

Don't Try This at Home! The Perils of DIY Auto Repair

I founded Chuck's Complete Auto Service because I loved to work on cars. When my buddies and I were teenagers we had our heads beneath the hood of some car, turning wrenches and tinkering all weekend. We'd change spark plugs, adjust the carburetor and tune up the engine. We'd change the oil and transmission fluids and replace the brakes.

But those days are long gone. With today's complicated technology, cars and trucks are computers on wheels. One of the first thing Chuck's mechanics do when you bring your car in is hook it up to a diagnostic machine that talks to your engine, tells us what could be wrong, and offers solutions. But it's not that simple or cut-and-dried. That's when the work truly begins. It's up to our mechanics to get their hands dirty and determine exactly what the problem is and fix it.

Servicing your vehicle is not something you should do at home. There are many perils in do-it-yourself (DIY) auto care.

Doug had an experience recently that made this issue very clear and I want to pass the lesson on to you so you don't make the same mistake.

While working on a Nissan, Doug discovered that the transmission fluid was red. Uh oh. That meant someone – presumably the car's owner – had put in the wrong transmission fluid. This Nissan had the newer continuously variable transmission (CVT) which uses a fluid that is either blue, clear, or green.

The CVT is different from the traditional automatic self-shifting transmission systems. More important, the two systems need completely different fluids.

Traditional transmissions work with a



Doug working to put yet another South Hills family vehicle back on the road.

hydraulic pump, disk, gears, and bands. The CVT runs a series of pulleys that are connected to a steel band rather than a fixed set of gears. Each system needs a particular type of transmission fluid in order to work properly.

"For this particular car, you should not find red fluid," Doug said. "It looked like someone changed their transmission fluid at home. I don't recommend that."

When the ATF is put in a vehicle that needs CVT fluid:

- The car will stall while shifting gears
- The engine make a clunking sound
- The gears will slip
- The clutch system will lock up
- The car will shift and drive rough

And even worse – make this mistake and your transmission will dig itself an early grave in the dead car junkyard.

"The transmission could quit doing its job and that would be the end of it \$4,000 later," Doug said. "That's about what a transmission costs for this particular Nissan."

"And a lot of fluid changes are like that. I'll hear guys saying they want to do a particular service at home because they want to teach their son how to fix cars. And I'll think, 'But you don't have the apparatus to change fluids correctly.' Certain fluid changes cannot be made without a fluid pump and few people have those in their garage at home."

Another service that should be left to Chuck's professionals is changing the brake fluid. It's a service that is needed often and routinely. Most manufacturers recommend replacing the brake fluid regardless of mileage, every two to three years.

"Doing that yourself could put you and your family's safety at risk," Doug said. "Brake fluid should be done by people who know what they are doing. And by doing it yourself, you would not be saving all that much money either. Chuck's doesn't charge much beyond the cost of fluids. And why would you want to crawl around under your car if you don't have to? I know I don't!"

Doug is right. And I'll add one more thing: Doug, Sean, and Vince have hours and hours of professional training. They are all Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified mechanics. This independent non-profit institute is dedicated to improving the quality of vehicle repair and service by testing and certifying automotive professionals.

The ASE seal of approval is the hallmark for quality work throughout the United States. So why try to do it yourself and possibly risk your family's safety? Come on down to Chuck's and let our mechanics, who are the best in the business, take care of all your family vehicles.

-Chuck

CLINKS AND CLANGS, BINGS AND BANGS, WHAT IS YOUR VEHICLE TELLING YOU?

HINT: We Know!

The purrrr of a well-tuned engine is a beautiful thing. But what if what you hear discordant sounds, a cacophony of clatter, clinking, clanking, and cater-wauling? That's something else entirely.

Your vehicle will tell you when something is wrong if you listen. Here are warning sounds and what they mean.

You hear: Finger-snapping, popping or clicking when you turn a corner.

What it means: Your constant velocity (CV) joints on your front axle may need to be replaced. The CV joints accommodate the movement of the suspension and steering system to provide a smooth ride.

You hear: A rhythmic squeak that speeds up as the car accelerates

What it means: On a rear-wheel or four-wheel drive vehicle, this annoying mouse-in-distress sound could be a failing universal joint (U-joint) which connects the driveshaft to the transmission.

You hear: A squeal or screech.

What it means: A belt in the engine could be wearing out. When it slips instead of grips, it will squeal.

You hear: what sounds like a coin tumbling in your clothes dryer.

What it means: A loose lug nut inside a hub cap caused when your wheel wasn't tightened properly the last time it was removed and replaced.

You hear: A grinding sound that is even worse than the one in your head at the dentist's office.

What it means: It could be your brakes. Something may be rubbing alongside the brake rotors, or the pads may be contacting unevenly with the rotors. It could also be faulty calipers which are designed to squeeze the brake pads against the rotor to stop



"Why didn't you take the car to Chuck's for service before we took the kids on vacation, Steve?"

the car.

You hear: Sputtering, rumbling, or rattling beneath the car.

What it means: Your exhaust system, which runs from the engine to the rear of the vehicle, may have a hole. The exhaust system consists of a catalytic converter, muffler, and an exhaust pipe. Over time, the components wear and the joints holding them together can loosen.

You hear: Flapping or ticking.

What it means: Your serpentine belt has partially broken and the frayed sections are striking neighboring parts inside the engine compartment. The sound will speed up when you accelerate. Turning on the air conditioner may make the squealing or ticking more intense.

You hear: Whistling and it's not "Dixie."

What it means: A high-pitched, shrill whistle can mean two things – your vehicle may be running low on transmission fluid, or the fuel injectors are dirty.

