **Pedal sinks with no leak anywhere** — When the reservoir stays full but the pedal creeps down at a stoplight, the master cylinder is leaking internally past its own seals.
- **Soft after brake work or air in the lines** — A pedal that turned spongy right after other brake work usually just needs a proper bleed.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE SHOP

This is a stop-driving symptom. Expect a leak inspection at every wheel and along the lines; a sinking pedal with a dry system points at the master cylinder. Lines, hoses and wheel-end hydraulics lead these outcomes. Every fix includes a full bleed and fresh fluid — that's part of the price, not padding.

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 soft or sinking brake pedal ended. Your vehicle, its history and the shop's testing decide yours. FixDozer does not perform repairs and receives nothing from shops.