

# Automotive Answers

## How To Communicate For Better Automotive Service

(NAPSA)—Whatever type of repair facility you patronize—dealership, service station, independent garage, specialty shop or national franchise—good communication between the customer and the shop is vital. The following tips from the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) may help:

### Do your homework

- Read the owner's manual to learn about the vehicle's systems and components.
- Follow the recommended service schedules.
- Keep a log of all repairs and service.

You know your car better than anyone else. You know how it feels and sounds when everything is right, so don't ignore its warning signals. Use all of your senses to inspect your car frequently. Check for:

- Unusual sounds, odors, drips, leaks, smoke, warning lights, gauge readings.
- Changes in acceleration, engine performance, gas mileage, fluid levels.
- Worn tires, belts, hoses.
- Problems in handling, braking, steering, vibrations.

Note when the problem occurs. Is it constant or periodic? Does it occur when the vehicle is cold or after the engine has warmed up? At all speeds? When accelerating? When braking? When shifting? When did the problem start?

### Communicate findings

Professionally run repair establishments, have always recognized the importance of communication in automotive repairs.

- Be prepared to describe the car's symptoms.
- Carry a written list of the symptoms that you can give to the technician or service manager.
- Resist the temptation to suggest a specific course of repair.



**Good communication will help you get better automotive service.**

Just as you would with your physician, tell where it hurts and how long it's been that way, but let the technician diagnose and recommend a remedy.

### Stay involved

- Ask as many questions as you need. Don't be embarrassed.
- Don't rush the service writer or technician to make an on-the-spot diagnosis. Ask to be called and apprised of the problem, course of action and costs before work begins.
- Before you leave, be sure you understand shop policies regarding labor rates, guarantees and acceptable methods of payment.

The National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) was founded in 1972 as a non-profit, independent organization dedicated to improving the quality of automotive service and repair through the voluntary testing and certification of automotive professionals. ASE-certified technicians wear blue and white ASE shoulder insignia and carry credentials listing their exact areas of certification. Their employers often display the ASE sign. Visit [www.asecert.org](http://www.asecert.org) for more information and for additional car care tips.