



Fluid Leaking From Your Car — What It Usually Is

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

Gasket / seal or A/C refrigerant

About a third of all these visits end in one of these two

Gasket / seal **\$65 – \$444**
A/C refrigerant **\$107 – \$264**

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

THE FIX INVOLVED	SHARE OF THESE VISITS*	TYPICAL COST†	MEDIAN
Gasket / seal	17.7%	\$65 – \$444	\$188
A/C refrigerant	13.0%	\$107 – \$264	\$162
Hose	9.9%	\$103 – \$387	\$207
Brake fluid	8.6%	\$106 – \$366	\$203
Power steering	8.0%	\$142 – \$510	\$289
Water pump	6.6%	\$261 – \$651	\$394
Radiator	6.6%	\$189 – \$624	\$401
Thermostat	5.5%	\$165 – \$408	\$262
Valve cover gasket	4.9%	\$182 – \$481	\$299
Other, rarer causes	smaller shares — axle seals, differential covers, coolant reservoirs, washer 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

- **Red fluid** — Transmission and power-steering fluid share the red family — location decides (center-rear vs front).
- **Clear water** — A clear, odorless puddle under the passenger footwell area in summer is A/C condensation — the system working as designed, not a leak.
- **The leak that moves** — Fluids travel along the underbody before dripping, so the wet spot is often downstream of the source.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE SHOP

First question: which fluid? Color and location narrow it fast — expect the shop to identify the fluid and clean and dye the area before naming a part. Seals, gaskets and lines lead these outcomes. A leak that's just a seep may be monitored; anything hydraulic (brakes, steering) gets fixed now.

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