

If you have ever called three detail shops and gotten three very different quotes for what sounded like the same service, you are not alone. Auto detailing prices vary more than most drivers expect, and the gap is not random. Vehicle size matters. Condition matters even more. Location, shop reputation, equipment, and what is actually included in the package all push the number up or down.

That is why the advertised price on a website can be useful and still not tell you what your own appointment will cost. A compact sedan that gets washed every two weeks and never carries pets is one job. A three-row SUV with crushed crackers in the third row, dog hair in the cargo area, and tree sap baked onto the hood is another. The menu might say "full detail," but the labor behind those two jobs is nowhere close.

This guide breaks down typical car detailing cost for sedans, SUVs, and trucks, explains what shops usually include at each level, and shows where the pricing gets fuzzy. If you want a realistic sense of the cost to get your car detailed, not just a teaser number, this is the framework to use.

What detailing really covers

A proper detail is not just a better car wash. Washing removes loose dirt. Detailing addresses contamination, staining, buildup, trim condition, paint feel, light defects, and the neglected areas people notice only when they try to sell the vehicle or hand back a lease.

On the interior side, detailing often means vacuuming, compressed air work in cracks and seams, wiping and dressing trim, cleaning cupholders and door pockets, shampoo or extraction on carpets and cloth seats when needed, leather cleaning and conditioning, interior glass, and attention to the trunk or cargo space. On the exterior, it usually includes a hand wash, wheel and tire cleaning, bug removal, door jambs, spray protection or wax, and often clay treatment or light polishing if you move into a higher package.

The phrase "full detail" causes the most confusion in car detailing pricing because it sounds comprehensive but is not standardized. One shop's full detail might include basic paint protection and a light interior clean. Another might include clay bar treatment, steam cleaning, seat extraction, engine bay touch-up, and a one-step polish. The names are less important than the task list.

Average auto detailing prices by vehicle type

The numbers below reflect common retail ranges for independent detail shops and mobile detailers in many U.S. Markets. Luxury studios, high-cost metro areas, and heavily neglected vehicles can run well above these averages.

| Service level | Sedan | SUV | Truck | |---|---|---|---| | Basic interior or exterior detail | \$75 to \$150 | \$100 to \$180 | \$100 to \$190 | | Full detail, inside and out | \$180 to \$300 | \$220 to \$380 | \$230 to \$400 | | Deep clean or restoration-level detail | \$300 to \$500 | \$350 to \$600 | \$350 to \$650 | | Paint correction or polish add-on | \$150 to \$600+ | \$200 to \$700+ | \$200 to \$750+ | | Ceramic coating package | \$600 to \$2,000+ | \$800 to \$2,500+ | \$900 to \$2,800+ |

These numbers make more sense once you think in labor hours rather than package names. A basic sedan detail may take 1.5 to 3 hours. A large SUV with pet hair, stained upholstery, and kid-related mysteries hiding under every seat can eat up most of a day. The customer sees one car. The detailer sees surfaces, materials, contamination levels, and how many hours it will take to bring everything up to standard.

Why sedans usually cost less

Sedans are generally the least expensive vehicles to detail, and that is not just because they are smaller. They also tend to have less interior volume, fewer large plastic trim pieces, shorter rooflines, and easier access to all panels. A midsize sedan with cloth seats and moderate use often falls into the simplest workflow for a shop.

For a basic service, many shops land somewhere around \$90 to \$150. A more complete inside-and-out package often runs \$180 to \$280, and a heavily soiled sedan can push beyond that. If the car has light-colored upholstery, coffee stains, makeup transfer, salt lines in the carpet, or a smoker's odor, expect extra labor charges or a move into a deeper package.

Paint condition can also change the price quickly. Black sedans show swirls and water spots more than silver ones, and that matters if you are requesting polishing. I have seen owners say the paint "just needs a wax," when what they really wanted was defect removal. Wax is protection. Polishing is correction. The second takes much more time and equipment, so it changes the estimate.

