# AAA Car CARE

What You Need to Know About Your Car Battery

Your car battery supplies the electrical current that the starter motor needs to crank the engine. It powers components and accessories when the engine is not running and, when electrical loads temporarily exceed the car's charging system capacity, the battery supplies the needed extra current. The battery also acts as a voltage stabilizer for the entire electrical system. Today's vehicles have more electrical demands than ever before, and batteries play an essential role in meeting those demands.

While manufacturers are always working on improvements, today's car batteries generally fall into two basic design categories:

- Flooded lead acid (FLA), which has been the standard for decades.
  - · Absorbent glass mat (AGM),

a newer design that offers advantages in specific applications.

The flooded battery and glass mat battery serve the same basic function, but do not work interchangeably. It's important to consult your owner's manual before you purchase a replacement battery.

While most modern designs claim to be maintenance free, there are a few things you can do to get maximum life out of a battery. You can complete these steps yourself or ask your auto service tech when you bring your car in for routine maintenance.

- Check and clean the corrosion from each battery terminal.
- Check and tighten the mounting hardware so the battery does not move around when the car hits bumps in the road.

Even though the alternator

keeps it charged, there will come a time to replace the battery. Car batteries last three to five years typically depending on a few different factors, such as climate. If you live in a location where higher average temperatures are the norm, you can expect more frequent car battery replacements.

After the second year, it's a good practice to have your auto tech do an annual test to determine the battery's remaining energy capacity. It's far better to identify a weak battery in the service bay than to have a dead battery out on the road.

#### Choose the right auto service professional

AAA makes it easy with open access to its network of more than 7,000 Approved Auto Repair facilities. Each AAR location meets AAA's high standards for tech training and certification, customer satisfaction and more, taking the guesswork out of finding the right auto service professional. AAA also provides an easy-to-use online tool that calculates the estimated price including parts and labor and includes the AAA member discount.

#### **AAA Mobile Battery Service**

If your car won't start when you turn the key, turn to AAA for convenient mobile battery service. Whether you're stranded in your driveway, a parking lot or on the road, a professional car battery service tech will come to your location, conduct a free diagnostic test of your car's battery and starting and charging systems, and if needed, install a new battery on the spot. AAA also takes care of proper disposal and recycling of the replaced car battery. For more information, visit AAA.com/Battery.

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## Top Five Car Care Do's That Don't Get Done Why Skimping on Car Care Today Will Be Costly Tomorrow

Your car needs an oil change or a tires rotated. It's one more chore on your never-ending "to do" list, and sometimes it just falls through the cracks. Apparently, you're not alone. Last year, vehicle inspection events held during AAA Car Care Month uncovered a variety of maintenance issues that were well on their way to becoming real problems for vehicle owners. Described below are five examples of why following your car's recommended maintenance schedule is a way to ensure your vehicle operates more safely, uses fuel more efficiently, lasts longer and retains its value for resale.

#### 1. Tire Pressure

why: Over-inflated tires ride roughly and suffer premature wear at the center of their tread. Under-inflated tires decrease fuel economy, cause imprecise handling, suffer premature wear at the edges of their tread, and can overheat and fail at highway speeds. Tires typically lose about one pound of pressure per month through normal seepage, and as seasons change, tires lose or gain another pound of inflation pressure with every 10 degree change in outside temperature.

**WHEN:** Check the tire pressures (including the spare) at least once a month when the tires are cold. Always follow the inflation pressure recommendations in your

owner's manual, or those on the tire information label that is located in the glove box, on a door jamb, or on the underside of the trunk lid. Do not use the inflation pressure molded into the tire sidewall; this is the pressure needed to achieve the tire's rated load capacity, and it may or may not be the correct pressure for your particular car.

#### 2. Engine Air Filter

WHY: Your vehicle's air filter prevents dust and dirt from entering the engine. A dirty or clogged air filter restricts airflow and will reduce engine performance and fuel economy while increasing exhaust emission levels.

