

*Lees bij de volgende teksten steeds eerst de vraag voordat je de tekst zelf raadpleegt.*

## Tekst 11

---

# When It Pays to Nix Instead of Fix

By Michelle Singletary

Chances are you have a broken household appliance collecting dust in your garage or basement. And chances are you're never going to take the time to find a repair shop to fix that appliance.

These days folks just figure, why bother? As prices continue to come down on many appliances and pieces of electronic equipment, by the time you pay to repair something, you're halfway to buying yourself a new and improved washing machine, microwave oven or DVD player.

In its latest repair-or-replace survey, Consumer Reports magazine confirmed what most of us already know - the repair road is a costly and often frustrating trip. Nearly half the respondents said they didn't seek repairs or quit along the way.

It took me several days and many telephone calls to find a repairman who would make a house call to diagnose and fix my 10-year-old, 32-inch television with a sound problem. If I got more than a couple of feet away from the set, I had to be able to read lips.

For a hot second, I, too, thought why bother, knowing full well that repair costs can be daunting. Consumer Reports found that readers paid as much as \$500 to fix projection TVs, \$400 to repair laptop computers and \$180 to fix digital cameras. A front-load washer typically costs \$350 to service.

With these costs it's easy to see why people don't want to call a repair shop.

Instead they go looking for a replacement as soon as they realize they've got a problem.

### **Some tips**

Still, if you think it's worth your time and money to repair a product, follow this advice from Consumer Reports:

## **Make sure the product is really broken**

Seriously, I once called a repair person for a freezer that wasn't working. Turns out the cord, which we had snaked around a corner to an outlet, kept coming unplugged.

## **Check the owner's manual**

You know, it's the book that you tossed in a drawer after you opened your new electronic toy. Most instruction manuals have a troubleshooting section. Personally, I've saved a number of products from the recycling bin by just reading the owner's manual. (Okay, my husband has fixed them by reading it.)

## **Find help**

If you've lost the manual but you are the do-it-yourself type, there are a number of Web sites that can help you with a broken product. Check out <http://www.repairclinic.com> or Appliance Repair Central at <http://www.pcappliancerepair.com>. Both provide troubleshooting help so you can figure out how to fix your appliance. Each also can help you find replacement parts. And if you're a handyman (or handywoman), Appliance Repair Central has a national in-home service referral database.

## **Contact the manufacturer**

That's right, call the maker even if your product is no longer under warranty. In the Consumer Reports survey, 10 percent of readers who complained about a problem got an offer to fix or replace an out-of-warranty product free of charge. Hey, it never hurts to ask.

## **Do a cost analysis**

If you're faced with the fix-it-or-nix-it choice, do a cost analysis. Don't assume a repair will be too expensive. When it came to my TV, I thought it was at least worth the effort because I had paid \$900 for it. (Under duress, I might add. My husband was tired of watching the Super Bowl on our 19-incher.) Trust me, having paid more than I ever thought I would for a television set, I wasn't going to heave-ho it into a landfill.

For \$80 I got the sound back. Now I don't have to strain to hear what those desperate housewives are saying as I prepare my kids' lunches for the next day.

*<http://www.washingtonpost.com>*

*Lees bij de volgende opgaven steeds eerst de vraag voordat je de bijbehorende tekst raadpleegt.*

## **Tekst 11 When it pays to nix instead of fix**

---

Je televisie doet het slecht. Je wilt het kapotte apparaat zelf proberen te repareren, maar je bent de handleiding kwijt.

- 1p **45** Adviseert Michelle Singletary wat je het beste kunt doen als je het tóch zelf wilt proberen? Zo nee, antwoord "Nee". Zo ja, wat raadt zij aan?