

Automotive Answers

Is It Best To Repair Or Replace Your Car?

(NAPSA)—A growing number of people are finding that the economy has them debating whether it's best to buy a new car or repair the one they have. If you are trying to decide between buying and repairing, here are some tips that may help:

Comparing Costs

It is typically less expensive in the long run to repair the vehicle you already own rather than purchasing a newer one. Financing even a \$2,000 repair typically means lower payments (or similar payments for a shorter time) than those incurred when purchasing a newer vehicle.

The 50-Percent Rule

After receiving the estimate of a major repair, consider the “50-percent rule.” When the cost of a needed repair approaches 50 percent of the vehicle's value, it is time to seriously consider replacing it.

Reliability And Maintenance History

The best way to know a vehicle's condition is by maintaining it on a regular basis and using the same repair shop. If a repair shop knows the service history of a vehicle, consumers can look to its technicians for guidance on when their vehicle likely will need major repairs.

“Following the vehicle manufacturer's maintenance recommendations can greatly increase the life span of vehicle,” said John Nielsen, director of AAA Approved Auto Repair and Auto Buying.

Cosmetics

The cosmetic condition of a vehicle can greatly affect its value and a motorist's desire to hold on to it. Motorists should take a critical look at their vehicle for signs of wear and tear and evaluate how important their



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vehicle's cosmetics are to them.

Lifestyle

Changes in lifestyle can be a large factor in changing vehicles. Family size, commute length, recreational usage and business needs are all legitimate reasons to consider purchasing a newer vehicle that is better suited to a consumer's driving routine.

Outside Factors

Several outside factors may impact the decision between repairing and replacing a vehicle, such as reduced pricing and special offers from manufacturers. A vehicle that could become a valuable classic might be worthy of extraordinary repairs and maintenance.

If you decide to go with a major repair, be sure to use a qualified and trustworthy auto repair facility. A listing of AAA Approved Auto Repair shops is available at AAA.com/repair.