**WHEN:** Check the air filter every six months or 7,500 miles. Typically, your repair shop will inspect the filter at each oil change. You can check it by holding it up to a 60-watt light bulb. If you can see light through much of the filter, it is still clean enough to work effectively. However, if the light is blocked by most of the filter, replace it.

#### 3. Battery Cables/Clamps Terminals

**WHY:** Power from the battery flows to the rest of your vehicle's electrical system through the cables, clamps, and terminals. If these components and connections become corroded or loose, your car won't have the power needed to

start the engine and operate other systems.

**WHEN:** The battery cables, clamps, and connections should be inspected at every oil change. If there are signs of corrosion, or you notice other indications of electrical problems such as slow engine cranking or dimming headlights at idle, have your repair shop test the charging and starting system, and clean and tighten the battery connections as necessary.

#### 4 Windshield Washer Fluid

**WHY:** Rain, insects, grime, and other debris on your windshield will compromise your vision if they cannot be removed by your windshield wipers. A supply of the proper washer fluid will help your wipers remove these contaminants effectively.

**WHEN:** Check your washer fluid reservoir monthly and more often when you use the washers frequently. Top it up with a washer solution formulated to aid in the removal of insects and other debris, and during winter, be sure to use a solution with antifreeze protection. Finally, test the washer spray nozzles for proper operation and aim.

#### 5. Engine Oil

**WHY:** Oil is the lifeblood of your engine. Without an adequate supply of clean oil, your engine will wear more rapidly, and could even seize and be destroyed. Oil doesn't

freeze like water, but its viscosity (thickness) does increase as the mercury drops. Lighter grade oils reduce the load on your car's battery and starter, allowing more rapid cranking and starting. Lighter oils also reach critical engine lubrication areas much quicker than heavier oils, greatly reducing wear.

WHEN: Change your engine's

oil and oil filter at the specified intervals, and follow the more frequent "severe service" recommendations if your driving habits meet any of the conditions described in your owner's manual. Always use the weight of oil recommended by your vehicle's manufacturer for the existing temperature conditions. Not only will better vehicle mainåtenance improve fuel economy, in most cases it also will protect you from budget-busting repair bills. And, your savings account isn't the only thing you'll protect by paying attention to your vehicle. A car that is in top working condition is much safer for you and your passengers. There is no question that preventative car care is the best way to protect both your safety and your investment in your vehicle. To locate a quality service facility in your area, visit www.aaa.com and use the AAR Shop Locator to find a AAA Approved Auto Repair facility.

#### **DIY Car Detailing: Step by Step**

#### Before you start, make sure your car is parked in a shaded area and is cool to the touch.

#### Step 1: Pre-rinse

Thoroughly spray your car with water to wash off loose dirt and debris.

#### **Step 2:** Clean your wheels one at a time

While most wheel cleaners can be sprayed on and rinsed off, if you have caked-on dirt and brake dust, you may need to use a brush or car mitt to remove the grime. Don't use the same car mitt to clean your wheels and your painted surfaces.

#### **Step 3:** Prepare the 2-bucket car wash method

Follow the instructions on your car soap label to fill your first bucket with the correct water-to-soap ratio. Create as many suds as you can. Fill your second bucket with clean water.

#### Step 4: Apply soap

Start washing from the top of your car and work your way down. Soak your car mitt in the first bucket and wash the first section of your car. Rinse off your mitt in the second bucket. Repeat for each section.

#### Step 5: Rinse & dry

Use a hose to spray off all the remaining soap, then use microfiber towels to completely dry the car.

#### **Step 6:** Clay bar treatment

Once your car is clean and dry, work in one small section at a time and spray a clay lubricant or soapy water on your car. Flatten the clay bar into a disc and lightly rub it over the surface 4 or 5 times, making sure the area always stays wet. Use a clean microfiber towel to dry the area. Fold the clay bar to a clean side,

mold it back into a disc, and repeat process until you've gone over all the painted surfaces.

