

CONSUMER BULLETIN



New Car Batteries for New Technologies

Modern cars and trucks are getting better every day. Motorists demand more creature comforts and conveniences, and governmental regulations demand better fuel economy, less emissions and greater safety.

Most of the modern conveniences and advances in technology for your car are run by a multitude of computers. In fact, some newer cars have over a hundred different computers on-board to run systems that do everything from turning on the interior lights when you unlock the door to preventing a roll-over during emergency maneuvers.

All this technology requires power - strong, stable and reliable electrical energy. Over the past several years, virtually all car (and battery) manufacturers have researched and developed new technology for car batteries, along with the car's entire starting and charging system.

It's true that car batteries are lasting longer and longer. If you properly maintain your car, you may not even replace the battery during the time you own it. Battery performance, power and life-cycles have increased, and batteries have become safer and more environmentally friendly. It's probably been a long time since you or your mechanic has had to top-off the fluid in a battery to make sure that it will hold a charge and keep working. Most of today's batteries are sealed, and some even use absorbent "mats" inside the battery to retain liquid so that battery acid won't spill - even if the battery case is tipped or becomes damaged.



You may have noticed that in some cars, batteries are no longer visible under the hood. Many cars now have batteries that are mounted on their side somewhere under the engine, hidden in the trunk or even under the back seat, inside the passenger compartment.

That's why battery manufacturers developed "non-spillable" type batteries that use Absorbed Glass Mat (AGM) technology. AGM batteries help prevent leaks of toxic battery acids and hydrogen gases into the vehicle's passenger compartment.

AGM batteries typically last longer, provide more power in a smaller size, are vibration and corrosion resistant and recharge faster to meet all the demands of the modern vehicle.

When it is finally time for car battery replacement, never be tempted to ask for an older-style technology battery as a less-expensive repair option. Your car may be several years old, but the manufacturer designed your car's electrical system to operate and perform with a battery that meets very specific requirements. If your car came equipped from the factory with an AGM battery, insist that it be replaced with an AGM.

While many battery types can be made to *fit in the battery compartment, only the correct type and capacity battery will perform properly. If an incorrect specification battery is installed,



it can cause starting issues or performance problems, illuminate dashboard warning lights or even leave you stranded.

*This is a good example of "bigger is not always better". Some batteries with excess peak starting power can have insufficient capacity for continuous use of some accessories and may even cause damage to your car's alternator.

Do-it-yourself car repairs have become a real problem when it comes to batteries. You may not know that your car came factory-equipped with a sealed, AGM-type battery. If you attempt to recharge the battery without a charger specifically designed for AGM batteries, you will damage the battery, and may cause an explosion and suffer personal injury.

Anytime your car is at the shop for routine maintenance, it is a great time to have the car's battery, starting and charging systems checked. If the shop makes a recommendation for battery replacement, ask questions to make sure you are purchasing the correct type and specification of battery as designed for your vehicle.



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