2001 Dodge Ram 1500 at 125,000 mi

1B7HF13Z21J123456

MODEL / CHASSIS	ENGINE	MILEAGE	DRIVETRAIN
Ram 1500 · BR (1994–2001)	Chrysler 3.9L (239) Magnum V6 and 5.2L (318) / 5.9L (360) Magnum OHV V8	125,000 mi	4WD
BUILD MONTH	**REPORT DATE**	**MODE**	**PREPARED FOR**
Not entered (door jamb)	October 28, 2026	Owner	Sample Owner

VIN check: check digit valid; model-year code '1' = 2001, matches the year entered. The VIN doesn't record the build month. Sample report: synthetic VIN.

1 · SUMMARY

What this car needs, in order

Each item compares this car's mileage with when owners and shops report the part failing. It is not an inspection: a qualified technician decides what the car actually needs.

0	0	3
jobs recommended now	to plan in the next 30,000 miles	to watch or check at each service

Safety recalls NHTSA lists for this model year (3 of 4)

- **02V-042** · Electrical · alternator cable at the power distribution center: The alternator wire connection at the power distribution center can loosen, overheat and start a fire.
- **01V-153** · Air bags · steering wheel (clockspring): Sound-deadening material inside the steering wheel can come loose and break the clockspring circuit, so the driver air bag may not deploy.
- **00V-307** · Suspension · front upper control arm bolts (Quad Cab): Upper control arm bolts can stretch and break; under braking the axle could rotate, twist the steering linkage and pull the brake lines apart.

A model-year list, not a VIN check. The full report lists the others. Repairs are free at a Dodge dealer if open. On a car over 15 years old, ask the dealer whether a newer recall is still repaired free. Check this VIN at nhtsa.gov/recalls.

Step 0 · Free: run the VIN at nhtsa.gov/recalls and ask a Dodge dealer for a campaign printout. Read the build month (MM/YY) on the driver's door-jamb label.

Recommended now at the next service

Good news: nothing on the 3.9L V6 / 5.2L / 5.9L Magnum V8 watch list is due at this mileage. Worth a fresh look at about 135,000 mi.

Next 12 months up to about 137,000 mi

Nothing scheduled here.

Within the next 30,000 miles up to 155,000 mi

Nothing else enters its reported range in this window.

Watch inspect at each service, fix on condition, or optional

Intake plenum gasket failure (oil burning, smoke) — **$600–$1,100**
Any mileage · Inspect at each service; fix at the first sign
independent shop, installed

Broken exhaust manifold bolts (ticking leak) — **$267–$371**
Any mileage (worse with heavy towing (Chrysler bulletin)) · Inspect at each service; fix at the first sign
independent shop, installed

Spark knock under load (PCM update) — **No published price**
Any mileage (2000–2002 trucks; Chrysler bulletins) · Inspect at each service; fix at the first sign

Recommended now

No repairs due now

Independent shop, installed. Dealers often charge more.

Planned through 155,000 mi

No repairs planned

Now + next 12 months + next 30,000 miles. Excludes “watch” and optional items.

Costs are published independent-shop ranges (low end + low end, high end + high end). Bundled jobs are priced together because the labor overlaps. Routine service (oil, brakes, tires) isn't included; factory fluid and spark plug intervals are listed below.

FACTORY MAINTENANCE

The maker's maintenance schedule isn't on this report

This report doesn't include the maker's scheduled maintenance for this car yet, so brake fluid, spark plugs, coolant and transmission fluid aren't listed even when they're due. Check the service records and the maker's schedule for this car.

WHERE 125K SITS FOR EACH WEAK POINT

#	WEAK POINT	REPORTED RANGE	THIS CAR
1	Intake plenum gasket failure (oil burning, smoke)	Any mileage SHOP/RETAILER	Any mileage
2	Broken exhaust manifold bolts (ticking leak)	Any mileage; worse with heavy towing (Chrysler bulletin) OFFICIAL	Any mileage
3	Spark knock under load (PCM update)	2000–2002 trucks; Chrysler bulletins OFFICIAL	Any mileage

Colors compare mileage with reported failures, not the car's condition. Red: past the range. Amber: inside or approaching. Green: below, or not listed for a recall.

