

## *Deciphering the Car*

Cars are among the most expensive and most baffling of objects. We have vague ideas of how they work. Push the gas, ease off the clutch, turn the wheel, rolling now. We put our faith into these vehicles. It will get us home safely because it has done so in the past. But it doesn't always happen that way. Cars break down, run out of gas, run out of life.



What happens when we hear a strange sound while we're driving? What about when we're stuck on the side of the road because our car broke down? What about a crash?

What usually happens is that we take our car to a mechanic. They give us an estimate of damage. We have no idea what they're talking about, and we assume we'll get ripped off. But what other choices do we have?

Date: 10/12/2016 04:54 PM  
Estimate ID: 896  
Estimate Version: 8  
Preliminary Profile ID: Michael

## RALPHS COLLISION INC.

1873 Genesee St. Oneida, NY 13421-2619  
(315) 363-6689 Fax: (315) 361-1528  
Shop Registration #4270107

Damage Assessed By: RALPH HOLMES #001507

Deductible: 0.00  
Claim Number: 896

Owner: ELIZABETH HOLIK  
Address: 30 E. AVE WATERVLIET, NY 12184  
Telephone: Home Phone: (518) 428-6388

Michael Service: 915130

Description: 1998 Honda Civic EX  
Body Style: 4D Sed  
VIN: 1HGBJ62W1E28484  
Options: ALUMINUM WHEELS, AIR CONDITIONING, POWER STEERING, POWER WINDOWS, POWER DOOR LOCKS, TILT STEERING WHEEL, CRUISE CONTROL, ELECTRIC DEFOGGER, AM/FM STEREO/CD PLAYER(SINGLE)

Drive Train: F.R. by 4 Cyl SM

Line Item	Entry Number	Labor Type	Operation	Line Item Description	Part Type/Part Number	Dollar Amount	Labor Units
2	801083	MCH	REMOVE/REPLACE	TIRE	**Qual Repl Part	73.50	0.0
3	801083	MCH	REMOVE/REPLACE	TIRE	**Qual Repl Part	73.50	0.0
4	801083	MCH	REMOVE/REPLACE	TIRE	**Qual Repl Part	73.50	0.0
7	800381	BOY	REMOVE/REPLACE	WHEEL	Qual Recycled Part	40.00	0.3
8	800381	BOY	REMOVE/REPLACE	WHEEL	Qual Recycled Part	40.00	0.3
9	800381	BOY	REMOVE/REPLACE	WHEEL	Qual Recycled Part	40.00	0.3
10	800373	MCH	ALIGN	FOUR WHEEL			1.6
11	800388	MCH	REMOVE/REPLACE	L FRT SUSP WHEEL HUB	44005-004-000	106.80	0.0
12	802781	MCH	REMOVE/REPLACE	L FRT SUSP STEERING KNUCKLE	ORDER FROM DEALER	240.37	1.8
13	800437	MCH	REMOVE/REPLACE	L FRT SUSP SHOCK ABSORBER	01800-001-A01	112.30	0.4
14	800473	MCH	REMOVE/REPLACE	L LWR FRT SUSP CONTROL ARM ASSY	01380-001-A00	106.30	0.8
15	803443	MCH	REMOVE/REPLACE	L STEERING TIE ROD END	01880-004-013	39.82	0.0
16	803447	MCH	REMOVE/REPLACE	L RWR STEERING TIE ROD	03010-004-001	54.00	0.6
17	801318	BOY	REMOVE/REPLACE	L FRT DOOR MIRROR ASSY	**Qual Repl Part	95.00	0.3
18	801584	GLS	REMOVE/REPLACE	L FRT DOOR MOVEABLE GLASS	FD0857W07Y	165.25	1.0
19	810001		ADD'L COST	TOWING		283.50	
20	800800	MCH*	ADD'L LABOR OF	MNTNAL 3	Existing		0.0
21	800800	BOY*	ADD'L LABOR OF	TIRE DISPOSAL	Sublet	3.00	0.0
22	800800	BOY*	ADD'L LABOR OF	TIRE DISPOSAL	Sublet	3.00	0.0

*Everything that's bad*

I. Labor Subtotal				Add'l Labor		Subtotal		Totals	
Body	Units	Rate	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount
Body	1.2	42.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Glass	1.2	42.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mechanical	7.5	52.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Taxable Labor				424.00					
Labor Tax @ 8.00%				33.92					
Total Labor				457.92					

