



Brand new rotors and brake pads are a must for ensuring proper braking in the wintertime.

Once your car is in motion, there's nothing more important than having the ability to stop -quickly and efficiently. Therefore, the brakes are one of the most important parts to your car. And yet, very few people know how to care for them – or even how to troubleshoot problems in advance.

Depending on how you drive, the amount of abuse your car's brakes take on a daily basis can vary greatly. If your typical drive is coasting down a gentle slope that gradually lets you slow down, then congrats. Your brakes will probably last you a long time. But, if you're like most of us, and your daily commute involves a lot of herky-jerky starts and stops, either on stoplight-filled streets or crowded freeways, then your brakes are taking a lot of abuse.

### **Brake Parts, and How They Work**

The average driver, who is not a mechanic, really only needs to concern themselves with two brake parts: the brake pads, and the rotors. Understanding the roles each of these play will help you to learn exactly what a brake does, and maybe even how to drive more safely.

Your brake pads are exactly what they sound like: hard material (ranging from asbestos to organic compounds) that uses friction to stop the car. Brake rotors are round wheel brakes

## Give Me a Brake

that the pads clamp onto to slow and stop the car.

Disc brakes use brake pads that are contained within calipers. When the pedal is pushed, they apply pressure to the rotor, which in turn slows the car. So it's not surprising that, every so often, both pads and rotors need repair, and eventually replacement.

### **Brake Pad Maintenance**

Usually, your car's brakes are good at letting you know when they need a little tender loving care. If you happen to notice a shrill, high-pitched squeal (it's hard to miss) coming from your car, that's a sign that the brake pads are wearing out. Manufacturers include a small sheet of metal in the brake pad itself, called an indicator, which lets you know it's time to replace them.

**Soft Brakes:** If it takes you longer than usual to stop, that's a sign of brake pad wear.

**Pushing Harder:** If your brake pedal seems to go farther, or need more of a push, there could be a brake pad issue.

### **Rotor Maintenance**

Rotors can usually last a driver through 2 or 3 sets of brake pads, but they do need to be examined from time to time for wear and warping. One indicator is if your steering wheel "wiggles" in your hands when your car is at a standstill.

If you hear or feel a grinding noise when you apply pressure to your brakes, chances are your pads are shot and you're wearing down your rotors with every stop sign.

Bring your car by for an inspection of your brakes & rotors.



## Bald is NOT Beautiful!

Just as your feet are sore after a long walk, the tires on your car take a beating every time you drive. This isn't a sign of bad driving --well, not usually -- but rather an inevitable fact of life.

Tires get old and worn down. And because a tire failure while you're driving can be catastrophic, causing your car to go out of control or leaving you stranded in the middle of nowhere without any easy way to get home, you want to know when your tires are in bad shape so you can get new ones before something goes wrong.

### **5 SIMPLE THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND...**

- The tread on your tires should never fall below 1/16 of an inch (1.6 millimeters) in depth. If you regularly drive on slick, wet surfaces, you'd be even better off with twice that much.
- Tread wear indicator bars built in the tires themselves. These bars, invisible or barely visible when the tires are new, gradually begin to appear as the tread wears down. They appear as flat rubber bars running perpendicular to the direction of the tread itself.
- Sidewalls...Look for tracks or cuts in the sidewall -- grooves that are distinct enough to be visible to the naked eye.
- Check the tires monthly. Tires will typically lose up to 1 psi (pounds per square inch) per month, and pressure drops about 1 psi for every 10-degree Fahrenheit drop in air temperature.
- If your car has a bad case of the shimmy shimmy shakes, especially if you notice this when you aren't driving on bad roads, take it to the mechanic right away to have it checked out.