#### Step 7: Wax

Again, working in small sections, apply wax on your car and wipe it off with a clean, dry microfiber towel in a straight motion. Wipe off any excess wax with a separate dry microfiber cloth.

#### **Step 8:** Tire protectant

Following the instructions on the bottle, evenly spray your tire protectant onto the sidewall of your tires. Wipe down each wheel with a terry cloth or microfiber towel. Let the tire protectant dry for 15-30 minutes before driving.

#### How often should you detail your car?

AAA recommends detailing your car at least 2-3 times a year, but this can vary depending on how you store your car and how often you drive it.

#### AAA members get discounts when they shop online with Zymol and NAPA

- Get 45% off Zymöl car care products Handcrafted without harsh chemicals or abrasives, Zymöl's car washing and detailing products have been trusted by car enthusiasts worldwide for decades. AAA members save 45% by using the code AAA45 at checkout. AAA.com/Zymol
- Save on everything you need to detail your car at home with NAPA Auto Parts
- AAA members save 10% off the retail price of thousands of quality auto parts and accessories when shopping AAA.com/NAPA online and at participating NAPA Auto Parts stores.

#### Find Your Next Car With AAA Car Buying Service

Even under the best circumstances, buying a car can be stressful. As a AAA member, there's a way you can buy a car stress-free—the AAA Car Buying

**Research your vehicle** — Use the car buying service research tool to see price reports and photos of vehicles you're interested in. Search for new or used cars from our participating network of dealers.

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**Visit the Dealer** — Call and set up an appointment at the dealership to test drive the car you want, with no obligation to buy.

Pay a price that works for you.

#### Access AAA Services Wherever You Are

We're always with you, even when you are on the go. The Auto Club App puts your favorite AAA services and resources in the palm of your hand. Use the app to book your flight, car rental, hotel, or cruise; or request 24-7 AAA roadside assistance. You can also access your AAA membership card and AAA proof of insurance electronically or compare local gas prices, and so much more! Text APP10 to 86792 and you'll receive a link to download the app.







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#### **AAA EMERGENCY ROAD SERVICE RULES**

AAA's 24-hour Emergency Road Service means there is always a person to call in case of an automotive emergency. We'll rescue you and your vehicle to get you back on the road as quickly as possible with a dedicated network of more than 13,000 Emergency Road Service facilities across the U.S.A. and Canada.

AAA assistance includes changing a flat tire, jumping a dead battery or mobile battery testing and replacement service, delivering emergency gasoline or fuel, lockout and key service, or when all else fails, towing your car. We'll provide the assistance to help you get behind the wheel again as quickly and safely as possible. No one provides better roadside assistance than AAA.

AAA Emergency Road Service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and is designed to assist you in an emergency when your vehicle, or the vehicle in which you are a passenger, becomes disabled. Your membership coverage applies only to those emergency and towing services listed in this guide. AAA coverage entitles each AAA member in the Primary Member's household up to 4 calls per membership year. After 4 calls, members will be charged for service.

#### Your AAA Membership Card is Your Key to Service

To receive emergency road service, you must present your AAA membership card or dues receipt and a matching driver's license, or other state or federally issued photo identification to the independent-service provider when the service vehicle arrives. Your identification may be scanned or swiped to verify your identity and authenticity of identification.

Service is available only to the person named on the membership card, who is the driver of or a passenger in the vehicle at the time of the vehicle disablement. AAA memberships are not transferable, and membership service is not provided to nonmembers. Other members of your household who want emergency road service must have their own membership cards, in their own names, to obtain service.

Unless a valid AAA membership card and matching valid driver's license or other state or federally issued photo identification are presented at the time of service, you will be required to pay for the service provided at commercial rates. A non-refundable service fee applies each time you use roadside assistance for the first three days of your membership. See AAA.com/servicefee for fee amount.