2 · RECALLS AND BULLETINS

Recalls to check for this 2001 Dodge Ram 1500

Safety recall repairs are free at Dodge dealers. On a car over 15 years old, ask the dealer whether a newer recall is still repaired free. Nothing here can tell whether a recall is open or already done on this VIN; only the official VIN lookup or a dealer can.

Official VIN check (2 minutes)

1. Go to nhtsa.gov/recalls and enter 1B7HF13Z21J123456.
2. Note every recall shown as “Recall incomplete” and keep a screenshot.
3. Ask a Dodge dealer for a campaign printout; it also lists completed campaigns.

3.9L V6 / 5.2L / 5.9L MAGNUM V8 RECALLS WE TRACK

NHTSA lists no engine-specific recall campaign for the 3.9L V6 / 5.2L / 5.9L Magnum V8 as of 2026-10-28. Recalls on the rest of the car are in the model-year list below.

EVERY RECALL NHTSA LISTS FOR THE 2001 DODGE RAM 1500 (4)

RECALL	COMPONENT	WHAT CAN HAPPEN (NHTSA, SHORTENED)
02V-042	Electrical · alternator cable at the power distribution center	The alternator wire connection at the power distribution center can loosen, overheat and start a fire. Details
01V-153	Air bags · steering wheel (clockspring)	Sound-deadening material inside the steering wheel can come loose and break the clockspring circuit, so the driver air bag may not deploy. Details
00V-307	Suspension · front upper control arm bolts (Quad Cab)	Upper control arm bolts can stretch and break; under braking the axle could rotate, twist the steering linkage and pull the brake lines apart. Details
00V-366	Child seat anchors · owner's manual	The owner's manual may be missing the steps for attaching a child seat to the anchors, so a child seat may not be attached properly. Details

Source: NHTSA recalls API, fetched 2026-10-28 and combined across NHTSA model names: RAM 1500, RAM. Safety categories (air bags, fire, brakes, stalling, roll-away and loss of control) are listed first; listings whose NHTSA text names another engine, or an aftermarket part, go last. OFFICIAL

Left out of this list (RAM 1500): This sample is a Quad Cab 4x4 pickup. 09E-025, 09E-012, 08E-050, 06E-060 (aftermarket lamps), 07E-066 (Cequent trailer adapter) and 06E-024 (K&N fuel kit) are aftermarket parts; 04V-185, 01V-253 and 01V-184 cover Ram Vans and Wagons; 01V-289 covers 2500 Wagons; 03V-504 (snow plow package tires) and 01V-008 (camper package with overload springs) cover option packages this truck does not have. They are left out; a VIN check would show any that applied.

SERVICE ACTIONS, BULLETINS AND WARRANTY PROGRAMS

Manufacturer bulletins and warranty programs for this engine are cited on each weak point in section 4, where they apply.

4 · THE 3 WEAK POINTS

Each weak point, one card each

Every figure carries its source. Retailer part numbers are shown only when the retailer lists them for this chassis (BR).

1 Intake plenum gasket failure (oil burning, smoke)

Any mileage

Severity: High: overheating, stalls, limp mode or a big bill · 0 mentions in counted NHTSA complaints

COMPUTED FROM NHTSA DATA

Reports cover a wide mileage span (Any mileage), so mileage doesn't say much here. Range: Any mileage SHOP/RETAILER [2]

WHAT FAILS FORUM/BLOG [2][3][8]

The bottom of the intake manifold is a steel plenum pan bolted to the aluminum manifold. The two metals expand at different rates and the gasket between them fails. The engine then draws oil mist from the lifter valley into the intake and burns it. Trade articles warn that a new gasket alone often fails again; repair kits add a thicker plate and better bolts. A Chrysler bulletin covers high oil consumption and grey smoke on 2000–2001 Rams.

SYMPTOMS

- High oil use with no visible leak
- Grey or blue smoke, often at idle
- Pinging, rough idle, fouled plugs on one cylinder

IF IT'S LEFT TOO LONG

Burning oil fouls plugs and oxygen sensors and can damage the catalytic converter.

IS IT WORTH DOING EARLY? OUR ESTIMATE

Fix it when oil use climbs; use a plate-style repair kit, not a gasket alone.

ESTIMATED REPAIR COST

Plenum gasket repair (Open Labor Project estimate)	**$600–$1,100** FORUM/BLOG [5] independent shop, installed
Intake manifold gasket replacement, Ram 1500 Van (RepairPal)	**$1,122–$1,384** SHOP/RETAILER [6] reported range for the bill after a failure
Dealer	**Often 1.5–2× the independent-shop price** OUR ESTIMATE

1.5× The failure-bill midpoint ($1,253) is about 1.5× the early-fix midpoint ($850). A cost ratio, not a probability.

