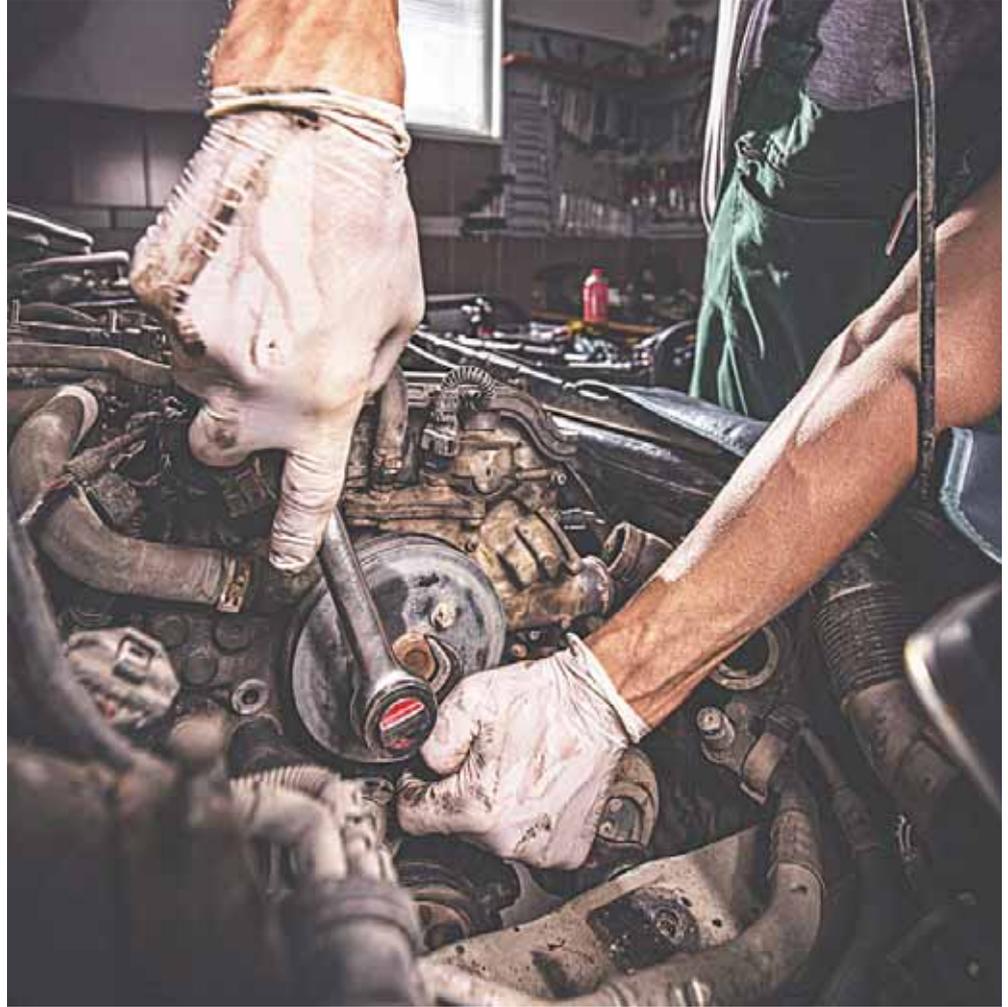


## Local

# Tips for repairing your car



By Nawara Fattahova

Getting a car fixed is a hassle. For those who have bought a brand new vehicle from the agency, they will enjoy peace of mind for a few years, and will have all checks and service done at the agency, usually free of charge, depending on the offer they got when buying the car.

With used vehicles, especially those over five years old, most people prefer to repair their vehicles at various garages and not at the agency. Usually people take word of mouth as recommendation for a good or honest garage. This recommendation is not always reliable, and some people just go to any nearby garage.

Some customers have been cheated by the garage, either over the service or the spare parts. Most customers don't bother to complain at the consumer protection department of the ministry of commerce, and they don't even know about the warranty they should receive by law. Some reputable garages agree to redo their repair work free of charge.

The most important thing to do when you take your car to any garage is to get a receipt of your payment with the description of the service done. The ministry of commerce has issued a list of car repair services that have a warranty,

whose period differs according to the service.

If you got service done on your vehicle and you were not satisfied, then you should go back to the garage and ask them to fix it. If they refuse, you can go to the consumer protection department with the invoice, and an inspector will go with you to the garage and force them to

correct their work or refund you the money if the problem was caused by the garage's negligence.

If you don't have any particular garage to go to, then it's always better to check with two or three different garages to compare the price estimate. For instance, if the air conditioning has stopped working, it can be a simple case of antifreeze leak-

age which can be refilled after fixing the leak. If the belt is cut, it can be replaced easily. The worst and most expensive repair is of the compressor.

But a dishonest garage will always try to convince you that it's the compressor that's gone to make money from you. If you are told this, always check with at least two other

garages. If you have to change the compressor, you can always get a used one. If the technical problem is not clear and you didn't get a logical answer from the garage, it's better to get a computer check done, which is also recommended if you are buying a used vehicle, as this advanced check should show all the malfunctions and faults in the vehicle.

Some mechanical parts are also very expensive at the agency, which you can find for less than half the price at the scrap yard, but this place is very far away. It used to be in Amghara, but shifted to Salmi a few years back. For many, especially women, it's almost impossible to go there. But most of the garages go there to bring parts. There are also drivers who bring parts from there twice a week and only charge KD 2 for delivery.

Some parts can be found outside the agency and are called commercial parts. They cost maybe less than half the price of genuine parts, but their quality is not as good. If you change a part at the garage, you can ask for the old part that was changed and the invoice of the new part, or you can buy the part yourself and give it to the garage to replace.

