

## Back to Basics – Repair Vs. Replace Considerations

Sometimes, going back to the basics can make the difference between a quality repair and a failed repair. Deciding to repair or replace a damaged panel is a daily decision, but it is more complicated than it may seem.

The decision to repair or replace a damaged panel requires evaluating:

- **OEM vehicle-specific manuals for repair restrictions**

- **Panel construction material**

- Aluminum, mild steel, high-strength steel, ultra-high-strength steel, dual-phase steel
- Heating restrictions

- **Severity of the damage**

- Have the factory welds been damaged?
- Are there kinks, cracks, tears, or stretching?

- **The location of the damage**

- If adhesive is in the repair area, has the adhesive been damaged, requiring panel replacement?
- Is the damage in a high-wear area that is continually subjected to stress?
- Is the damage in an area with crush zones, and have they been deformed?

- **Damage accessibility**

- If collision damage extends into the vehicle structure, outer panels may need to be removed to access the damage.
- Can the corrosion protection be properly restored if the panel is repaired?



- **Durability/longevity of repair area**

- If replacement disrupts OEM welds and corrosion protection, repair may be a better option if the damage is not too severe.
- Do the materials used ensure the panel maintains integrity over time?

- **Previous repairs**

- Excessive paint thickness
- Poor color match
- Poor condition of the previous repair

Always check OEM service information for any information, specifications, and requirements that impact this decision. These repair vs. replace considerations can help ensure a complete, safe, and quality repair.