PARTS FOR BR

- Ask your parts supplier for the OE part number for this VIN.

WHAT TO ASK YOUR SHOP

- How much oil does it use between changes?
- Plenum gasket ever replaced, and with what kit?

2 Broken exhaust manifold bolts (ticking leak)

Any mileage

Severity: Medium: leaks and wear · 1 mentions in counted NHTSA complaints

COMPUTED FROM NHTSA DATA

Reports cover a wide mileage span (Any mileage; worse with heavy towing (Chrysler bulletin)), so mileage doesn't say much here. Range: Any mileage; worse with heavy towing (Chrysler bulletin) OFFICIAL [9]

WHAT FAILS FORUM/BLOG [1][4][9]

Exhaust manifold bolts break, mostly on the passenger side, and cause an exhaust leak with a ticking noise. A Chrysler bulletin covers manifold bolts losing torque on trucks used for heavy trailer towing. Broken bolts may need drilling out. Owners report the same broken bolts on the 3.9L V6 Dakota.

SYMPTOMS

- Ticking at cold start that fades as it warms
- Exhaust smell
- Soot at the manifold joint

IF IT'S LEFT TOO LONG

A leak near the oxygen sensors upsets fueling and can scorch nearby wiring.

IS IT WORTH DOING EARLY? OUR ESTIMATE

Fix it before more bolts break; check the bolts on a truck that tows.

ESTIMATED REPAIR COST

Exhaust manifold gasket, 2001 Ram 1500 Van 5.9L (YourMechanic shop/dealer range)	**$267–$371** SHOP/RETAILER [7] independent shop, installed
Same job; drilling broken bolts costs more	**$267–$371** SHOP/RETAILER [7] reported range for the bill after a failure
Dealer	**Often 1.5–2× the independent-shop price** OUR ESTIMATE

1.0× The failure-bill midpoint ($319) is about 1.0× the early-fix midpoint ($319). A cost ratio, not a probability.

PARTS FOR BR

- Ask your parts supplier for the OE part number for this VIN.

WHAT TO ASK YOUR SHOP

- Any tick at cold start?
- Tows a trailer?

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3 Spark knock under load (PCM update)

Any mileage

Severity: Medium: leaks and wear · 6 mentions in counted NHTSA complaints

COMPUTED FROM NHTSA DATA

Reports cover a wide mileage span (2000–2002 trucks; Chrysler bulletins), so mileage doesn't say much here. Range: 2000–2002 trucks; Chrysler bulletins OFFICIAL [10][11]

WHAT FAILS OFFICIAL [10][11][12]

Chrysler issued bulletins for light-to-moderate spark knock when accelerating under load, and for hot sag, spark knock and shift problems that are fixed with a PCM flash. A later bulletin covers knock or rattle when climbing a long grade while towing a heavy trailer.

SYMPTOMS

- Pinging when accelerating or climbing
- Hesitation when hot
- Knock or rattle when towing up a grade

IF IT'S LEFT TOO LONG

ESTIMATED REPAIR COST

PCM flash (no published price)	**No published price** independent shop, installed
No owner-reported bill	**No published price** reported range for the bill after a failure
Dealer	**Often 1.5–2× the independent-shop price** OUR ESTIMATE

PARTS FOR BR

Heavy, long-lasting knock can damage pistons.

IS IT WORTH DOING EARLY? OUR ESTIMATE

Ask for the latest PCM calibration and use the fuel grade the manual calls for.

- Ask your parts supplier for the OE part number for this VIN.

WHAT TO ASK YOUR SHOP

- Any pinging under load?
- PCM ever reflashed?

5 · ALSO REPORTED, NOT RANKED

Other themes in 3.9L V6 / 5.2L / 5.9L Magnum V8 owner complaints

Every NHTSA complaint theme with 10 or more counted reports is either a weak point above or explained here.

THEME	COMPLAINTS	WHY IT ISN'T A WEAK POINT
Suspension / brakes	33	Chassis complaints that mention the engine size; not engine faults.

6 · BUYING OR SELLING

Used-car checklist and resale helper

For owners this is a resale checklist: it's what a careful buyer will ask.

