

How to chose a garage, best practice when faced with a large bill, disputes...

At some point we will all need to choose a garage to look after our cars. Clearly all garages are not the same although the vast majority will be reliable.

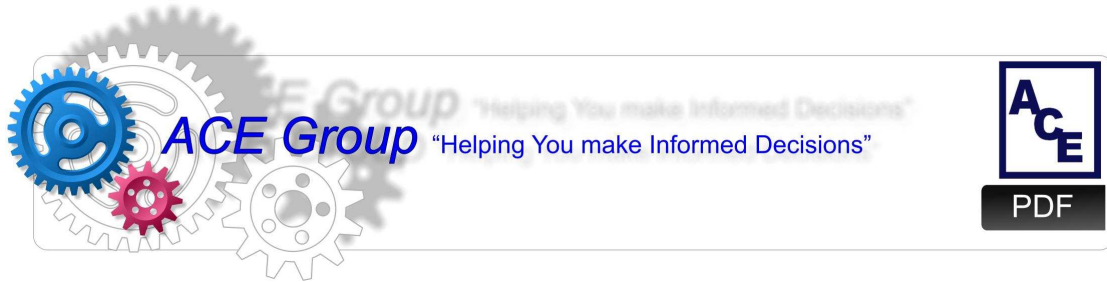
1. Always choose an established and reputable garage - preferably one with membership of a recognised trade association, such as the [Motor Vehicles Repairers Association](#), or endorsed by The AA, RAC, Green Flag or equivalent. The good garage guide also can help. MVRA members adhere to strict guidelines and are regularly assessed to ensure that the correct standards are maintained.
2. For convenience consider a local garage to home or work, but check around first. A garage's reputation is hard to check but you can ask friends and family to find out whom they recommend. You could visit several garages and speak to them about what you require and first impressions are a good indicator.

Best practice when faced with a large bill.

1. For any work you wish to be completed get the garage to provide you with a written quote. Apart from ensuring you get the best price, it will also highlight any garages that are willing to carry out unnecessary work.
2. Remember even a quote can alter by a reasonable amount if other work is found. But work should not be completed without your authority, prior to the work been undertaken they should contact you.
3. On renovation projects agree an overall budget, which you do not wish to exceed. Put in place a staged repair contract with help of experts. Consider monitoring the work and costs by regular visits and inspections usually before the next staged payment.
4. Always consider if a garage discounts the price and says they will work it in with other jobs the completion time is likely to be exceeded in my experience.

Disputes.

1. The complexity of modern day vehicles can lead to problems and disputes. The garages however, are the experts but even then things can go wrong.
2. If you encounter a problem, first stay calm, initially ask to speak to the supervisor or manager. Detail your concern, sometimes it helps to write it down, prior to contacting them, take sometime to get the sequence of events right and your concerns. Ask them politely to rectify the issue. Listen to there explanation, in the majority of incidents they will want to resolve the issue.



3. If this is unsuccessful ask to speak to the senior manager or owner. Again stay calm. Re-detail your complaint and give him or her time to consider and speak with other individuals.
4. If the negotiation doesn't work you could take it higher in-group if a large concern.
5. If you think that they are just not listening, consider experts like ourselves, we offer a 15-minute free consultation, during which we can discuss the options available to you. Sometimes offering an independent view of a condition might help resolve the issue without legal action, which in the majority of occasions will need an expert report. Ask them to stand half the fee subject to the outcome and to be bound by the conclusions. Insist on a civil prosecution compliant report CPR35.