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OEM Numbers — Finding the Right Part

How to read a part number and turn it into the correct part.

> **FITMENT** Fitment is confirmed in the car filter on the site, never by this document. Naming a topic or a brand is not confirming it fits your car.

What an OEM number actually is

- An OEM number identifies the part the manufacturer fitted at the factory. It is not a brand and it is not a promise of quality — it is an address.
- Aftermarket makers publish their own references and cross them to the OEM number. Two parts with the same OEM reference are meant for the same position on the same car.
- The number tells you what the car left the factory with. It does not tell you what a previous owner changed.

Where to read it

- On the old part. Most parts carry the number stamped, etched or on a label. Clean the surface first — oil and road dirt hide a digit and one digit is a different part.
- On the vehicle plate and the VIN. The VIN pins down model year, engine, gearbox and market, which is what decides between two parts that look identical.
- On a dealer invoice or a past service record. If the part was replaced before, the invoice carries the number that was actually used.
- In the owner's handbook, for consumables such as filters, bulbs and wiper blades.

Reading the common formats

- **BMW:** eleven digits, usually printed in groups — the first pair is the assembly group (11 is engine, 34 is brakes, 61 is electrics).
- **VAG (VW, Audi, Seat, Skoda):** three blocks, where the middle block is the part family and the suffix letter is the revision. The suffix matters.
- **Toyota and Lexus:** five digits, five digits, two digits. The last pair separates variants of the same part.
- **Mercedes-Benz:** the A-number, where the engine or body series sits inside the number itself.
- **Whatever the brand:** a letter at the end is almost never decorative. It is usually the revision, the side or the colour.

Superseded numbers

- Manufacturers retire numbers and replace them with newer ones. An old number that returns nothing is often not a dead end — it was superseded.
- The newest number in a supersession chain is normally the one to use: it carries the fixes made since the first version.
- A supersession can also merge two old numbers into one new part, or split one into a left and a right. Read the chain before assuming.

The four things that break a 'same model' assumption

- Side. Left and right are different parts far more often than people expect, and the number is frequently the only difference.
- Facelift. The same model name across a facelift can carry different mounts, different connectors and a different part entirely.
- Engine and gearbox code. Two cars of the same year and model with different engine codes do not necessarily share cooling, mounts or exhaust parts.
- Drive and market. Front, rear or all-wheel drive, and the market the car was built for, change brakes, axles and emissions parts.

How to use it on our site

- Put the number straight into the search box. If we carry a part that crosses to it, it comes up.
- If the number returns nothing, use the car filter instead: make, model, year, engine. The filter is the part of the site that knows what fits.
- If you only have the old part in your hand and no number, open the chat with Tej and describe the car and the part. He will tell you what to measure or photograph.

The rule we do not break

- An OEM number is a starting point, not a confirmation. Naming a topic, a brand or a reference is not the same as confirming it fits your car.
- Application is confirmed in the car filter on the site and, where there is any doubt, by our team before the order ships.
- If something cannot be confirmed, we say so. We would rather lose an order than send you a part that does not fit.