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# The True Cost of a Wheelchair

Wheelchair Repair  
vs.  
Replacement



# The True Cost of a Wheelchair

## Wheelchair Repair vs. Replacement

### Average Cost of Replacement Parts

Are you constantly repairing wheelchairs? A bearing, an armrest, a wheel lock, a tire – they all cost money and take time to replace.

Buying replacement parts for wheelchairs may seem like a cost-effective solution, but is repairing always worth your time and money?

The situation is similar to owning a vehicle. If your car is worth \$5,000 and needs a \$4,500 repair you will probably think twice before having that repair done. While the repair can be completed, you still have an old car. It is very likely that there will be more repairs to come which can easily add up to be more expensive than actually replacing the car.

The same logic applies to wheelchairs. If you pay \$130 on average for a standard wheelchair it makes sense to replace some smaller items if needed. However, when it gets to the point where you are repairing multiple parts or expensive items it is usually more cost effective to buy a new wheelchair.

**Table 1: Average cost of replacement parts compared to percentage of chair cost**

Replacement Part	Avg. Price	% of Chair
Standard Wheelchair	\$ 130	100 %
Wheel Assembly	\$ 67	52%
Camlock Elevated Leg Rest Assembly	\$ 57	44%
Camlock Footrest Assembly	\$ 30	23%
Stem Bearing Kit	\$ 28	21%
Caster Fork	\$ 23	18%
Upholstery, Back	\$ 20	15%
Upholstery, Seat	\$ 20	15%
Wheel Lock Assembly	\$ 19	15%
Caster Wheel	\$ 18	14%
Leg Rest Pad	\$ 15	12%
Foot Plate Assembly	\$ 15	12%
Tires or Tubes	\$ 14	11%
Wheel Lock Extension Handle	\$ 8	6%
Camlock Spring	\$ 8	6%
Armrest Pad	\$ 7	6%
Wheel Bearing	\$ 5	4%
Caster Bearing	\$ 4	3%
Axle Assembly	\$ 3	2%
Dust Cap	\$ 1	1%
Rubber Tip	\$ 1	1%
Tube End Cap	\$ 1	1%
<b>Total Spent on Repairs</b>	<b>\$ 364</b>	<b>280%</b>

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## Wheelchair Repair vs. Replacement

### Diminishing Returns of Replacing Wheelchair Parts

If you need to replace each of these items on a wheelchair at some point in its lifecycle the cost of the repairs covers the costs of purchasing almost three new wheelchairs. This assumes only one of each item is replaced. Many of these items, such as armrests or tires, are replaced in multiples.

The more or the higher the cost of parts replaced on a wheelchair the quicker the savings are eaten up. If you happen to replace every item on the list below once, you could have purchased three new wheelchairs. Considering that replacing all of those items at one time is very unlikely, everyone has their own threshold of what is too much. Do you spend \$10, \$50 or \$70 before you give up and buy new?

**Table 2: Diminishing Returns of Replacing Wheelchair Parts**

Replacement Part	Avg. Price					
Wheel Assembly	\$ 67					
Camlock Elevated Leg Rest Assembly	\$ 57	\$ 57				
Camlock Footrest Assembly	\$ 30	\$ 30				
Stem Bearing Kit	\$ 28	\$ 28				
Caster Fork	\$ 23	\$ 23				
Upholstery, Back	\$ 20	\$ 20				
Upholstery, Seat	\$ 20	\$ 20	\$ 20			
Wheel Lock Assembly	\$ 19	\$ 19	\$ 19			
Caster Wheel	\$ 18	\$ 18	\$ 18			
Leg Rest Pad	\$ 15	\$ 15	\$ 15			
Foot Plate Assembly	\$ 15	\$ 15	\$ 15			
Tires or Tubes	\$ 14	\$ 14	\$ 14	\$ 14		
Wheel Lock Extension Handle	\$ 8	\$ 8	\$ 8	\$ 8		
Camlock Spring	\$ 8	\$ 8	\$ 8	\$ 8		
Armrest Pad	\$ 7	\$ 7	\$ 7	\$ 7		
Wheel Bearing	\$ 5	\$ 5	\$ 5	\$ 5		
Caster Bearing	\$ 4	\$ 4	\$ 4	\$ 4	\$ 4	
Axle Assembly	\$ 3	\$ 3	\$ 3	\$ 3	\$ 3	
Dust Cap	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1	
Rubber Tip	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1	
Tube End Cap	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1	\$ 1
<b>Total Spent on Repairs:</b>	<b>\$ 364</b>	<b>\$ 297</b>	<b>\$ 139</b>	<b>\$ 52</b>	<b>\$ 10</b>	<b>\$ 1</b>

# The True Cost of a Wheelchair

## Wheelchair Repair vs. Replacement

### Cost of Labor

Labor also needs to be calculated into this equation. If the maintenance employee that makes wheelchair repairs earns \$25 per hour and it takes 30 minutes to repair a part then for every ten parts that are replaced or repaired it would cost approximately \$125 in labor. A new wheelchair could be purchased with this labor cost alone.

Complete wheelchair replacement gets even more cost effective with Crest Healthcare Supply's Charisma Wheelchair. Charisma offers affordable, low price options starting as-low-as \$110 at regular price. Repairing wheelchairs is cost-effective in some circumstances, but once you have to replace many items or a high cost item it may be most effective to invest your money in a new wheelchair.



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