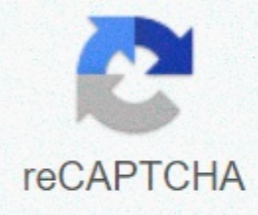




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How to read a car diagnostic tool

If you care about your vehicle’s health, there’s no reason not to buy one. Our vehicles are not infallible, and when something inevitably goes wrong, you can struggle to understand the problem without a car diagnostic tool. Well, you could call road assistance or your trusted mechanic and wait uselessly for how long it takes. But, for all you know, the problem could be something less like a blown fuse, or more serious engine problems requiring professional intervention. This simple, high-tech, tool can interface with your car’s computer system to control all electrical components to find out exactly where the problem is. These scanners detect 'mistake codes' or 'problem codes', facilitating the isolation and presence of a problem area. If you have some know-how, this can also be something you can solve, which could save a lot of time and money that you would otherwise spend on experts having to physically check and diagnose the problem. freepik.com freepik.com There is a variety of auto diagnostic tools and software out there, but quality products should be welded by those that would be a waste of money. Most of these tools are relatively simple, connecting to the diagnostic port or connecting via Bluetooth so you can easily access information on your car’s internal operations. However, there are some things you will need to know before making a purchase of an on-board diagnostic tool (OBD). Knowing the difference between OBD-I and OBD-II is of vital importance, since neither are universal or interchangeable. OBD-I tools only work on specific brands and models from before 1996, while OBD-II models work on all modern vehicles that have the latest automobile diagnostic computer software introducedThat date. The main advantage of the latter is that an OBD-II drive works on any type of car rather than being model-specific. There is also a difference between a code reader and a scanner. Whereas,code, scanners give you a greater amount of data. The best professional car diagnostic software can collect a large number of problems. While you do not need to be a programmer to read them, knowing that the associated codes are the key to knowing where the problem is. In general, there are four categories that an OBD-II tool can evaluate, with numerous subsystems under each one: Powertrain (including transmission codes and motor) Chassis (includes ABS)Body (with air conditioning and airbag)Wiring freepik.com freepik.com Vehicle diagnostic software is packaged in a variety of different ways. You could go for the most independent auto diagnostic scanner tool, which is able to scan the vehicle and relay the results directly to you. However, there are numerous apps you can find for your phone, whether it’s Android or iOS, which work in tandem with a Wi-Fi/Bluetooth-enabled tool for scanning your car and then turning your mobile device into a reader for that information. Similarly, you can use an iPad or tablet to review the test results. Modern cars generally use some form of the OBD-II tool mentioned above. Therefore, it should not surprise that mobile apps all work on the same principles. Combining an OBD-II tool with your smartphone transforms your car into a smart, too. The standard features on most of these applications also allow you to export reports as a pdf file to review later, or you can send them directly to the manufacturer or your mechanic to process a repair plan. There may be compatibility issues with some phones, though, or even with the electrical components of the machine you are trying to scan. This is sometimes because the installed protocolsout of date, which is more common for premium applications if you go the free-to-use route. Update to the latest version often solves the problem, or you can contact the developer for help. This is usually much easier than it would be to contact the manufacturer of a portable scanner if you run itproblems. Many of these scanners and applications use superior car diagnostic software compatible with Windows or Mac computers, so you can email the report or compare it with online searches to determine the best way to solve any potential problems. Use this in combination with a useful guide for common car problems and problems like this. So now you know what to look for in a diagnostic tool and with engine diagnostic software. But the real question remains as exactly you use the small nifty device. Regardless of whether you are using an autonomous tool or mobile app connected to a scanner, steps remain similar. Find that door: This presupposes that you have a post-1996 vehicle that includes OBD-II systems on board. It is generally located under the dashboard near the steering column, although you should check with the car manual to be sure. Turn on: Make sure the vehicle is turned off before connecting the scanner so as to avoid causing further damage, either to your car or tool. Tell me where it hurts: Once you turn on the machine again, the scanner should start receiving information from the onboard computer, although some require you to start the process manually. Then it translates it into various codes that refer to the functions of the vehicle. Hit the books: Take note of the displayed codes, since most tools will not give you a detailed explanation of the problem (this may differ for mobile applications.) You will then need to search exactly what these codes mean. Thanks to the internet, you can usually just do a quick search on Google on your mobile phone. Similarly, applications should redirect to a more detailed explanation of a code when you tap the link. Fix-it Felix: Onceyou know what the exact problem is, you can then determine whether it is something you are able to repair yourself, or restore it through the tool, if necessary. You can often find a link to a help section for the related problem when you do a search for the code. Knowing what the problem is will help you get accurate estimate of repair costs. However, if you feel that it is beyond your skills, you can call your mechanic and explain the problem. Remember to make use of a reputable mechanic you can trust, or look out for these scams in car repairs. Pexels.com freepik.com The experience of all with a product differs, so what many people say is the perfect choice could not be the device you prefer. However, there are some brands that have proven and should be worth considering. These include Autel, Launch, Actron and BlueDriver. Specific models will offer different functions and corresponding price labels. Since there are so many to choose from, prices vary a little. Also, if you buy a scanner separately to work next to a mobile app, you need to do math for the total price. It is very likely that between \$20 and \$100 for a fully independent scanner, while modular scanners bring similar price tags depending on their quality and functions. Many mobile apps are free, but some will ask you to pay a fee to unlock their premium features. Simply turn off the vehicle, connect the diagnostic scanner to the door (check the manual for the location), and turn on the ignition. Some cars will not need to start completely before they start providing information to the device. Then you take the codes that gives you and cross-reference with their explanations, often found in the corresponding manual or online, to determine the exact problem and potential fix. Some may give more information than others. Using a self-bought scanner, you usually get a critical system report in a few minutes, but a correct scan may take between one and three hours. Some tools are actually designed to stay connected while driving,up-to-second updates so that you always know the health and condition of your vehicle. Was this article useful? Please rate it. evaluate it. how to use a car diagnostic tool. how to use a car diagnostic reader. how to read car diagnostic scanner

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