Why SUVs jump in price faster than people expect

SUVs often surprise owners because the price increase from sedan to SUV can feel steep. Once you have watched a technician clean one properly, the reason is obvious. There is more glass, more trim, larger cargo areas, more vertical surfaces, and more plastic cladding to scrub and dress. Third-row seats add more seams, rails, cupholders, vents, and carpeted surfaces. Roof rails and taller side panels also make exterior work slower.

A compact crossover may only cost a little more than a sedan. A full-size SUV with captain's chairs, a third row, and family wear can be one of the most labor-intensive routine details a shop handles. Basic auto detailing prices for SUVs often start around \$100 to \$180, but a true full detail commonly lands between \$220 and \$380. If the vehicle has dog hair woven into the cargo carpet or sticky residue throughout the rear seats, the number can move beyond that range fast.

One common edge case is the "clean but big" SUV. The owner keeps it fairly tidy, there are no major stains, and the paint is decent. Even then, it still costs more than a sedan because square footage is square footage. Shops price time, not just dirt.

Truck detailing has its own quirks

Truck owners often assume pricing should match an SUV, and sometimes it does. But trucks come with a few variables that make quoting harder. Bed condition matters. Running boards collect grime. Large wheels and aggressive tire sidewalls take longer to clean and dress. Lifted trucks require more effort on the exterior, especially if the roof and hood are hard to access. Work trucks may also carry grease, red clay, construction dust, metal shavings, and ground-in debris that do not behave like ordinary commuter dirt.

For a pickup in average personal-use condition, a full detail often falls around \$230 to \$400. A crew cab with a short bed may sit near the lower-middle part of that range. A lifted heavy-duty truck with a long bed, all-terrain tires, and a worksite interior can go well above it. Some detailers charge separately for the bed, especially if you want it washed, decontaminated, dressed, or coated.

Interior layout matters too. A regular cab can be simpler than an SUV. A large crew cab with under-seat storage, rubber mats, pet hair, and spilled drinks can be more involved than many crossovers.

What changes the detail package cost more than vehicle type

Vehicle size sets the starting point, but condition is what really drives the invoice. Two identical SUVs can come in \$150 apart if one is maintained and the other is neglected.

The biggest pricing factors usually include:

1. Interior condition, especially stains, pet hair, odor, sand, and heavy debris
2. Exterior contamination, such as sap, bug buildup, tar, overspray, and water spots
3. Paint correction needs, from a light gloss enhancement to multi-step polishing
4. Vehicle size and configuration, including third rows, crew cabs, long beds, and large wheel setups
5. Location and service model, since mobile detailers and premium studios price differently

Pet hair is worth calling out because many shops charge extra for it, and for good reason. It can add a surprising amount of labor, especially on carpeted cargo areas and cloth seats where the hair has worked itself into the fibers. Sand is another underappreciated culprit. Beach towns see this all the time. Fine sand migrates into tracks, seams, and under mats, then keeps appearing even after the first pass.

Odor removal is also a separate issue from general interior cleaning. If a car smells like smoke, mildew, or spilled milk from three weeks ago, a standard detail may improve it without fully solving it. Real odor work can require enzyme treatment, deeper extraction, cabin filter replacement, or ozone treatment if the shop offers it.

Basic, full, and premium packages are not interchangeable

A lot of the confusion around auto detailing prices comes from package labels that sound similar but mean different things. Shops use their own naming systems, so the only reliable way to compare is to ask exactly what tasks are included.

A basic package is often a maintenance-level service. It usually covers a hand wash, wheel cleaning, tire dressing, vacuuming, wipe-down of interior surfaces, window cleaning, and a quick spray sealant or wax. That works well for a newer vehicle or one that is already kept in decent shape.

A full detail normally adds deeper interior attention and stronger exterior treatment. You may get door jambs, stain spot treatment, leather conditioning, trim dressing, more thorough wheel cleaning, and some type of paint decontamination or hand-applied protection. This is the price band most people mean when they ask about the average cost to get your car detailed.