II. Additional Costs		III. Part Replacement Summary	
Non-Taxable Costs	Amount	Taxable Parts	Amount
Total Additional Costs	283.50	Parts Adjustments	1,356.57
		Parts Adjustments	39.80
		Sales Tax @ 8.00%	111.81
		Total Replacement Parts Amount	1,508.18

IV. Adjustments		V. Totals	
Insurance Deductible	Amount	Total Labor	Amount
Insurance Deductible	0.00	Total Replacement Parts	1,508.18
Customer Responsibility	0.00	Total Additional Costs	283.50
		Gross Total	2,323.86
		Total Adjustments	0.00
		Net Total	2,323.86

*This is a preliminary estimate. Additional changes to the estimate may be required for the actual repair.*

Paperwork, estimates, and invoices are confusing and designed for the service provider, not the customer.

As a nation, we bring 231 million cars and \$140 billion dollars into the auto repair industry each year.

Business is up in profits, but prices of parts are regulated to stay constant. This means that we are fixing our cars more often while keeping them for a longer period.

What if things were explained to us?  
 What if we knew our choices? What if  
 we were the ones with the power and  
 not the mechanic?



### Prioritizing auto repair allows the customer to understand his choices.

By color-coding based on need, Ralph's Collision starts a dialogue with the customer. The driver can better understand the problems within the car and how best to solve them.

Scrap the car? Sell the car? Fix the car enough so it's drivable? Fix some now, save the rest for later? Fix the car to perfect condition?

## RALPHS COLLISION INC.

1673 Genesee St. Oneida, NY 13421-2619  
 (315) 363-6860  
 (315) 361-1508

**Shop Registration #4270107**

Driver: Elizabeth Holik  
 Address: 20 E Ave  
 Watervliet, NY 12184  
 Phone: (518) 428-5588

1998 Honda Civic DX  
 VIN jh18639587928374dg  
 Plate #: JLW1598  
 Mileage: 78,562

**COLLISION REPORT**  
 Date: 10/08/05  
 Location: I-90E mile 349

Insurance: Geico  
 Deductible: \$500

Market Value Before: \$ 6000  
 Market Value After: \$ 100

Property Damaged: \$412  
 Covered by Insurance: \$412

**AUTOMOTIVE DAMAGE REPORT**

3 tires need to be replaced, right front end suspension needs to be replaced, right front window and mirror need to be replaced, engine needs to be replaced, body is damaged, lights are scratched.

- High Priority-fix now to get on the road and pass inspection
- Moderate Priority-fix soon to get running well
- Low Priority-optional, make like new

ITEM	CONDITION	QTY	COST	AMOUNT	LABOR RATE	LABOR TIME	LABOR COST	TOTAL COST
<span style="color: red;">1</span> Tires	Flat	3	73.50	220.50	50.00	1.5	75.00	295.50
<span style="color: red;">2</span> Suspension	Broken	1	521.76	521.76	50.00	2.2	110.00	631.76
<span style="color: red;">3</span> Front Bumper	Broken	1	30.00	30.00	42.00	0.5	21.00	51.00
<span style="color: red;">4</span> Engine	Broken	1	179.50	179.50	50.00	1.8	90.00	269.50
<span style="color: red;">5</span> Right RV Mirror	Broken	1	95.00	95.00	42.00	0.3	12.60	107.60
<span style="color: red;">6</span> Right Front Window	Broken	1	165.75	165.75	42.00	1.2	50.40	220.15
<span style="color: orange;">7</span> Battery	Old	1	92.00	92.00	50.00	0.2	10.00	102.00
<span style="color: orange;">8</span> Brake Pads	Worn	2	24.99	49.98	50.00	1.1	55.00	105.98
<span style="color: orange;">9</span> Right Front Door	Damaged	1	0.00	0.00	42.00	1.3	54.60	54.60
<span style="color: blue;">10</span> Air Filter	Old	1	10.00	10.00	50.00	0.1	5.00	15.00
<span style="color: blue;">11</span> Right Chassis Body	Damaged	1	0.00	0.00	42.00	2.0	84.00	84.00
<span style="color: blue;">12</span> Lights	Scratched	2	35.00	70.00	42.00	0.5	21.00	91.00

the paperwork

Beth Holik Car Maintenance



*How can we help being confused by mechanics if we're even more confused by our cars?*

*Look under the hood. The average car will be a grimy mess of wires, metal, and plastic, with a few colored pieces thrown in. These colors are used to designate certain fluid reservoirs. The caps, however, are incredibly hard to read and give little instruction on what to do with them.*