#### To Obtain Service

AAA is only a phone call or click away! In the case of an automotive emergency, call the AAA number listed on your AAA membership card. You'll be connected to our 24-hour dispatch center or the AAA club in the area from where you are calling. You can also request emergency-road service online at AAA.com, or via the Auto Club App, which can be downloaded free of charge. To help speed our response, be prepared to:

- Provide your name, membership number and your club code listed on your membership card.
- Give the exact location of your disabled vehicle and the nature of the trouble.
- Provide the vehicle's year, make, color and license plate number.
- If possible, provide a telephone number where you can be reached.

#### Allowable Roadside Assistance Calls

Each AAA cardholder is entitled to four (4) emergency-road service calls or reimbursements for personal, non-commercial use per membership year at no charge, provided the calls meet the conditions described in this guide. There will be a service charge for each additional service call after the fourth call or reimbursement. AAA may require immediate payment of a service charge by credit or debit card for Classic benefit level service before providing emergency-road service on the fifth or subsequent service request in a membership year.

Additional charges for emergency-road service beyond the Classic benefit level, such as towing beyond 3 miles, the cost of emergency fuel and excess vehicle locksmith services, will be payable by the member at the time of service. If the member is unable to provide a valid credit or debit card to AAA at the time-of-service request or the charge is not approved by the credit or debit card company, AAA may send service on a C.O.D. basis, meaning all charges payable by the member will be paid directly to the independent-service provider at the time of service. If a cardholder has an unpaid service-charge balance and contacts AAA for emergency road service. AAA may require immediate payment of both the unpaid balance and the service charge for the current service call before providing service. The nonpayment of a service charge may result in cancellation of membership.

#### Machanical First Aid

The AAA emergency service representative will make minor mechanical repairs or adjustments to place a vehicle in safe-driving condition. If needed and available, parts and the labor cost to install them are to be paid by the member. If the vehicle cannot be put into condition to proceed under its own power, towing service, as described in Towing Services, will be provided.

#### **Flat Tire Service**

If the vehicle's spare tire is inflated and serviceable, it will be installed in place of the vehicle's flat tire. If not, towing provisions will apply.

#### **AAA Battery Service**

AAA Battery Service is a mobile battery testing and replacement service. The AAA Battery Service technician will test and assess the vehicle's battery and electrical system. If the existing battery fails the test and the member would like to have the battery replaced, the member can purchase a AAA battery. The technician will install a new battery, if available, that meets or exceeds the vehicle's original specifications. Each AAA Premium battery is backed by a limited warranty that includes a 3-year free replacement guarantee. AAA Battery Service is generally provided by independent-service providers and is only available in select areas, during select hours. Batteries are available for most makes and models. Battery prices vary depending on vehicle make and model. Copies of the warranties are available for inspection from the technician at any time upon request. Membership emergency road service terms and conditions apply.

#### **Fuel Delivery Service**

An emergency supply of fuel will be delivered to a member's disabled vehicle enabling the member to reach the nearest service station. The member will be charged for the fuel at current pump prices. Specific quantities, brand, or octane ratings cannot be promised, nor can availability.

AAA Plus provides sufficient free emergency fuel to enable you to reach the nearest service station, when your vehicle runs out of fuel.

#### **Towing Services**

When your vehicle cannot be safely driven after attempting any of the listed emergency services, your vehicle will be towed (once per breakdown) to the facility rendering the service, or up to 3 miles in any direction from the point of disablement at no charge. Charges for service that exceed the benefits listed will be at the prevailing hourly or mileage rate for the region where service is provided. In instances when your vehicle becomes disabled while towing a light-duty trailer, service will be provided for the trailer. You will be required to pay for trailer towing. All vehicles must be free of snow and ice prior to towing.

AAA Plus provides up to 100 miles of free towing, in any direction from the point of disablement, to the repair facility of your choice.

AAA Premier increases one tow to a maximum 200 miles plus a free one-day rental car.

#### Extrication/Winching

Your vehicle will be pulled out of a ditch by being extricated/winched when it can be safely reached from a normally traveled or established thoroughfare (driveways must be cleared of snow or ice). If special equipment, additional service personnel or vehicles are required, the associated costs will be at your expense.

AAA Plus provides a second truck and second driver, for up to one hour, if your situation requires it.

