

Detecting Vehicle Defects

Your vehicle is a lot like your body. When one part is not functioning well, the entire body is affected. A simple toothache has the power to make you very sick. Although only one tooth has a problem, your body finds it very difficult to function soundly. The same is true with your vehicle. When one part experiences a breakdown, the whole vehicle may stop running smoothly.

On the other hand, discovering automotive problems is not as difficult as determining human sickness. To detect mechanical defects, no technologically advanced MRIs or CT scans are necessary. You just have to be a brilliant observer who knows how to use the senses well. Your eyes, ears, and nose are very important in figuring out the condition of your automobile.

Observe If There's Unusual Odor

Unusual smell in your vehicle should be taken seriously. It may be a sign of internal troubles. Here are some of them:

1. Smell that can be associated with putrid eggs or a constant smell of sulfur burning typically points to a setback in emission control mechanisms like the catalytic converter. This tells you that vehicle repair is imperative.
2. A light yet distinct smell of something burning indicates an electrical short. This needs immediate diagnosis. Don't use your vehicle until the electrical problem is resolved.
3. Burning oil generally results to a solid pungent odor. This must prompt you to search for hints of a leak.



Examine the Stains

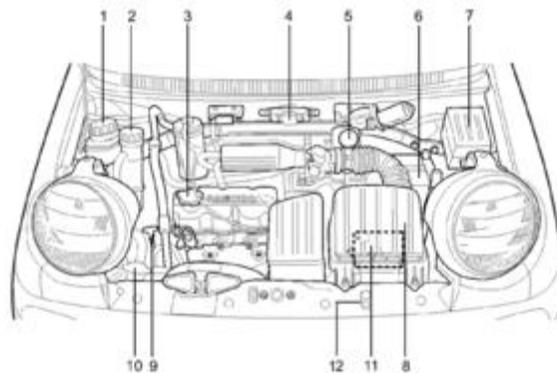
To save your vehicle from further damage, you need to know right away if there are leaks. Infrequent stains in little amount are not that alarming. However, if spills under your vehicle are a constant sight, there really must be something wrong within the system. Regularly checking the vehicle for any spill will be very helpful.

1. A faulty gasket could cause leaks. If this happens, you will notice a considerable amount of black greasy liquid under your vehicle.
2. If the stain is light blue, yellowish green or orange, it's either the engine of the vehicle is overheated or there's coolant leak coming from a busted radiator or water pump.
3. A red oily spot indicates a transmission or power-steering fluid leak.

Be Aware of How the Vehicle Sounds

When your vehicle is not in good condition, it would most likely sound in a different way. The squeaking sounds and rattles would tell you that your vehicle utterly needs some treatment.

4. Damaged or loose air conditioning belt, power steering or fan shrill can cause a sharp noise. This is typically an engine speed setback.
5. If there is a jammed valve lifter, a twisted fan blade, a loose wheel cover or low engine oil, you will most probably hear a small yet distinct noise. That means that there is something wrong with the vehicle speed or the engine speed.
6. If you hear a sharp clanging sound while your vehicle is moving, there must be a problem with the brakes.
7. An unsystematic pounding sound means a suspension part like the shock absorber is loose.



Notice Changes in the Driving Experience

As a driver, you should know if there's something wrong with the vehicle through your own driving experience. Sensing some unusual vibrations or having difficulty in handling the vehicle would tell you that an automotive check-up is urgently needed.

1. Vibrations generally are due to unbalanced tires. This should be given proper attention because it may hastily damage suspension and steering pieces.
2. One way to know whether or not your shocks need to be replaced is doing the Bounce Test. Try to powerfully bounce your vehicle at every wheel and then release it. If the vehicle bounces more than once, it means that your shocks are weak and needs to be replaced.
3. Damage in one of the steering elements and misalignment of the front wheels can instigate problem with steering in a straight line.

Source: <http://automechanics.wordpress.com/2007/08/18/detecting-vehicle-deficiencies/>