*What part does what? Is this supposed to be loose? How full is this supposed to be? Do I need to mix anything? What fluids go where?*



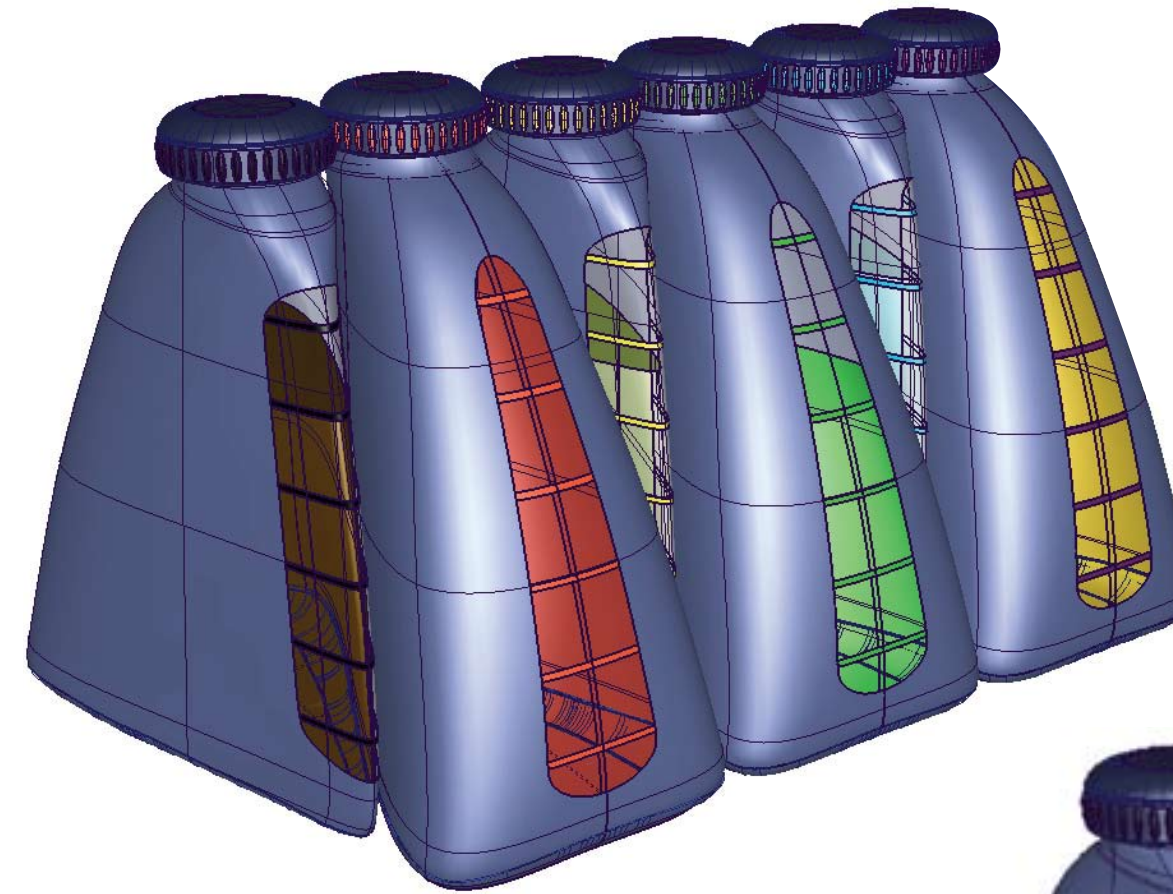
### How consumer-friendly is a car?

With so many advances in user-friendly design and devices, how much emphasis has been put on helping drivers to understand the vehicles they own.

The few cues that exist are hard to read and not very informative. Why is a mechanic our only choice in understanding our vehicles?

Fluids are the life-blood of our cars. When they run out, our cars fail.