A premium or restorative package is where labor rises sharply. This level often includes shampooing or extraction, steam cleaning, clay treatment, machine polishing, headlight restoration, seat treatment, and extended time on neglected areas. The final price may look high compared with a wash-and-vac package, but the amount of hands-on work is in a different league.

Mobile detailer versus shop pricing

Customers often ask whether mobile service should be cheaper because the detailer is “just coming to the house.” Sometimes it is. Sometimes it is more expensive.

A shop has fixed overhead but also better access to water, power, lighting, lifts or ramps, drainage systems, and a controlled workspace. A mobile detailer carries water tanks, generators or battery systems, chemicals, tools, and waste management solutions, all while losing time to travel. That convenience has value, especially if your day is packed or you have multiple vehicles to service.

For basic services, mobile detailing can be competitively priced. For correction work or larger jobs, a shop may offer better value because the work environment supports more efficient, precise results. If your goal is deep interior restoration or paint correction, a quality shop often has the edge. If your vehicle is in decent shape and [how much does it cost to get your car detailed](#) your main priority is convenience, mobile can be an excellent option.

Regional pricing matters more than online averages

A full detail that costs \$225 in a smaller market might cost \$350 in a dense metro area with high labor and rent. Coastal markets, affluent suburbs, and cities with strong luxury car demand often sit at the high end of car detailing pricing. Rural or lower-cost areas may come in noticeably lower.

Climate also affects what shops see every day, and that influences services. In snowy regions, salt removal and carpet extraction are common. In hot southern climates, baked-on bugs, oxidized trim, and UV-faded surfaces show up more often. In wooded areas, sap and pollen can turn a simple exterior detail into a decontamination job.

That is why national averages are useful only as a starting point. The right local comparison is between shops offering similar quality and similar scope of work.

When a quoted price is actually a bargain, and when it is a red flag

There is a floor below which quality becomes hard to trust. If someone promises a full interior and exterior detail on a large SUV for a price that barely covers a basic wash, something is missing. Either the service will be rushed, the package is much lighter than it sounds, or the upsell will come later.

That does not mean expensive always equals better. Some high-end studios charge premium rates mainly because they cater to luxury owners and have polished branding. The smart move is to evaluate value, not just the number.

Look closely at before-and-after photos, how clearly the service menu is written, whether condition-based surcharges are explained upfront, and how the business talks about realistic outcomes. A professional detailer should be comfortable saying, "This stain may improve a lot but not disappear entirely," or "This package adds gloss but does not remove swirls." That kind of honesty is usually a good sign.

How to compare quotes without getting confused

When you are pricing out the detail package cost, ask each shop the same few questions. What is included in the base package? Are shampooing, extraction, clay treatment, and machine polishing extra? Is pet hair billed separately? Is there a surcharge for oversized vehicles or heavy soil? How long will the service take?

The answer to "how long" tells you a lot. If one provider says two hours and another says six for what sounds like the same job, they are not actually offering the same thing. A rushed detail can still make a car look brighter on the surface, but it often leaves dirt in seams, gloss on the table, and problem areas untouched.

Another useful question is whether the quote is firm or subject to inspection. Reputable shops commonly give a range before seeing the vehicle, especially for interiors. That is not evasive. It is realistic. The difference between "lightly dirty" and "needs extraction and odor treatment" can be significant, and photos do not always tell the full story.

Add-ons that can double the price

The largest jumps in car detailing cost usually come from paint correction and long-term protection. If your paint feels rough, has visible swirl marks, or looks dull under sunlight, the vehicle may need more than a wash and wax. Clay treatment removes bonded contamination. Polishing improves gloss and removes or reduces defects. Multi-step correction goes even further, but it takes time and should not be confused with a standard detail.

Ceramic coatings also sit in a separate category from routine detailing. They are not a spray wax upgrade. A proper coating package often includes decontamination, polishing, panel prep, and careful application. That is why prices commonly start in the high hundreds and can rise into the thousands, especially for larger vehicles.

Interior add-ons matter too. Seat extraction, odor treatment, mold remediation, and specialty stain removal can all push the total above the menu price. If the vehicle has been neglected for months or years, restoration work tends to price more like a specialty service than a standard maintenance detail.

