



AUTOMOTIVE ENGINEERING

FACT SHEET



AUTO REPAIR SURVEY

BACKGROUND

For most consumers, finding a trusted repair shop can be a daunting task. When trouble strikes, drivers can find it stressful to take their vehicle for repairs when they are unsure what's wrong, how much it will cost or if the repair facility will do the work properly.

According to a recent AAA survey, two out of three Americans do not trust auto repair shops – citing excessive charges, unnecessary service recommendations and poor past experiences as the top reasons for their misgivings. Despite this lack of confidence, 64 percent of U.S. drivers have identified an auto repair shop they do trust, suggesting that consumers have chosen to find a reliable mechanic in an industry perceived to have a poor reputation. With vehicles becoming increasingly connected, AAA also found that majority of drivers want to send their vehicle's data to their trusted repair facility.

However, there are currently 75 million U.S. drivers who have not found a repair shop they trust. AAA urges all motorists to identify a reputable facility well before one is needed.

To understand consumer attitudes toward the auto repair industry, AAA pursued three lines of inquiry:

1. Do U.S. drivers trust auto repair shops in general?
2. If not, what are the top reasons for their distrust?
3. Despite overall attitudes toward the repair industry, have U.S. drivers identified one auto repair shop they do trust?

KEY FINDINGS

- **Two-thirds (63 percent)** of U.S. drivers generally do not trust auto repair shops.
 - The reasons that U.S. drivers lack confidence in auto repair shops are:
 - **Recommendations of unnecessary services** (76 percent)
 - **Overcharging for services** (73 percent)
 - **Negative past experiences** (63 percent)
 - **Concerns that the work will not be done correctly** (49 percent)
 - **Two-thirds of U.S. drivers** have found an auto repair shop they trust, while **one-third** of motorists have not.
 - The **majority of U.S. consumers** want the ability to send vehicle data to a trusted repair facility of their choice.
- Older drivers are more likely than younger drivers to trust auto repair shops.**
- Baby Boomers are **twice as likely** as younger generations to trust auto repair facilities, with **one-in-five** reporting they “totally trust” the industry.
 - **Baby Boomers (76 percent)** are more likely to have a preferred auto repair shop compared to **Millennials (55 percent)** and **Gen-Xers (56 percent)**.

AAA RECOMMENDATIONS

To find a trustworthy auto repair shop, AAA suggests that drivers:

- Identify a repair shop before issues occur. Ask family and friends for recommendations and visit AAA.com/autorepair to locate a AAA Approved Auto Repair facility near you.
- Research potential repair shops and find out how long they have been in business. Check with the Better Business Bureau, State Department of Consumer Affairs or attorney general's office to see how the repair shops deal with consumer complaints.
- When you've chosen a facility, make an appointment for a minor job such as an oil change or tire rotation. While waiting, talk to shop employees and inspect the shop's appearance, technician credentials and warranties. If you find the service to be good, stick with them. Build a relationship with the technician so they can get to know you and the vehicle.



AAA APPROVED AUTO REPAIR

AAA's Approved Auto Repair program was created more than 35 years ago and includes nearly 7,000 facilities across North America. These approved auto repair shops follow professional business practices that support their long-term viability, and they must maintain customer satisfaction ratings of at least 90 percent. To ensure the ongoing quality of the network, AAA representatives visit and inspect each AAA Approved Auto Repair shop quarterly. AAA members receive unique benefits by selecting an Approved Auto Repair facility, including priority service, a 24-month/24,000-mile warranty, discounts on repairs, free inspections and AAA assistance with dispute resolutions, if needed.

METHODOLOGY

Between Sept. 22 and 25, 2016, an omnibus telephone survey was conducted in the continental United States. A total of 1,001 interviews were completed among drivers ages 18 and older.

A dual-frame approach was used that combined landline and cell phone interviews to ensure that adults who primarily communicate via cell phones were properly represented.

Survey responses were weighted by five variables (age, gender, region, race/ethnicity and education) to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the country's total population of those 18 and older.

The study results have an average statistical error rate of +/- 3 percent at the 95 percent confidence level.