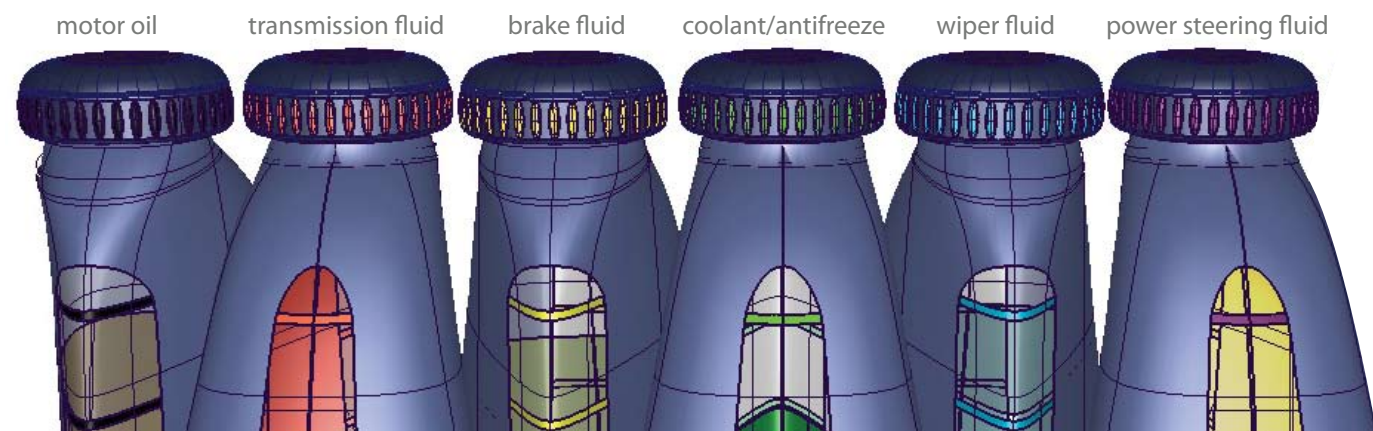
Even as the most important and the easiest thing a driver can do for his own car, it is still confusing to many. Making these processes more clear for consumers just makes sense.



**Solution 1:**  
Color-coding fluid bottles and corresponding fluid reservoirs in vehicle allows driver to easily perform maintenance.

The single most important thing a driver can do himself is refill and monitor fluid levels in the car.

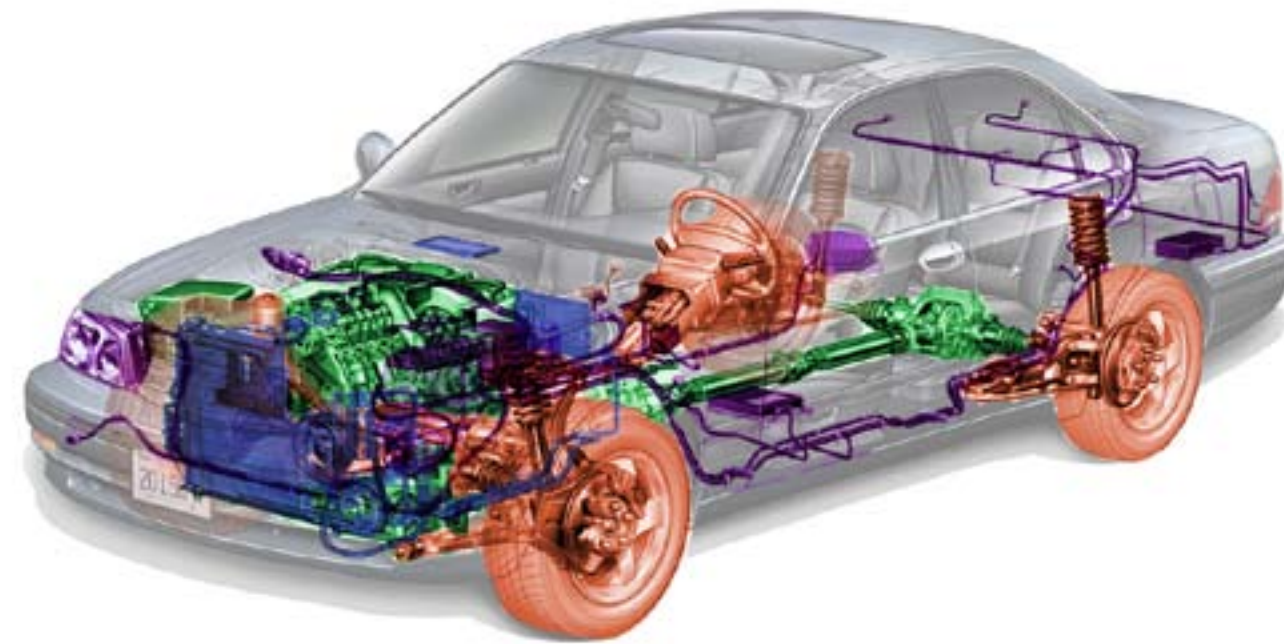
All fluids are vital to driver safety and the lifespan of the vehicle. An easy do-it-yourself project, they are relatively simple to check and refill with proper instruction.



