



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

How real visits for a grinding 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	57.8%	\$223 – \$554	\$355
Brake rotors	44.6%	\$194 – \$447	\$303
Wheel bearing / hub	19.1%	\$321 – \$623	\$445
Brake caliper	18.2%	\$125 – \$359	\$221
CV axle / driveshaft	4.7%	\$211 – \$612	\$355
Brake shoes	4.6%	\$145 – \$332	\$220
Starter	3.1%	\$267 – \$494	\$370
Power steering	3.0%	\$142 – \$510	\$289
Serpentine belt	2.3%	\$120 – \$292	\$182
Other, rarer causes	smaller shares — dust shields, stones in the brakes, CV joints, wheel bearings	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 when you brake** — If the grind appears or sharpens when you press the pedal, it's brake pads worn to the metal — the dominant outcome.
- **Grinding while rolling** — A grind or growl that's there whether or not you're braking, and that changes on gentle swerves, is a wheel bearing — the second-largest family in these visits.
- **Grinding on turns** — Grinding or clicking mainly in turns points at a CV joint running dry inside a torn boot.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE SHOP

Expect the shop to separate braking grind from rolling grind — the pedal test does it in a minute. Braking grind is pads to metal with rotors likely; rolling grind is a wheel bearing; grinding on turns a CV joint. Ask which, and for the wheels to come off before the quote.

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