

Keep That 'New Car' Feeling With Proper Front End Care

One of the pleasures of driving a new car is being able to go over a rutted or bumpy road without any discomfort.

As mileage adds up, however, that new car ride disappears, particularly if you've neglected maintenance.

According to TRW, proper car care in the front end system and suspension can continue to give that new car feeling for years to come.

Front end and suspension systems should be checked every three months, says TRW's senior product engineer W. Louis Cohn. And the front end should be lubricated as specified in your owner's manual.

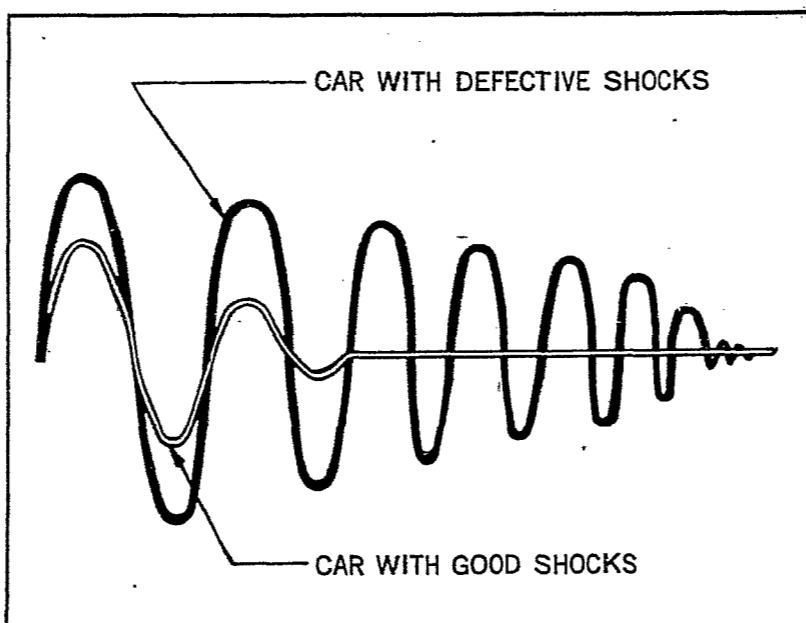
If you neglect these services, your car will give tell-tale signs that something is wrong, according to Cohn.

Your car will tend to wander all over the road, even though you hold the steering wheel firmly. Another sign that the steering system is malfunctioning is the presence of irregularly worn tires.

Parts of the front end system that need particular attention include the steering linkage — the idler arm, pitman arm, center link and tie rod assemblies. Have your mechanic check these next time your car is on the hoist.

Also have him check the dust seals which keep dirt, water and foreign material out of the working parts of the steering linkage. If the seals are broken or damaged, it is an indication that the parts are wearing out, prematurely.

Suspensions Need Attention
If you notice that the front end of your car appears lower than the back end, it may



If your car were hooked up to an oscilloscope, measuring the ride, here's the difference a new set of shocks would produce. Comfort, the kind you enjoyed when the car was new, would be restored and there would be less stress placed on vital components like tires.

be a sign that the front coil springs or torsion bars are sagging. The condition may also indicate worn upper or lower control arm bushings. In the case of torsion bar sag, it is often possible to adjust them. Sagging coil springs must be replaced, as must defective control arm bushings.

Bad or worn shock absorbers can be detected by loose bushings, leaks of fluid around the seal, or by bouncing the car. If the car bounces more than one and one-half times after you have rocked it, the shock should be replaced.

The function of the shock is to hold the wheels on the road, and a bad or worn shock cannot do this. Driving a car with bad or worn-out shocks will give the driver the feeling of being in a boat. The vehicle continuously

bounces up and down and is difficult to control.

Always check the rear suspension. With the advent of four coil suspension, control arms and radius rods hold the rear axle to the frame. Loose bushings in these arms often contribute to oversteering, difficulty of holding the car on the road, and driver fatigue.

After, and only after all suspension parts have been checked, and defective and worn-out parts have been replaced, should the vehicle be aligned.

Periodic inspections will determine when parts are just beginning to wear, and by replacing these parts the car owner will avoid large repairs at any one time. The car will give better service, it will handle like new, and will be fairly easy on the pocketbook.

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