



Rattling Noise — What It Usually Is, and What It Costs

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

Sway bar

The single most common outcome — roughly one in five of these visits when combined with the runner-up

Sway bar **\$154 – \$369**

Wheel bearing / hub **\$321 – \$623**

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

THE FIX INVOLVED	SHARE OF THESE VISITS*	TYPICAL COST†	MEDIAN
Sway bar	22.3%	\$154 – \$369	\$240
Wheel bearing / hub	6.4%	\$321 – \$623	\$445
Struts	6.4%	\$400 – \$1,024	\$690
Tie rod	4.1%	\$222 – \$504	\$329
Control arm	3.8%	\$387 – \$926	\$599
Shocks	3.7%	\$264 – \$677	\$423
CV axle / driveshaft	3.6%	\$211 – \$612	\$355
Ball joint	3.1%	\$288 – \$713	\$454
Other, rarer causes	smaller shares — exhaust heat shields, loose trim, strut mounts, brake hardware	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

- **Rattle over bumps** — A metallic rattle or clatter over broken pavement is the sway-bar-link signature — small joints at each end of the stabilizer bar that wear loose.
- **Rattle underneath at idle** — A tinny buzz under the car at idle or at certain RPMs is usually a loose exhaust heat shield — harmless-sounding advice until you've heard one.
- **Rattle with clunks mixed in** — When the rattle deepens into clunks on bumps, you're in worn strut and joint territory — the heavier end of these outcomes.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE SHOP

Expect a lift inspection and a shake-down — rattles are found by hand. Loose heat shields are the classic cheap fix; sway-bar links the common suspension answer; struts the pricier one. Ask to see the loose part.

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