

Auto Repair Software Buyer Checklist

Compare garage management software by real shop workflow, not just feature lists.

Use this checklist before booking demos, switching systems, or choosing software for your repair shop.

What this checklist helps you compare

- Booking, scheduling, job cards and technician workflow
- DVI, estimates, customer approvals and invoices
- Inventory, parts, reporting, CRM and customer follow-ups
- Migration, onboarding, support, pricing and demo quality

Tip: Do not choose software only because the feature list looks long. The right system should make the daily workflow easier for advisors, technicians, managers and owners.

Your shop details

Shop name	
Contact name	
Shop size / number of bays	
Current software or process	
Main problem to solve	
Target go-live date	

1. Workflow fit checklist

Use this section to check whether the software fits how your shop actually works day to day.

Bookings, job cards and technician workflow

Check	What to ask or verify	Notes
☐	Can customers request or confirm bookings online?	
☐	Can front desk staff see available bays, technicians and booking slots?	
☐	Can a booking turn into a job card without retyping the same details?	
☐	Can technicians see assigned jobs, labor notes, parts and status updates?	
☐	Can service advisors update customers without jumping between multiple tools?	
☐	Can managers see the status of all open jobs in one dashboard?	

Estimates, approvals and invoices

Check	What to ask or verify	Notes
☐	Can the system create estimates with labor, parts, fees and notes?	

Check	What to ask or verify	Notes
☐	Can estimates be sent to customers for approval?	
☐	Can approved estimates move into jobs or invoices?	
☐	Can the shop explain R&I, R&R, labor time and parts clearly?	
☐	Can staff track pending approvals and follow up with customers?	

Inventory and parts control

Check	What to ask or verify	Notes
☐	Can the system track parts, tire inventory or consumables?	
☐	Can staff see low-stock items or reorder needs?	
☐	Can parts be linked to jobs, estimates or invoices?	
☐	Can supplier cost and selling price be tracked clearly?	

2. Customer, CRM and reporting checklist

Customer records and follow-ups

Check	What to ask or verify	Notes
☐	Can customer history be found quickly by name, vehicle, phone or plate?	
☐	Can the shop send reminders for service, follow-ups, reviews or missed bookings?	
☐	Can staff see previous estimates, jobs, invoices and notes before speaking to the customer?	
☐	Can the system support repeat bookings and retention campaigns?	

Reporting and owner visibility

Check	What to ask or verify	Notes
☐	Can owners see revenue, open jobs, invoices, technician workload and shop performance?	
☐	Can reports be filtered by date, service advisor, technician, job type or location?	
☐	Can the system show bottlenecks in bookings, approvals, jobs or invoicing?	
☐	Can data be exported if needed?	

3. DVI, integrations and support checklist

Digital vehicle inspection workflow

Check	What to ask or verify	Notes
☐	Can technicians create digital vehicle inspections with photos, notes and recommendations?	
☐	Can inspection findings become estimates or recommended work?	
☐	Can customers review and approve recommended work clearly?	
☐	Can advisors explain inspection findings without printing paperwork?	

Migration, integrations and support

Check	What to ask or verify	Notes
☐	Does the software connect with your accounting, invoicing or payment workflow?	
☐	Can data be migrated from spreadsheets or your current software?	
☐	Is onboarding included or charged separately?	
☐	Is support available during your working hours?	
☐	Can the system handle multi-location needs if your shop grows?	

4. Pricing and contract checklist

Do not compare only the monthly price. Compare the total cost of setup, training, migration, users, locations, add-ons and support.

Total cost questions

Check	What to ask or verify	Notes
☐	Monthly base price is clear	
☐	Setup or onboarding fees are clear	
☐	User, bay, location or vehicle limits are clear	
☐	SMS, WhatsApp, email or communication costs are clear	
☐	Accounting, payments or integration costs are clear	
☐	Contract length and cancellation terms are clear	
☐	Data export terms are clear	
☐	Support availability and response time are clear	

5. Demo comparison scorecard

Use the same questions in every demo. This makes the comparison fair and stops you from being distracted by features you may not use.

Score each platform

Category	What good looks like	Must have?	Score 1-5	Notes
Booking and scheduling	Fast booking flow, clear calendar, bay/technician visibility	☐		
Job cards	Jobs are easy to create, assign, update and close	☐		
Estimates and approvals	Clear estimate flow with customer approval tracking	☐		
Invoices and payments	Clean invoice creation and payment handoff	☐		
Inventory and parts	Parts can be tracked, linked to jobs and reordered	☐		
DVI	Photos, notes, recommended work and approvals are easy to manage	☐		
CRM and follow-ups	Customer records, reminders and retention workflows are built in	☐		
Reporting	Owner can see performance without manual spreadsheet work	☐		
Migration	Current data can be moved without chaos	☐		
Support and onboarding	Training and help are practical and available	☐		

6. Demo questions to ask every vendor

- Can you show the full flow from booking to job card to invoice?
- How does a service advisor create and send an estimate?
- How does a technician update job status?
- How are customer approvals tracked?
- How do parts and inventory connect to jobs and invoices?
- What happens if a customer no-shows or needs a follow-up?
- What reports can an owner check every morning?
- What does onboarding include?
- How long does migration usually take?
- What data can we export if we leave later?
- Which features cost extra?
- What support do we get after launch?

7. Red flags before choosing software

- The demo only shows dashboards, not the actual shop workflow.
- Pricing is unclear or depends on too many hidden add-ons.

- The system cannot show booking, job cards, estimates and invoices in one flow.
- Migration sounds vague or is left entirely to your team.
- Support is slow, outsourced or not available during your shop hours.
- The software looks powerful but is too complicated for advisors and technicians to use daily.

8. Final decision worksheet

Platform	Best strengths	Biggest concerns	Decision
			☐ Shortlist ☐ Reject ☐ Demo again
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Next step

After you shortlist platforms, book a demo and ask to see your real workflow: booking, job card, estimate, customer approval, invoice, follow-up and reporting.

autoGMS helps repair shops manage bookings, job cards, estimates, invoices, inventory, customer follow-ups and reporting in one place.