#### **Emergency Check Acceptance**

Club and contract facilities will accept payment by check, credit or debit card for payment of emergency-road service charges up to \$250 per occurrence.

#### **Lockout Service**

If your keys are locked inside the vehicle, services will be sent to gain entrance. If your keys are lost, broken, or the service provider cannot gain entrance to your vehicle, locksmith services up to \$60 or, if a AAA locksmith is not available, reimbursement for locksmith service up to \$60, will be provided. In cases where the vehicle cannot be made operable, towing services will be provided according to our towing provision.

AAA Plus provides up to a total of \$100 in parts and labor to gain entry or make vehicle operable.

AAA Premier provides up to \$150 for Vehicle Locksmith, \$100 Home Lockout Service reimbursement.

#### **Service Limitations**

Emergency-road service will be limited to that which can be provided with equipment ordinarily used by the independent-service provider serving the area. Service will not be provided when the disabled vehicle cannot be safely reached or serviced without damage to the vehicle or servicing equipment.

#### **SERVICE INCLUSIONS**

Towing service is only provided for a covered vehicle disablement. Service may not be used as a substitute for regular maintenance necessary to keep a vehicle in good operating condition. AAA cannot render service repeatedly to a vehicle in need of repair. Service is intended for personal, non-commercial use, and only provided for a covered vehicle disablement. An individual's AAA membership may not be used by a business or organization to provide roadside-assistance service for its customers, employees or vehicles, including, but not limited to taxicabs, limousines, shuttles and other commercial vehicles for hire

The following services are not provided under the membership benefit:

- Servicing or extrication of vehicles on inaccessible streets, back roads, driveways, parking lots or alleys that become snowbound or flooded.
- Shoveling snow from around a vehicle or cleaning a road or driveway.
- Service to a vehicle located in an area not regularly traveled by private-passenger vehicles (such as beach, open field, creek bed, private logging or forest service road).
- Towing to or from auto dismantlers, salvage yards, repair facility to repair facility or from one storage location to another.
- Towing for the purpose of transporting vehicles due to a purchase, sale, renovation, auction transaction, car show exhibition, charitable donation, relocation or any other similar situation.
- Service to a vehicle that is loaded, altered or constructed in such a way as to cause damage or create a hazard while being serviced.
- Charges related to impound or stolen-vehicle recovery, towing or storage.
- Tire rotation, the installation or removal of snow tires or tire chains.
- Cost of vehicle locksmith services beyond what is necessary to place the vehicle in a condition to be safely driven (such as duplicating keys, nonemergency lock repairs and re-keying of vehicle locks).
- Service in situations where the membership card and matching valid driver's license or other state or federally issued photo identification is not provided to the service driver. You must provide a driver's license for identification if you are the driver.
- Use of two or more roadside-assistance service calls to extend the member tow-mileage benefit for the same breakdown.
- AAA Plus® members will be responsible for any additional mileage charges beyond 100 driving miles of towing per roadside-assistance call. AAA Premier® members will be responsible for any additional mileage charges beyond 200 driving miles of towing on one roadside-assistance service call per AAA Premier® household per membership year and beyond 100 driving miles of towing on the remaining allowable roadside-assistance service calls.
- Towing, extrication/winching and tire-change service for RVs and towing and extrication and winching services for motorcycles, unless the member has optional AAA Plus RV° or AAA Premier RV° coverage.
- AAA Plus RV® members are entitled up to \$500 per allowable service call, and up to \$1,000 total per household per membership year on allowable RV/ Motorcycle service calls. Members will be responsible for all other costs of roadside service above that amount.
- AAA Plus®, AAA Premier®, AAA Plus RV® and AAA Premier RV® emergency-road service is available 7 calendar days after purchase date if paid in full.
- Without limiting any other rights or remedies it may have, AAA may seek reimbursement from a member or associate for roadside-assistance services fraudulently or wrongfully obtained by the member or associate. Primary members are responsible for the conduct and the service demands of their associates.

