

## Troubleshooting Steering & Suspension Problems

- **Car pulls to one side while moving:**

As you drive the car tends to pull to one side or the other. You need to constantly hold the wheel firmly to keep the car going straight. This will have happened over time. When the problem is slight, it often is dismissed and only severe pulling is noticed.

**Possible causes:**

1. Tire pressures are not equal: Check and adjust tire pressures.
2. The wheels are out of alignment: Have the wheels aligned.
3. One brake is dragging or isn't releasing: Check brakes and repair as required.
4. Parts of the steering linkage are loose and need to be tightened: Tighten or replace loose parts as required.
5. The car's tires are not worn evenly: Replace tires as required.

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- **The car seems to wander down the road:**

As you are driving, you notice that you must constantly correct the direction of the car by turning the steering wheel. The problem seems to increase, the faster you travel. This problem may occur gradually and get worse over time or it may appear suddenly.

**Possible causes:**

1. The car is overloaded, or the weight is unevenly distributed: Lighten the load or equalize weight distribution.
2. The wheels are out of alignment: Have the wheels aligned.
3. The car's springs are weak: Replace springs.
4. Parts of the steering linkage are loose and need to be tightened: Tighten or replace loose parts as required.
5. The front wheel bearings are out of adjustment or are severely worn: Adjust wheel bearings or replace as required.

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- **Steering wheel jerks:**

When you are driving slowly or at an idle the steering wheel jumps or jerks. You don't see any other problems as far as steering and handling go. As time goes by it seems to be getting worse.

**Possible causes:**

1. The power steering drive belt is damaged or loose: Tighten or replace power steering drive belt as required.
2. The fluid level in the power steering reservoir is low: Fill fluid to proper level.
3. The engine is idling too low: Adjust idle speed.
4. You have a problem with the power steering pump: Repair or replace power steering pump as required.
5. The steering linkage is rubbing against something: Inspect steering gear and repair the interference.

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- **Steering wheel vibrates:**

At about 45 to 60 miles per hour the steering wheel begins to vibrate. You also notice that the car is also vibrating or twitching. This can be very dangerous. If you notice the problem only occurs when you step on the brakes, it will make diagnosis simpler.

**Possible causes:**

1. Warped or damaged brake rotors and/or drums: Resurface or replace brake rotors and/or drums as required.
2. Loose wheel lug nuts: Tighten wheel lug nuts.
3. Out-of-balance wheel and tire assemblies: Balance wheels.
4. Parts of the steering linkage are loose and need to be tightened: Tighten or replace loose parts as required.
5. Bent or damaged wheels: Replace bent or damaged wheels.
6. Severely worn or damaged tires: Replace tires.

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- **Wheel shimmy:**

You notice a side-to-side wobble in the steering wheel when traveling at steady speeds. The vibration gets worse when you are on an uneven road surface or after going over a pot hole.

**Possible causes:**

1. Tire pressures are not equal: Check and adjust tire pressures.
2. Out-of-balance wheel and tire assemblies: Balance wheels.
3. Worn or damaged tires: Replace tires.
4. Parts of the steering linkage are loose and need to be tightened: Tighten or replace loose parts as required.
5. You have worn suspension parts: Replace suspension parts as required.

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- **Noises while turning a corner:**  
You notice a knocking, clunking, and/or squeaking noise while you turn a corner. Everything else seems to be fine except for the noise. The problem seems to be getting worse over time.

**Possible causes:**

1. Something is rubbing against or hitting the steering column: Locate the interference and repair.
2. The steering gear needs to be lubricated or repaired: Lubricate or replace steering gear parts as required.
3. Parts of the steering linkage are loose and need to be tightened: Tighten or replace loose parts as required.
4. Your tires are hitting or rubbing against something: Locate the interference and repair.
5. You have worn suspension parts: Replace suspension parts as required.