2011 BMW 335I

Rear subframe bushings, front control arm bushings, sway-bar end links

80–130k · Plan · $600–$1,800 depending on how deep you go

HOW IT BREAKS

The N54/N55-era E90 335i uses rubber-bonded control arm bushings (the 'lollipop' front lower control arms) and rear subframe bushings that take a beating from the car's weight and power. Rubber hardens and cracks with age/heat, and the lollipop bushings especially develop play that lets the whole front end shift under load. Ignored long enough, it accelerates tire wear, messes up alignment, and can eventually let the subframe bushings tear completely, causing clunks and poor rear wheel control under power.

You'll notice: Clunking or knocking over bumps and during acceleration/braking, vague or wandering steering feel, uneven tire wear, and a general sense the car has gotten 'floppy' or less precise compared to when new.

FIX IT YOURSELF DIY: MODERATE

Doable in a home garage with a lift or sturdy jack stands, a press or big C-clamp/bushing tool for pressing the lollipop bushings out of the control arms (or just buy complete arms pre-bushed to skip pressing), and basic hand tools plus a torque wrench. Sway bar end links are bolt-on 10-minute jobs each side. Rear subframe bushings are more involved — subframe needs support and partial unbolting — so budget more time and care there; use Lemforder or OEM-equivalent bushings, not cheap no-name parts.

AT THE MECHANIC

Tell the shop you want front lower control arms (lollipop bushings) replaced complete rather than pressed if cost is close, do sway-bar end links same visit, and get a quote for rear subframe bushings separately since that's more labor-intensive. Expect roughly 3-5 hours labor total if done together; ask for a post-job alignment and get OEM/Lemforder parts specified on the invoice so you're not billed premium labor with cheap aftermarket parts.