

PURCHASING A NEW BATTERY

EVENTUALLY, EVERY CAR WILL NEED A NEW BATTERY. The “one-size-fits-all” batteries found at large retail stores may be more of an expense and headache than they are worth. Battery ratings, physical size, and post location are important factors in ensuring the proper fit and function of your battery. In fact, choosing the wrong battery can adversely affect the entire electrical system of your vehicle. For convenience, accurate diagnosis, and professional installation, turn to your nearest AARS facility or CAA Battery Assist*, a mobile unit that provides on-the-scene battery testing and installation.

*Check for availability in your area.

BATTERY SAFETY

ALTHOUGH BATTERIES MAY APPEAR TO BE UNCOMPLICATED, THEY CAN BE ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS COMPONENTS TO SERVICE IF CARE IS NOT USED. Follow the warnings listed on the battery and in your owner’s manual.

- Wear eye protection and gloves when handling the battery.
- Avoid dropping the battery. Batteries can be heavy and can cause injuries if dropped.
- Avoid tipping the battery because sulphuric acid may spill out and cause burns.
- Never smoke when servicing your battery. Explosive hydrogen gas is present and may ignite.
- Remove all jewellery before servicing the battery. A watch or ring touching a battery post may cause an explosive spark or burn.
- Be sure to wash your hands with soap and water after handling a battery. Water will help neutralise any acid.

- When charging a battery, connect all leads before turning on the battery charger. Always charge a battery in a well-ventilated area.
- Never place tools on top of the battery. Tools can cause a short across battery posts or cables.

WHAT TO CHECK

- Clean the battery case and check for bulging or cracks.
- Check the electrolyte level if the battery has removable vent caps.
- Remove corrosion from terminal connections and battery hold-downs.
- Check battery posts and terminals.

WARNING SIGNS OF A WEAK BATTERY

- Slow cranking
- Dim headlamps
- Battery warning lamp illuminated

Maintenance Schedule

Frequency	Maintenance Item
Monthly	Check battery case, electrolyte level, and cables

This maintenance interval is based on normal driving conditions.

For more information about your car’s battery and how to care for it, contact your local CAA Approved Auto Repair Service facility.

To locate the AARS facility nearest you, call your local CAA office or check online at caa.ca.

Important safety information: Due to the complex nature of today’s vehicles, it is essential that you use the utmost care when working on your car or truck. Before attempting any service or repair, consult your owner’s manual. Be sure that you understand the service procedure completely, have the proper tools, and adhere to all safety precautions, including handling instructions for any chemicals you are using. If you are unsure about any repair, consult a professional technician.



MAKE SENSE of CAR CARE

ADVICE FROM CAA

BATTERIES



BATTERY: POWER CENTRAL

TODAY'S VEHICLES HAVE MORE ELECTRICAL DEMANDS THAN EVER, AND BATTERIES PLAY AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN MEETING THOSE DEMANDS. The battery supplies the electrical current that the starter motor requires to start the engine. It also provides power to the electrical components and accessories when the vehicle's engine is not running. When the electrical load exceeds the charging system's capacity, the battery steps in to supply the extra current required. The battery also acts as a voltage stabiliser for the entire electrical system.

Do-it-yourself maintenance can play a crucial role in maximising the life of your battery. It is also important to have your battery and charging system checked at least once a year. Early detection of a weak component can save you time and money. Look for an Approved Auto Repair Service facility near you that has the proper testing equipment to perform a complete check of your battery as well as your charging and electrical systems.

BATTERY INSPECTION AND SERVICE

WHETHER YOU HAVE A VENT-CAP BATTERY, IN WHICH THE CAPS CAN BE REMOVED TO ADD FLUID WHEN IT GETS LOW, OR A MAINTENANCE-FREE BATTERY, SOME REGULAR MAINTENANCE IS NEEDED TO ENSURE YOUR BATTERY WORKS SAFELY AND EFFECTIVELY.

The simplest maintenance procedure you can perform is keeping the battery case clean. Dirt and residue can actually cause a current drain on the battery. Clean the battery case by wiping it with moist paper towels and mild detergent.

If the battery has removable vent caps, check the level of the electrolyte, which is a solution of sulphuric acid and water found inside your

battery. The electrolyte should rise above the top plates of the battery. If fluid is needed, add distilled water, but be sure to avoid overfilling the cells.

Inspect the battery case for cracks and bulging, as these are signs of a failing battery. You also need to look for corrosion around the battery terminal connections and battery hold-down. Corrosion can be cleaned off with a small, stiff brush and a solution of baking soda and water. After removing the corrosion, rinse the battery with water.

Check the battery's posts and terminals for loose connections and cracks. Always remove the cable from the *negative* battery terminal first, followed by the positive. However, when attaching the cables onto the battery terminals, install the *positive* cable first, followed by the negative cable. The battery cables are usually colour-coded: red for positive and black for negative. This may also be displayed by symbols on the battery: + for positive, - for negative. On post-type terminals, the positive post is the larger of the two. Don't pry the cable clamp off the battery post as this may harm the battery case or cause internal damage.

JUMP-STARTING YOUR VEHICLE

Precautions

- Before you begin, be sure to set the parking brake, then turn off all electrical accessories and the ignitions of both vehicles.
- Unplug all electrical components — such as cellular phones or radar detectors — before disconnecting or connecting the battery cables. Jump-starting may damage such items.
- Do not allow the vehicles to touch each other.
- Connect cables in the correct order and position.
- Never attempt to charge or jump-start a frozen battery or one that is low on electrolyte — it may rupture or explode.

- Never attempt to charge or jump-start a battery that is cracked or bulging.

With the extensive use of electrical equipment on today's cars, it doesn't take much to drain a battery. While jump-starting a battery may appear simple, special attention must be taken to ensure the safety of each vehicle.

- 1 Install one end of the jumper cable clamp to the positive terminal of the discharged vehicle's battery.
 - 2 Install the other end to the positive terminal of the vehicle doing the boosting.
 - 3 Install the second cable to the negative terminal of the booster vehicle's battery.
 - 4 Connect the other end of the discharged vehicle's cable to a grounding point, such as the engine block or an air-conditioning bracket. Try to keep the jumper cable as far from the battery as possible.
- Try to start the vehicle with the discharged battery. If the engine seems to be turning too slowly, stop cranking and start the other vehicle to avoid draining both batteries. Try to start the discharged vehicle again.
 - After the vehicle starts, remove the cables in the reverse order of installation.
 - Always refer to the vehicle's owner's manual for specific precautions regarding jump-starting of your vehicle.