Extended Roadside Assistance services for AAA Plus®, AAA Plus® RV, AAA Premier® or AAA Premier® RV benefit levels, where available, and certain AAA Premier benefits are effective seven (7) calendar days after processing, and receipt of the full payment due.

#### **Special Assistance**

When your vehicle cannot be made operable upon providing the services listed in this guide, AAA will assist you in finding the nearest open place of repair. If a repair facility cannot be located, we will assist you in obtaining lodging or alternate transportation, which will be at your expense.

#### Eligible Vehicles

Service applies to 4-wheeled motor-driven vehicles of the passenger, pleasure or recreational type that

were in operation immediately prior to disablement - provided that services can be safely delivered. If specific towing equipment is requested, but not required to safely transport the vehicle, the associated cost will be at your expense.

Automobiles, pickup trucks, sport utility vehicles, vans and minivans are eligible for those services which can be safely performed with equipment available from the independent-service provider, including slings, wheel-lift devices, car carriers (flatbeds) and dolly wheels. Dual-wheel unloaded pickup trucks are eligible for all services except tire services.

Motorcycle coverage is available with optional AAA Plus RV® coverage. Motorcycles (as defined by registration) must be licensed for highway use.

Recreational Vehicles (RVs) are eligible for service, with the exception of towing, extrication/winching and tire-change service. Towing, extrication/winching and tire service for RVs is available with optional AAA Plus RV® and AAA Premier RV® coverage. RVs include dual-wheel motorhomes, camper vans and cabover campers, motorcycles, and recreational trailers including camping trailers, fifth- wheel trailers and empty horse trailers. Boat trailers, personal watercraft trailers and ATV trailers must be either empty or transporting recreational vehicles or equipment. Utility trailers must be carrying recreational equipment (for non-commercial use). Commercial trailers are excluded. Service does not include transportation of horses

#### Unable to Locate the Vehicle

If a service provider does not appear within the time stated by the AAA customer service representative, please call AAA back to let us know. The service provider may not have been able to locate your vehicle.

#### **Cancel Unnecessary Calls**

If the requested service is no longer needed and the AAA service representative has not yet arrived, please call AAA immediately, as each service call is charged against the member's record.

#### Weather Emergencies

During severe weather conditions, AAA reserves the right to suspend service temporarily if the vehicle is already in a place of safety, such as a private or public garage, driveway, etc. AAA will provide service to the vehicle after the weather emergency is over.

#### Alternate Service

If you have followed the procedure outlined to obtain emergency-road service, and AAA service is not available, you may obtain your own service, pay for it and submit the original receipt to your AAA club within 60 days. Reimbursement will be based on the prevailing commercial rate for the region where the vehicle was disabled. In instances where the AAA contractor access is legally restricted (toll roads, limited-access highways), reimbursement will be provided for all covered services. If AAA service was available, but not requested, reimbursement may be limited to the amount the club would normally have paid for the covered service.

No reimbursements will be made by AAA on charges incurred when a member's vehicle is removed from the street or under direction of the police because of illegal parking, traffic violations, or other illegal activities. Storage charges and cleanup fees from the scene of a traffic accident are also not eligible for reimbursement.

Members having more than 4 road-service calls during their membership year are not eligible for alternate service reimbursement.

#### Member's Risk

Before servicing any vehicle when there is a possibility of damage to the vehicle or other property as a result of the service, a service representative will inform the member that the member must assume the risk of damage. Any such circumstances should be fully recorded on a release form.

While AAA-affiliated service providers are selected to provide the best emergency-road service to our members, such providers are independent contractors and are not agents of AAA. AAA assumes no responsibility for any injuries to persons or property, including damage to the member's vehicle, as a result of an emergency-road service request.

AAA will make every reasonable effort to work out a settlement between a member and an affiliated service provider of the member's claim for damages resulting from unsatisfactory emergency road service. Please contact AAA as soon as possible, and no longer than 10 days of the incident, and prior to repairs so that a prompt investigation can be made while all facts are available.