



Does My Car Need an Alignment?

Quick Facts about Alignments and Tires

Contrary to Popular Belief...	More often than not, a wander, pull or drift condition is caused by the tires, not by a problem in how the car is aligned.
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Sometimes customers call in requesting an alignment on their vehicle hoping to cure a wander, pull, or drift condition, which may be accompanied by an angled steering wheel spoke. It has been our experience that in 90 percent of the cases concerning these complaints that tires are at fault. Imagine a foam cup laid on its side, and you will understand the cause behind this condition. In our opinion alignments are one of the most over- sold services in the industry. Even though an alignment rack is a great tool for spotting potential or actual problems, trying to compensate for drift or pull by aligning the vehicle rarely works. If you are experiencing a problem such as this, the first step should be an examination of the tires by a qualified professional service technician. He will make sure that the problem is not caused by tire

wear or inflation issues. If no problems are indicated, the tires should be rotated or swapped side to side in an attempt to eliminate the condition. If the vehicle still pulls after having performed this service, an alignment may be needed.

Whenever the vehicle has impacted a curb or pothole hard, the alignment should be checked before unusual tire wear is detected. Steering or handling problems such as wander, steering wheel off center (and not accompanied by a pulling condition), or loose steering, should have an alignment performed as part of the diagnostic procedure. An alignment is needed only when the vehicle has experienced a repair to the suspension system. Making adjustments on vehicles that have experienced worn or broken parts is a waste of money.