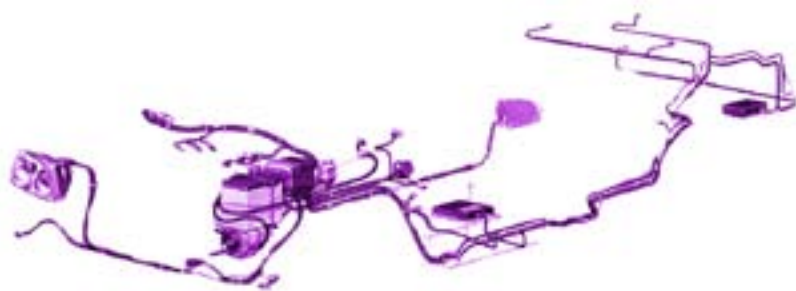
enhancing self-maintenance

How else can we make knowing our cars a little easier?

By color coding the parts of our car into the basic operations, we can help the driver distinguish between parts and the immediacy of attention required.



Electrical System



Air Conditioning System



Drivetrain



Steering and Suspension



*Solution 2:*

Parts can be differentiated to help the consumer understand the inner workings of his car.

Our cars tend to be mysterious beings that take us from one place to another. Many of us have no idea what part is what when we look under the hood.

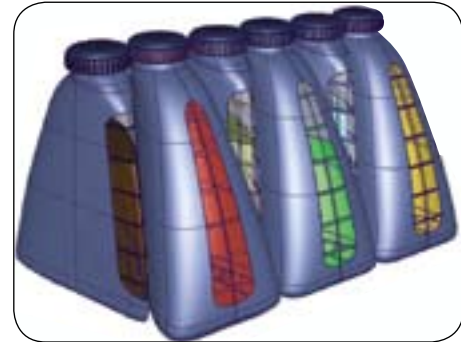
What if we had at least have a general idea of what the part does? What if we understood the thing we spend thousands of dollars to own and maintain?



differentiating parts

These are just a few suggestions to make understanding our cars a little bit easier. The fact is that most of us have little idea how to fix our cars, what a noise means, or what a part does.

Does this mean that we live in fear of something going wrong? Having spent thousands of dollars to own a car, how does the consumer then enable himself as a knowledgeable driver?



**RALPHS COLLISION INC.**  
 1673 Genesee St. Onida, NY 13421-2619  
 (315) 363-6660  
 (315) 361-1000

Shop Registration #4270107

Driver: Elizabeth Holik  
 Address: 20 E. Ave  
 Onondaga, NY 13694  
 Phone: (315) 328-1584

1998 Honda Civic EX  
 VIN: JH4KA94E98R007749  
 Plate #: J143178  
 Mileage: 76,562

Insurance: Geico  
 Deductible: \$500

Market Value Before: \$ 4,000  
 Market Value After: \$ 100

**COLLISION REPORT**  
 Date: 10/25/05  
 Location: 1.70E mile SW  
 Property Damaged: #12  
 Covered by Insurance: #12

**AUTOMOTIVE DAMAGE REPORT**  
 3 tires need to be replaced. right front and suspension needs to be replaced. right front window and mirror need to be replaced. engine needs to be replaced. body is damaged. lights are scratched.

High Priority: fix me to get on the road and pass inspection  
 Moderate Priority: fix soon to get running well  
 Low Priority: optional, make like new

ITEM	CONDITION	QTY	COST	AMOUNT	LABOR	LABOR RATE	LABOR TIME	TOTAL COST
Tires	Flat	3	75.00	225.00	30.00	1.5	75.00	300.00
Suspension	Broken	1	821.76	821.76	80.00	2.0	160.00	981.76
Front Bumper	Broken	1	30.00	30.00	42.00	0.5	25.00	55.00
Engine	1	174.00	174.00	50.00	1.6	40.00	214.00	
Right RV Mirror	Broken	1	95.00	95.00	42.00	0.3	12.60	107.60
Right Front Window	Broken	1	145.75	145.75	42.00	1.0	50.40	196.15
Battery	Old	1	40.00	40.00	50.00	0.2	10.00	50.00
Brake Pads	Worn	2	24.99	49.98	50.00	1.1	55.00	104.98
Right Front Door	Damaged	1	0.00	0.00	42.00	1.3	54.60	54.60
Air Filter	Old	1	10.00	10.00	50.00	0.1	5.00	15.00
Right Chassis Body	Damaged	1	0.00	0.00	42.00	2.0	84.00	84.00
Lights	Scratched	2	30.00	60.00	42.00	0.5	25.00	85.00

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