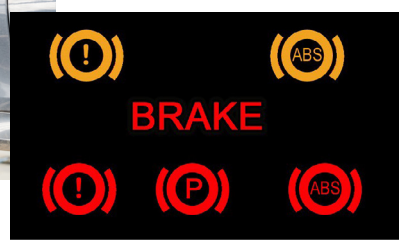


## Top Signs Your Brakes May Need Servicing

- ▶ **Symptoms:**  
Unusual Noises, Vibration During Braking, Low/Soft Brake Pedal, Burning Smells, or Dash Warning lights.
- ▶ **The Solution:**  
Inspect the Braking System and make any necessary repairs.



### Brake service is one of those routine maintenance chores you just cannot ignore.

When you notice a noise related to braking, a difference in braking performance, or a burning smell while driving, get a brake inspection as soon as possible. Brake parts have a life span, and they do need to be regularly serviced and sometimes replaced to work correctly. Fortunately, your vehicle usually gives you clear signals that your brakes are due for service. If you notice any of the following warning signs, it's time to get a professional to inspect your vehicle.

- 1) Brake Warning Lights** - When one of the red or yellow brake indicators on your dashboard lights up, it may mean you're just due for a brake inspection. It could also indicate your vehicle is alerting you to a problem. An engaged parking brake could also cause the brake light to remain lit. Be sure the parking brake is fully released to confirm it's not the issue. (And read up on what all of your dashboard brake warning lights indicate in your vehicle owner's manual.)
- 2) Squealing, Squeaking, or Grinding Noises** - If you hear a high-pitched noise that stops when you apply the brakes, that's likely the sound of the brake pad wear indicators. They could be letting you know that your brake pads are worn out and need to be replaced. Grinding noises when stopping are also a good indication the brake pads may be worn out.
- 3) Brake Pedal Pulsation, or Vibration, when Braking** - Shaking in the steering wheel or vibration when you apply the brakes may be the result of a brake rotor problem. It is normal for the brake rotor surfaces to get slight variations. During brake service, the rotors are often machined (smoothed and evened out) or replaced to correct these flaws. Another possible cause of rough braking is the brake caliper not releasing properly. The piston inside

the brake caliper can bind or seize. When you release the brake pedal, it may not retract the brake pads back into the fully "off" position. Another cause of vibration during braking could be damage to your brake components from improper wheel lug nut installation. Any time tires are removed, the lug nuts must be torqued to the proper specifications using a torque wrench to prevent brake rotor damage.

- 4) Spongy, Low, or Soft Brake Pedal** - If the brake pedal feels "soft" or sinks to the floor when applied, it's a sign you need immediate service. There could be air in the Brake System, a Brake Fluid leak, or a problem with the Brake Master Cylinder.
- 5) Car Pulling to One Side When Braking** - This could be caused by a faulty brake hose or a brake caliper problem. One brake caliper may be applying more or all the pressure during braking, resulting in unbalanced stopping.
- 6) Burning Smell While Driving** - A strong burning odor after repeated hard braking is a sign of overheated brakes. Pull over immediately, check your parking brake to make sure it's fully released, and allow the brakes to cool. If there's smoke coming from a wheel, it may be a seized brake caliper and possibly unsafe to continue driving.

Not every brake noise or symptom is going to cost you. It could be a harmless squeak from dust, dirt, or moisture on the brake pads. However, brake parts do wear out, and delaying brake service could put you and your passengers at unnecessary risk. As with many automotive issues, if there is a problem, the longer you put it off, the more you risk big repair bills.

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT**  
**800-228-9672**  
ASE Certified Technicians are Standing by 7 days a week.

