

Spring Improvement

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Signs it is time to replace brakes

Each component of a vehicle performs an important function that ensures the car runs safely and soundly. A working brake system is vital to vehicle safety, so any issues affecting the brakes merit attention. Fortunately, there are various warning signs that indicate to vehicle owners it is time to replace brakes.

- Grinding sound: Sun Auto Service says a deep grinding metal sound indicates that brakes are wearing down. Brake pads typically come equipped with tiny metal ridges on the bottom of the pads to alert the driver that the pads have worn down. Continuing to drive like this will put metal on metal, which can damage the rotors.

- Squealing sound: Some brake pads have built-in wear indicators. A driver may notice a squealing, screeching or whining noise when the brakes are engaged, says Bridgestone. Grinding or squealing often indicates that the brakes need to be replaced.

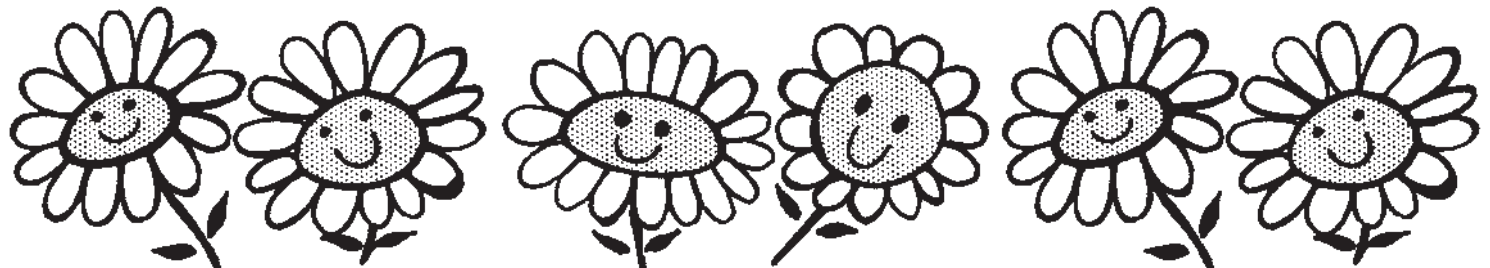
- Pulling to one side: When braking, drivers might notice the car pulling over to one side. This indicates brake pads are unevenly worn out, causing the car to pull to one side when braking.

- Visible wear and tear: A visual inspection of the brakes can give drivers an idea of their condition. If the pads are less than a quarter-inch thick, it is time to have them inspected or replaced.

- Brake pedal vibration: When brakes are working properly, the vehicle will smoothly slow to a stop. If the brakes are worn out or if the rotors are damaged, the brake pedal can vibrate and the car may even buck as it comes to a stop. This means the brakes and possibly the rotors will need to be changed.

- Failure to stop: Of course, a clear indication that it could be time to replace the brakes is if the car does not respond promptly to braking when the brake pedal is pressed. A soft brake pedal or longer stop times might mean brake fluid is low or may indicate the need for a brake replacement.

Various signs may indicate it is time to replace a vehicle's brakes.



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