

Have a Complaint? Need Help?

1. Check your car's warranty. Is this repair covered?
2. Contact the business and explain your specific complaint.
3. Deliver it in writing. Keep proof that it was received (such as sending it by registered mail), and keep records of all communication with the business.
4. If you are still not satisfied, file a formal complaint with the **Ministry of Consumer Services**.

How to file a complaint with the **Ministry of Consumer Services**:

- Visit the Ministry's website at www.ontario.ca/ConsumerServices.
- Or, call 416-326-8800 or toll-free at 1-800-889-9768.

VIDEO

Scan the QR barcode below with your smartphone to watch a "Know Your Rights" video about car repair shops.



Be a Smart Consumer ... We Can Help

Ontario's **Ministry of Consumer Services** informs and protects people so they can shop with confidence when buying goods and services.

Visit us:

www.ontario.ca/ConsumerServices

Call us:

Greater Toronto Area 416-326-8800
Toll-free 1-800-889-9768

TTY

Greater Toronto Area 416-229-6086
Toll-free 1-877-666-6545

E-mail us:

consumer@ontario.ca

Smartphone user?



For more information about **car repairs** scan this QR barcode with your smartphone.

CAR REPAIRS

What you need to know



MINISTRY OF CONSUMER SERVICES
www.ontario.ca/ConsumerServices

Have you ever taken a car in for repair and:

- Been unhappy with the quality of the work?
- Paid more than you expected?
- Had to pay for repairs that you thought were covered by the warranty?

Most repair shops are honest, but most people don't know a lot about cars. Finding a business you can trust is the key to getting good, reliable service.

How can I protect myself?

When you choose a repair business

- Ask friends and neighbours where they take their car. Ask them if they were happy with the service they received. If you can't get a referral, shop around with care.
- Go to the repair shop and speak to the service manager or the owner. The mechanic's licence should be posted where you can see it. If not, ask to see it.
- Use only businesses you know and trust. Check references. Check a company's track record by going to the Ministry of Consumer Services' online database at www.ontario.ca/ConsumerBeware. You can also find customer reviews online and with the Better Business Bureau. Red flags include:
 - reports of the business refusing to honour warranties
 - bad reviews when people have had problems with the repairs they had done.
- Once you find a good business, stay with it.

Before you agree to any repairs

- Look around. By law, repair shops must post a sign in an obvious place that tells you:
 - They must offer you an estimate unless you approve a maximum amount for the repair.
 - The shop's labour rates and how they are calculated. Will you be charged hourly? Or will you pay a flat rate for certain repairs, such as an oil and filter change?
 - Any commissions paid to mechanics.
 - They will return any replaced parts after they finish the job, if you ask for them.
- Always get a written estimate before repairs begin. If a business won't give you an estimate, go somewhere else.

Estimates should include:

- The date of the estimate and how long it is valid.
 - The name of the person or shop doing the repairs.
 - The shop's name, address and phone number.
 - Detailed identification information about your vehicle, including the make, model, vehicle identification number and licence plate number.
 - A full description of the work that will be done
 - Whether or not reconditioned parts will be used to repair your vehicle.
 - The rates charged for the work.
 - The date the work will be completed.
- The repair shop may charge for an estimate, but only if they tell you in advance how much it will be. If you authorize the repair, the cost of an estimate will normally be deducted from the total.
 - No one can make repairs to your vehicle unless you provide permission.

TIP: If a repair shop asks you to sign a blank work order, don't do it. If you sign, the repairer may argue you're liable for whatever work it chooses to carry out. It will be difficult to prove you didn't authorize it.

After the repairs are done

- The final cost can't be higher than 10 per cent more than the original written estimate – unless you agreed to additional or different services.
- The Consumer Protection Act provides that all repairs are warranted for a 90-day or 5,000-kilometre warranty (whichever comes first) on most new and used parts as well as the labour costs.
- If your vehicle breaks down during the warranty period, or is unsafe to drive, arrange to have it taken back to the repair shop. The shop must fix the part under warranty and cover the costs of the labour to redo the repair.
- If you can't return your vehicle to the same repair shop, you may have to have it repaired at another shop. To get your money back, you must return the defective parts to the first shop you used.