How often most vehicles need detailing

For a daily driver, a full detail every four to six months is a practical rhythm if you want the vehicle to stay ahead of wear. Some owners do a lighter maintenance service monthly or every other month and reserve a deeper detail for seasonal cleanup. That usually ends up cheaper over time than waiting until the vehicle is heavily soiled.

This is one of the easiest ways to control the cost to get your car detailed. Maintenance details are less labor-intensive, which means lower invoices and better preservation of materials. Leather lasts longer when cleaned and conditioned before it dries out. Carpets release stains more easily when spills are handled early. Paint responds better to light decontamination than to aggressive correction after years of neglect.

If you have kids, dogs, long commutes, or a work vehicle, your schedule may need to be tighter. A family SUV can go from tidy to overwhelming in a month. A commuter sedan driven mostly solo may hold its condition much longer.

Realistic price expectations by owner type

A commuter with a midsize sedan who wants the car freshened up before a road trip can usually expect a straightforward number. A well-kept vehicle might land near the lower-middle end of standard car detailing pricing, often under \$250 for a solid full service in many markets.

A family with a three-row SUV should budget more, not because shops are upselling, but because those vehicles collect life. Snacks, juice boxes, sports gear, muddy shoes, sunscreen smears, pet prints, and mystery crumbs all add labor. A realistic expectation for a true full detail is often in the mid-\$200s to upper-\$300s, with deeper interior work moving beyond that.

A truck owner with a personal-use pickup <https://mobiledetailorlando.com/what-is-mobile-detailing-and-how-does-it-work/> may sit in a similar range to an SUV, but a work truck is its own category. Dust, grease, jobsite residue, and neglected beds are not light-clean issues. They are restoration issues, and the price should be viewed through that lens.

The cheapest detail is often the one you avoid needing

The best way to keep detailing bills reasonable is simple maintenance between appointments. Regular vacuuming, quick cleanup of spills, sunshades in hot climates, floor mats that actually fit, and basic hand washing

do more than improve appearance. They reduce the amount of corrective labor your next appointment will require.

That matters because most of the expensive parts of detailing involve undoing neglect. Pulling pet hair from carpet, extracting old stains, polishing out neglected paint, and chasing odors all take time. Preventive care shortens the job, which lowers the bill.

For most owners, a fair target is not the lowest number on the internet. It is a detailer who explains the service clearly, prices by condition honestly, and leaves the vehicle noticeably cleaner, protected, and easier to maintain. Once you understand how vehicle type, condition, and service scope interact, auto detailing prices stop feeling arbitrary. They start making sense.

Liberty Auto Care

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Service Area: Orlando, FL & Surrounding Areas

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Mobile Car Detailing in Orlando, FL

Liberty Auto Care provides mobile car detailing in Orlando, FL and surrounding areas, bringing professional interior and exterior detailing directly to your home, office, or preferred location.

What makes Liberty Auto Care a convenient mobile detailing service in Orlando, FL?

Liberty Auto Care offers on-site service, transparent pricing, and flexible appointment options so Orlando drivers can get their vehicles cleaned and detailed without spending time at a shop.

Interior and Exterior Detailing in Orlando, FL

For drivers who want a cleaner, fresher, and better-maintained vehicle, Liberty Auto Care offers interior detailing, exterior detailing, and full-service mobile detailing throughout the Orlando area.

What services does Liberty Auto Care offer in Orlando, FL?

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Trusted Mobile Detailer in Orlando, FL

Liberty Auto Care is a trusted choice for mobile detailing in Orlando, FL, combining convenience, attention to detail, and professional service for local vehicle owners.

Why do Orlando drivers choose Liberty Auto Care?

Customers choose Liberty Auto Care for the ease of mobile service, reliable communication, and quality results that help restore and maintain the appearance of their vehicles.

Car Detailing at Your Doorstep in Orlando, FL

Instead of waiting at a traditional detail shop, Orlando drivers can book Liberty Auto Care for mobile car detailing that comes directly to them.

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