Ask the inspecting shop to check

- Oil use and smoke at idle (plenum gasket)
- Exhaust manifold bolts
- Pinging under load

Ask the seller

- How much oil does it use?
- Plenum or manifold work done?
- Tows a trailer?

Documents to request

- Dealer service-history printout for the VIN
- nhtsa.gov/recalls screenshot

WHAT A BUYER MAY DEDUCT

FINDING	ESTIMATED ADJUSTMENT
Intake plenum gasket failure (oil burning, smoke): seeping or leaking	$600–$1,100
Broken exhaust manifold bolts (ticking leak): seeping or leaking	$267–$371
Spark knock under load (PCM update): symptoms or fault codes present	No published price
Pre-ticked rows (●), if no records clear them	**None at this mileage**

● = expected at this mileage. Estimated repair costs, not an appraisal. Recalls cost the seller nothing: ask for open recalls to be completed rather than discounted. OUR ESTIMATE

7 · METHOD AND SOURCES

How this report is built

Inputs. VIN, model year, model, mileage and build month (if entered). Model and engine are checked with NHTSA's vPIC decoder.

Mileage positions. Below: more than 10,000 miles before the reported range. Approaching: within 10,000. Inside: in the range, or past the start of an open-ended range. Past: beyond the top of the range. These bands are our rules, not an industry standard.

The plan. Critical items inside or past their range go first; high-severity items follow, and jobs that share labor are bundled. At most three jobs land in “Recommended now”. Leaks that are cheap to watch are fixed on condition; inspections are asked for at each service.

Costs. Published independent-shop ranges from shop quotes, retailer prices and owner reports. The worst-case cost of every item failing is not shown: it isn't an expected cost.

Labels. OFFICIAL NHTSA/Stellantis documents · SHOP/RETAILER parts prices and shop articles · FORUM/BLOG owner forums and blogs · COMPUTED FROM NHTSA DATA our analysis of NHTSA data · OUR ESTIMATE ours.

NHTSA complaint data. Pulled Oct 27, 2026 from NHTSA's complaints API for Ram pickup, Ram Van and Wagon, Dakota and Durango complaints (2000–2003) that mention the 5.2L, 5.9L, 318, 360 or Magnum, or (Dakota, 2000–2001 Ram and Ram Van) the 3.9L or V6, and not a diesel, the 4.7L or the 3.7L: 80 complaints. Some of these nameplates were sold with other engines too; for those we left out complaints whose text names another engine or a hybrid, so a few complaints about other engines can remain. Themes are keyword matches on the complaint text. NHTSA data is thin: only a few dozen complaints name these engines, because most owners do not name the engine, so the counts under-count. The 3.9L V6 adds about 20 complaints, mostly chassis faults; engine items for it rest on the same bulletins and trade articles as the V8s. NHTSA complaint data starts with 2000 model years, so 1992–1999 trucks and the 1998 Grand Cherokee 5.9 Limited are not in the counts. COMPUTED FROM NHTSA DATA

THEME	COMPLAINTS	IN THIS REPORT
Suspension / brakes	33	Also reported
Transmission	9	—
Knock / ping	6	Item 3
Stalling	5	—
Exhaust manifold	1	Item 2
Oil burning / plenum	0	Item 1

Limits: complaints are self-reported and not adjusted for cars sold; keyword matching over- and under-counts; owners rarely file safety complaints about oil seeps, so leaks look rarer than they are.

SOURCES

1. NHTSA owner complaints for 2000–2003 Dodge Ram pickup, Ram Van and Wagon, Dakota and Durango complaints that mention the 5.2L, 5.9L, 318, 360 or Magnum (or, for the Dakota, 2000–2001 Ram and Ram Van, the 3.9L or V6) and do not mention a diesel, the 4.7L or the 3.7L, pulled Oct 27–28, 2026 (ODI numbers in the cost notes) OFFICIAL
https://www.nhtsa.gov/report-a-safety-problem#complaints

2. Underhood Service: Tech tip, servicing 1993–2003 3.9/5.2/5.9L Dodge Magnum engines (plenum gasket failure; replacing the gasket alone often fails again), via search extract Oct 28, 2026 SHOP/RETAILER
https://www.underhoodservice.com/tech-tip-servicing-1993-2003-3-9-5-2-5-9l-dodge-magnum-engines/

