Reverse Backup Sensors: Types and Reasons Why You Should Install Them

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Reverse backup sensors are designed to alert a driver of obstacles when backing up their vehicle. These systems are typically categorized in two groups.

Electromagnetic Parking Sensor

The first is the electromagnetic parking sensor. This type of device relies on the driver carefully and smoothly backing into position. If the car is to stop during the maneuver, the sensor will â€œforgetâ€• that the obstacle is there. These types of sensors are not typically recommended as they are unreliable. However, they are the easiest type of sensor to install.

Ultrasonic Parking Sensor

The other type of reverse backup sensor is the ultrasonic parking sensor. This type of sensor is the more reliable of the two as it measures the distance of nearby objects using pulses. The system works by warning the driver with either a visual or audible noise. The sensor uses the speed of the car along with the distance of the obstacle to create the alerts.

The ultrasonic parking sensor can be installed in either the front or the rear bumper or both. Ideally the sensor is installed in both the front and the back to help the driver know when an obstacle is close in either direction. The rear sensor will be enacted when a driver puts the car in reverse and will automatically shut off when the car is put into any other gear. A front sensor usually requires a button to be pushed to activate and then when a certain speed is reached the sensor will shut off.

Why Install a Backup Sensor

Reverse backup sensors can help protect your vehicle from damage, especially during parking situations. The reverse backup sensor allows drivers to back up with ease as they are warned as soon as they are to near an obstacle. It also reduces the driverâ€™s blind spot, resulting in fewer collisions when backing up or parking.

Feedback

There are both audible and visual forms of feedback available for this type of sensor. The most common type of feedback comes in the form of a tone or a beep. Typically the beeps will be more frequent or faster the closer you come to the obstacle. One continuous beep or tone usually indicates that the driver needs to stop immediately in order to avoid a collision.

The other feedback option is a visual aid. These come in the form of an LCD or LED readout that indicates the distance from the object. The warning symbols given, how strong and the location of them, will determine the distance to the object.

Issues with the System

One of the problems with this type of reverse backup system is that some objects may not be â€œreadâ€• by the sensors. This is because the system relies on sound waves being reflected and some objects may not be big enough or flat enough for the system to pick up.

For parking and other times when you need to back up slowly and avoid objects, the reverse backup sensor can be extremely beneficial. However, it is still important to pay attention by looking and driving carefully.

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