



Car Heater Not Working — What It Usually Is

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

Thermostat or blower motor

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

Thermostat **\$165 – \$408**

Blower motor **\$185 – \$435**

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

THE FIX INVOLVED	SHARE OF THESE VISITS*	TYPICAL COST†	MEDIAN
Thermostat	23.9%	\$165 – \$408	\$262
Blower motor	19.9%	\$185 – \$435	\$287
Module / actuator	17.1%	\$254 – \$696	\$413
Radiator	9.3%	\$189 – \$624	\$401
Water pump	7.1%	\$261 – \$651	\$394
Heater core / component	5.3%	\$141 – \$541	\$279
Hose	5.2%	\$103 – \$387	\$207
Switch	2.5%	\$126 – \$344	\$216
Radiator hose	2.1%	\$130 – \$386	\$234
Other, rarer causes	smaller shares — blower resistors, heater cores, thermostats, coolant level	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

- **Lukewarm at best** — An engine that never fully warms — often with the temp gauge reading low — is a thermostat stuck open.
- **Heat fades at idle** — Warm on the highway but cool at stoplights is the low-coolant signature: the heater core sits high and starves first.
- **One side hot, one side cold** — Split temperatures on dual-zone systems are usually a blend-door actuator — a small motor behind the dash, more labor than parts.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE SHOP

No heat splits into no airflow (blower motor or resistor) and no warm air (low coolant, thermostat, a blocked heater core or a stuck blend door). Expect the shop to check coolant level first — it's the cheapest cause. A heater core is the expensive tail, mostly for the dash work to reach it.

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 no heat ended. Your vehicle, its history and the shop's testing decide yours. FixDozer does not perform repairs and receives nothing from shops.