3. au7o: 2001 Dodge Ram 1500 known issues (intake plenum pan gasket lets crankcase oil mist into the intake; billet plate repair about $150–$500) — AI-assisted site, not independently verified, via search extract Oct 28, 2026 FORUM/BLOG
https://www.au7o.io/known-issues/dodge-ram-1500?year=2001

4. 8020 Automotive: the 5 most common Dodge 5.9 Magnum engine problems (plenum gasket, exhaust manifold bolts), via search extract Oct 28, 2026 FORUM/BLOG
https://8020automotive.com/dodge-5-9-magnum-common-problems/

5. Open Labor Project: 2001 Dodge Ram 1500 5.2L V8 Magnum (plenum gasket leak, estimate $600–$1,100) — AI-assisted site, not independently verified, via search extract Oct 28, 2026 FORUM/BLOG
https://openlaborproject.com/portal/dodge/ram-1500/2001/5.2l-v8-magnum/

6. RepairPal: Dodge Ram 1500 Van intake manifold gasket replacement estimate ($1,122–$1,384; labor $561–$823, parts about $561), via search extract Oct 28, 2026 SHOP/RETAILER
https://repairpal.com/estimator/dodge/ram-1500-van/intake-manifold-gasket-replacement-cost

7. YourMechanic: Dodge Ram 1500 Van exhaust manifold gasket replacement (2001 5.9L V8: shop/dealer $267–$371), via search extract Oct 28, 2026 SHOP/RETAILER
https://www.yourmechanic.com/estimates/dodge/ram-1500-van/exhaust-manifold-gasket-replacement

8. DaimlerChrysler TSB 09-004-01: High oil consumption, grey oil smoke from the exhaust or breather tube, or mechanical knocking (2000–2001 Ram and Ram Van) (2001-05-18), filed with NHTSA OFFICIAL
https://www.nhtsa.gov/?nhtsaId=628237

9. DaimlerChrysler TSB 09-002-01: Loss of exhaust manifold bolt torque on vehicles used for extended heavy trailer towing (2000–2001 Ram and Ram Van) (2001-03-02), filed with NHTSA OFFICIAL
https://www.nhtsa.gov/?nhtsaId=619120

10. DaimlerChrysler TSB 18-009-00 Rev. D: Light-to-moderate spark knock during acceleration under load (2000 Dakota, Durango, Ram, Ram Van) (2000-12-01), filed with NHTSA OFFICIAL
https://www.nhtsa.gov/?nhtsaId=616724

11. DaimlerChrysler TSB 18-009-02 Rev. A: PCM flash for hot sag, spark knock and transmission shift issues (2000–2001 Dakota, Durango, Ram, Ram Van) (2002-05-06), filed with NHTSA OFFICIAL
https://www.nhtsa.gov/?nhtsaId=634123

12. DaimlerChrysler TSB 09-008-02: Engine knock or rattle when climbing a long grade while towing a heavy trailer (2000–2002 Ram and Ram Van) (2002-10-21), filed with NHTSA OFFICIAL
https://www.nhtsa.gov/?nhtsaId=10000308

This report contains no affiliate links; retailer prices are quoted as price sources only. Found an error? Email hello@repairahead.com.

PLEASE READ

Important

Based on public records and published repair costs. Not a diagnosis or a guarantee. Your technician's inspection decides what your car needs. Confirm recalls with a dealer using your VIN.

Informational only. This report is not a mechanical inspection, a diagnosis, or professional, legal or financial advice. Nobody from RepairAhead has seen, driven or inspected this vehicle.

Reported ranges and estimates, not predictions

Failure mileages are reported ranges compiled from public owner complaints, manufacturer bulletins, recalls and repair-shop reports. Costs are estimates. Parts can fail earlier, later or not at all, and other problems can occur. Statistics from owner complaints describe past reports to NHTSA; NHTSA has not reviewed or endorsed this analysis.

Safety issues go to a dealer

If you notice overheating, a burning or fuel smell, smoke, a brake-assist problem, stalling or loss of power, pull over when it's safe and contact a Dodge dealer or qualified shop. Safety recall repairs are free at Dodge dealers. Confirm recalls for this VIN at nhtsa.gov/recalls.

No warranty

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Based on public records and published repair costs. Not a diagnosis or a guarantee. Your technician's inspection decides what your car needs. Confirm recalls with a dealer using your VIN.