autoGMS

AUTO MECHANIC SCHOOL

Comparison Checklist

Compare programs, costs, hands-on training, accreditation, career support, and final fit before choosing a school.

Program fit

Certificate, diploma, associate degree, bachelor's degree, manufacturer training, or specialty program.

Cost and funding

Tuition, fees, tools, housing, transport, financial aid, and hidden expenses.

Training quality

Hands-on hours, equipment, instructor experience, ASE preparation, and employer partnerships.

Final decision

Use the scorecard and shortlist worksheet to choose the best overall fit, not just the biggest name.

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How to Use This Checklist

- Choose three to five schools before filling in the detailed comparison pages.
- Use official school websites and admissions teams to confirm current tuition, program length, accreditation, and start dates.
- Score every school using the same criteria so your decision is based on fit, not marketing.
- Write down the full cost, including tools, fees, housing, transport, and lost income while studying.
- Use the final shortlist page before applying or paying a deposit.

1. Your Training and Career Goals

☐ Fast-track certificate
☐ Diploma program
☐ Associate degree
☐ Bachelor's degree
☐ Manufacturer-specific training
☐ Motorsports specialization
☐ Restoration specialization
☐ Diesel / heavy-duty training
☐ EV / hybrid training
☐ Undecided

Planning question	Your answer
Preferred career path	_____
Ideal program length	_____
Maximum total budget	_____
Preferred location	_____
Need financial aid?	_____
Need housing?	_____
Need evening/weekend classes?	_____
Target start date	_____

2. Quick School Comparison Scorecard

Score each school from 1 to 5, where 1 = weak and 5 = excellent.

Criteria	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
Program fit	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5
Accreditation	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5
Hands-on training	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5
Instructor quality	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5
ASE preparation	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5
Manufacturer partnerships	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5
Career support	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5
Tuition value	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5
Financial aid	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5
Location / housing	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5
Overall fit	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5	__/5

3. Detailed Program Comparison

Detail	School 1	School 2	School 3	Notes / best option
School / campus				
Program name				
Credential earned				
Program length				
Start dates				
Class schedule				
Accreditation				
Tuition				
Application / registration fees				
Tools and uniform costs				
Housing / transport estimate				
Financial aid / scholarships				
Hands-on shop hours				
Average class size				
ASE preparation				
Manufacturer partnerships				
Internship / apprenticeship				
Career placement support				
Graduation rate if published				
Employer relationships				

4. Total Cost Planner

Do not compare tuition alone. Use the full cost of attending.

Cost item	School 1	School 2	School 3	Notes
Tuition				
Registration fees				
Books / learning materials				
Tools				
Uniforms / PPE				

Cost item	School 1	School 2	School 3	Notes
Certification exam fees				
Housing				
Transport				
Food / living expenses				
Insurance				
Estimated lost income				
Total estimated cost				

5. Questions to Ask Admissions

☐ Is the program currently accredited?
☐ What vehicles and diagnostic equipment do students use?
☐ Does the program prepare students for ASE exams?
☐ Which manufacturers or employers partner with the school?
☐ What career-placement support is offered?
☐ What is the full cost beyond tuition?
☐ Can credits transfer to another program?
☐ Can I tour the workshop and speak to current students?
☐ How much of the program is hands-on?
☐ Are tools included or purchased separately?
☐ Are certification exam fees included?
☐ Are internships or apprenticeships available?
☐ What percentage of students complete the program?
☐ Are scholarships or payment plans available?
☐ Are evening, weekend, or part-time options available?

6. School Visit and Open-Day Notes

What to inspect	Rating / notes	Red flag?
Workshop cleanliness and organization		☐
Condition of tools and equipment		☐
Range of vehicles used for training		☐
Instructor engagement		☐
Student-to-instructor ratio		☐
Safety procedures		☐
Career-services team		☐
Student feedback		☐
Campus location and transport		☐
Overall atmosphere		☐

7. Red Flags to Watch For

☐ Pressure to enrol immediately
☐ Tuition quoted without fees and tool costs
☐ Vague job-placement claims
☐ Unclear accreditation status
☐ No access to workshop facilities before enrolling
☐ Outdated diagnostic equipment

☐ Very limited hands-on training

☐ No written refund or withdrawal policy

☐ Poor student reviews with repeated complaints

☐ Claims that certifications or employment are guaranteed

8. Final Shortlist and Decision

School	Main advantage	Main concern	Total cost	Decision
				☐ Apply ☐ Reject
				☐ Apply ☐ Reject
				☐ Apply ☐ Reject
				☐ Apply ☐ Reject
				☐ Apply ☐ Reject

My first-choice school: _____

Why it is the best fit: _____

Next action: ☐ Apply ☐ Visit campus ☐ Request financial aid details ☐ Speak to admissions

Bonus: Prepare for Your First Mechanic Job

- Build a basic professional tool kit gradually instead of buying everything at once.
- Keep copies of certificates, training records, and completed projects.
- Practice explaining repairs clearly, not only performing the technical work.
- Learn how modern repair shops use job cards, inspections, estimates, invoices, and customer follow-ups.
- Ask employers what skills and certifications they value most before graduating.

autoGMS helps modern repair shops manage bookings, job cards, estimates, invoices, technicians, inventory, and customer follow-ups in one place.
Learn more at myautogms.com