



## Noise When Braking — What It Usually Is, and What It Costs

How real visits for brake noise 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          | <div><div></div></div> 83.2%                                                        | \$223 – \$554 | \$355  |
| Brake rotors        | <div><div></div></div> 53.7%                                                        | \$194 – \$447 | \$303  |
| Brake caliper       | <div><div></div></div> 18.2%                                                        | \$125 – \$359 | \$221  |
| Brake shoes         | <div><div></div></div> 6.2%                                                         | \$145 – \$332 | \$220  |
| Wheel bearing / hub | <div><div></div></div> 3.6%                                                         | \$321 – \$623 | \$445  |
| Brake drum          | <div><div></div></div> 2.6%                                                         | \$86 – \$379  | \$174  |
| Wheel cylinder      | <div><div></div></div> 2.1%                                                         | \$135 – \$323 | \$209  |
| Other, rarer causes | smaller shares — wheel bearings, dust shields, hardware, stones caught in the rotor | 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

- **Grinding noise (metal on metal)** — Grinding usually means the pad friction material is gone and the backing plate is cutting into the rotor.
- **Squealing or squeaking** — A steady squeal that stops when you press the pedal is very often the built-in wear indicator — a metal tab designed to sing before the pad is gone.
- **Clunk, rattle, or grinding that isn't the brakes** — A noise you feel over bumps — or a hum that changes with speed but not braking — often isn't the brake system: wheel bearings and suspension hardware are the classic look-alikes in the remainder of these visits.

#### WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE SHOP

Expect the wheels off and a measurement of pad and rotor thickness — not a guess from the noise. Grinding usually means pads gone to metal and rotors damaged; a squeal caught early can be pads alone. Ask which axle and whether the rotors can be reused; that question is most of the price difference.

#### 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](https://fixdozer.com).