



## Autotech Auto Tips Diagnostic Checklist

*(To print this document, use the Acrobat print icon on the Acrobat toolbar.)*

Noises, smells, leaks and operating changes are all signs that something could be wrong with your vehicle.

To make repairing your vehicle faster and less costly, go through this check list and check off what is applicable to your vehicle's problems. **(Check all boxes that apply.)** You can give this check list to Autotech when you take your vehicle in for service or use it when you call us for an appointment.

### Performance Problems

√	Problem	Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Cuts out</b>	Temporary, complete loss of power. Engine quits at sharp, irregular intervals. May occur repeatedly or intermittently. Usually worse under heavy acceleration.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Ping or Knock</b>	Mild to severe ping, usually worse under acceleration and load. Engine makes sharp, metallic knocks that change with throttle opening. Sounds like marbles rattling around.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Hesitation</b>	Momentary lack of response as accelerator is pressed. Can occur at all speeds. Usually most severe when starting from a stop. May cause engine to stall.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Missing</b>	Pulsation or jerking which changes with engine speed. Exhaust has a steady spitting sound at idle or low speed. Not normally felt above 30 mph.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Rough idle</b>	Engine runs unevenly at idle. Car may also shake.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Sluggish</b>	Engine delivers limited power under load or at high speed. Won't accelerate as fast as normal. Loses too much speed going up hills. Has less speed than normal.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Stall</b>	Engine stops running or dies out. May occur at idle or while driving.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Surge</b>	Vehicle speeds up and slows down with no change on accelerator pedal. Can occur at any speed.

**Noises:** What is your car trying to tell you when it clicks, clunks and grinds? Translating these noise signals is key information for automotive technicians who are trained to identify problems via sound. **The important thing to remember with odd sounds is to be specific, narrow that 'rattle' down, and then detail when it happens — when the car's hot, cold, at idle, moving at 55 mph, etc.:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Squeaky brakes</b>              | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Knocking under hood</b>                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grinding brakes</b>             | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Growling from air conditioner</b>              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Metal on metal when braking</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Whining from tires on highway</b>              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Squealing windshield wipers</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Squealing from tires when turning a corner</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Screeching under the hood</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grinding while shifting gears</b>              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Popping from engine</b>         | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Clunking under hood when gears change</b>      |

**Smells:** Learning to pinpoint strange vehicle odors can help your automotive technician sniff out the real cause of the problem. Here are a few common odiferous car complaints:

- Sweet odor, usually accompanied by steam from under the hood
- Clear liquid with a smell
- Heavy, thick odor, possibly accompanied by smoke from under the hood or from the exhaust
- Acrid odor, like burned toast
- Continuous, heavy sulfur odor, like rotten eggs
- Burning material or rubber odor

**Leaks:** If your vehicle is leaving strange stains or other visual signs behind on the driveway, you need to pinpoint the following signals:

- Black stains
- Brownish-colored stains
- Reddish-colored stains
- Yellow, green, pink or orange-colored stains
- Clear liquid

**Handling:** Handling issues are unnerving and need to be checked out ASAP. Check the following that apply.

- Difficult to steer
- Drifts to either side
- Pulls upon braking
- Shimmies on highway
- Thumping or whining
- Noise when cornering

**1. Where does the problem come from?**

**Inside car –**

Front  Center  Rear  Instrument Panel  Seat  Door  Window  Floor  Trunk

**Outside car –**

Left  Right  Front  Rear  Under hood

**2. When does it happen?**

During braking  When shifting  During turning  At \_\_\_ mph  On rough roads

While accelerating (increasing load)  While decelerating (coasting)

**Mostly when using –**

Brakes  Heater/air conditioning  Steering  Starter  Radio/power antenna  Clutch   
Windshield wiper/washer  Other

**When the engine is –**

Idling  Hot  Cold  Being started

**3. How often does it happen?**

Always  Comes and goes  After \_\_\_ miles

**Thank you for taking the time to provide us with this important information about your vehicle.**

**Autotech Automotive  
781-935-5400**