You hear: Knocking beneath the hood.

What it means: If the knock increases and decreases in speed with the RPMs of the engine, your vehicle's engine bearings are worn out. This will lead to engine failure.

You hear: A huge, groaning yawn.

What it means: There is a problem in your power steering system and a malfunction is causing friction. Your power steering pump could be failing.

What you should do: None of these noises should be ignored. Many of them indicate problems that could lead to catastrophic failures.

Come to Chuck's! Before this happens, bring those chatty cars and trucks down to Chuck's. We will take them on test drives and listen well to their complaints. We'll run diagnostic tests and then we'll go to work fixing what is wrong.

You might not be schooled in "vehicle speak," but it's a language that Doug, Sean, Vince, and Ed speak fluently. And they know how to silence your vehicle's noisy complaints through excellent-quality repairs and service!

Chuck's Supports These Fine Charities!

\$76,858 to MAKE A WISH FOUNDATION to fulfill the wish of one dying or critically ill child every year since 2001 when Chuck's became a Corporate Sponsor.

\$5,470 to DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS, CHAPTER 76 helping ALL veterans.

\$3,450 to OPERATION HOMEFRONT which offers financial assistance, transitional housing and other programs to help military families in need.

\$26,835 to FOUNDATION FIGHTING BLINDNESS for research on disease and degenerative vision conditions. Our creative niece Christie, who helps with our seasonal displays, has a progressive eye disease. Lynn walks to raise money and Chuck's is a corporate sponsor.

\$22,225 to SHIM (South Hills Interfaith Movement). Chuck's is a Corporate Sponsor, donates for every new customer, and we participate in seasonal drives.

\$5,575 to WOUNDED WARRIORS which helps veterans who served 2001 to present.

3,056 phones to CELL PHONES FOR SOLDIERS which recycles them to buy phone cards so soldiers serving overseas may call home for free.

1,164 pairs of your old prescription glasses to One Sight which distributes them to people with vision loss in the U.S. and around the world.

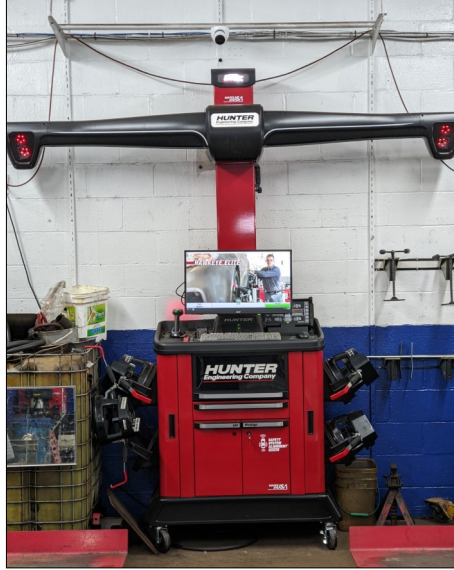
\$2,400 for TOYS FOR TOTS

\$12,780 to ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Thank you for helping us help them!

Chuck and Lynn

What's New at Chucks?



Chuck's New Beauty

The Hunter Hawkeye Elite is what's new at Chuck's! This state-of-the-art wheel alignment machine is the most powerful and up-to-date equipment available. As you know, updating our equipment is an important part of giving you the best possible service. And given the spring we are having that has left South Hills roads pocked with craters, we are very glad we have this machine.

Pittsburgh is known for its potholes and if you've had the misfortune of hitting one, especially at high speed, your vehicle's alignment system may have suffered damage. If your vehicle pulls in one direction or your steering wheel vibrates, you may need an alignment. Not getting one will also severely damage your tires.

This is another "Don't try this at



home" jobs. An alignment is an elaborate process. It brings the vehicle's suspension into proper configuration and positioning. The caster, camber, and toe are adjusted so the vehicle's wheels are aligned both with each other and with the surface of a road. All-wheel drive vehicles, especially SUVs, need to be aligned front and back at the same time. And no machine does it better than the Hawkeye. So if those moon craters on our South Hills roads have given your vehicle the shakes, Hawkeye will make the necessary repairs. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Winner of the FREE Oil Change!

Ed Grimenstein of Bridgeville

Call Chuck's! You've won a free oil change! Congratulations from all of us at Chuck's!

Copy this coupon and share it with family and friends!

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**Your Car is Talking to you,
Are You Listening? p.2**

**If your name is ??? You've Won
A FREE Oil Change! Yay! p.3**

Chuck's Excellent Solution to Pothole Damage p.3

**Why Your NEW Vehicles Should be
Serviced at Chuck's! p.4**

Your New Vehicles Can Be Serviced at Chuck's!

A federal consumer protection act—The Magnuson-Moss Act, says you may take your new vehicles anywhere you wish for service with your warranties remaining in effect as long as the auto shop you select uses quality products and professional mechanics perform the work.

You know Chuck's ASE-trained and certified mechanics are among the best in the business. Bring your new vehicles to Chuck's. Our mechanics are eager to service your new cars with the high-quality and expert care they've been giving your older cars for years.

www.chuckscompleteautoservice.com

Email: chucksappt@gmail.com

Find Chuck's Complete Auto Service on Facebook

412-831-2510

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday-Friday 8 am to 5:30 pm

Closed Saturdays and Sundays



Coming in for a vehicle inspection?

Please bring your vehicle registration and insurance cards into the office or put them in the after-hours drop box with your keys.

We Would Appreciate it!

Your opinion means a lot to us. We'd like to ask you to leave a review on Google, Yelp, or Facebook if you are pleased with our service. If you are not pleased, let us know and we will address your concerns personally. Thank you!