

Diagnosing why the engine won't start falls into two areas, depending on what you hear when you turn the ignition switch to the START (III) position:

- You hear nothing, or almost nothing. The engine's starter motor does not operate at all, or operates very slowly.
- You can hear the starter motor operating normally, or the starter motor sounds like it is spinning faster than normal, but the engine does not start up and run.

Nothing Happens or the Starter Motor Operates Very Slowly

When you turn the ignition switch to the START (III) position, you do not hear the normal noise of the engine trying to start. You may hear a clicking sound, a series of clicks, or nothing at all.

Check these things:

- Check the transmission interlock. If you have a manual transmission, the clutch pedal must be pushed all the way to the floor or the starter will not operate. With an automatic transmission, it must be in Park or neutral.
- Turn the ignition switch to the ON (II) position. Turn on the headlights, and check their brightness. If the headlights are very dim or do not come on at all, the battery is discharged. See **Jump Starting** on page [263](#) .

- Turn the ignition switch to the START (III) position. If the headlights do not dim, check the condition of the fuses. If the fuses are OK, there is probably something wrong with the electrical circuit for the ignition switch or starter motor. You will need a qualified technician to determine the problem. See **Emergency Towing** on page [276](#) .

If the headlights dim noticeably or go out when you try to start the engine, either the battery is discharged or the connections are corroded. Check the condition of the battery and terminal connections (see page [252](#)). You can then try jump starting the vehicle from a booster battery (see page [263](#)).

If the Engine Won't Start

The Starter Operates Normally

In this case, the starter motor's speed sounds normal, or even faster than normal, when you turn the ignition switch to the START (III) position, but the engine does not run.

- Are you using a properly coded key? An improperly coded key will cause the immobilizer system indicator in the instrument panel to blink rapidly (see page [77](#)).
- Are you using the proper starting procedure? Refer to **Starting the Engine** on page [190](#) .

- Do you have fuel? Check the fuel gauge; the low fuel indicator may not be working.
- There may be an electrical problem, such as no power to the fuel pump. Check all the fuses (see page [270](#)).

If you find nothing wrong, you will need a qualified technician to find the problem. See **Emergency Towing** on page [276](#) .

Although this seems like a simple procedure, you should take several precautions.

⚠ WARNING

A battery can explode if you do not follow the correct procedure, seriously injuring anyone nearby.

Keep all sparks, open flames, and smoking materials away from the battery.

You cannot start your vehicle with an automatic transmission by pushing or pulling it.

To jump start your vehicle:

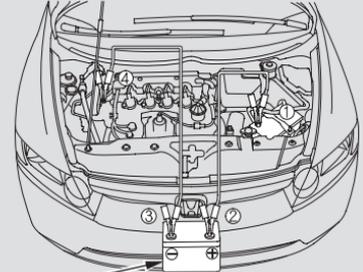
1. Open the hood, and check the physical condition of the battery. In very cold weather, check the condition of the electrolyte. If it seems slushy or frozen, do not try jump starting until it thaws.

NOTICE

If a battery sits in extreme cold, the electrolyte inside can freeze. Attempting to jump start with a frozen battery can cause it to rupture.

2. Turn off all the electrical accessories: heater, A/C, audio system, lights, etc. Put the transmission in neutral (M/T) or Park (A/T), and set the parking brake.

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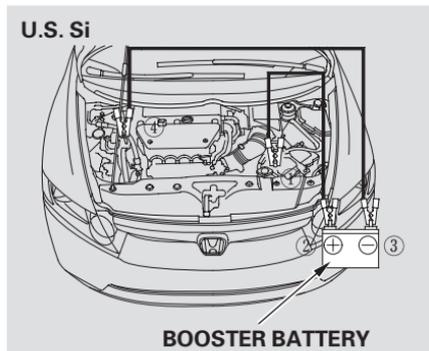


BOOSTER BATTERY

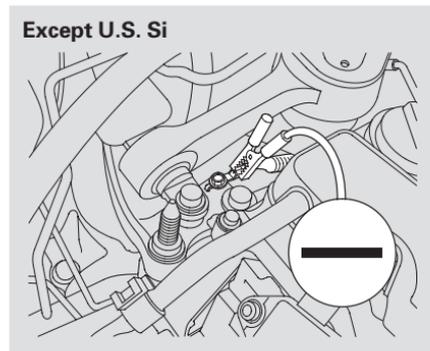
The numbers in the illustrations show you the order to connect the jumper cables.

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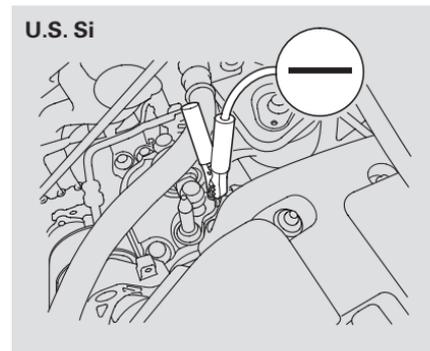
Jump Starting



3. Connect one jumper cable to the positive (+) terminal on your battery. Connect the other end to the positive (+) terminal on the booster battery.



4. Connect the second jumper cable to the negative (-) terminal on the booster battery. Connect the other end to the grounding strap as shown. Do not connect this jumper cable to any other part of the engine.
5. If the booster battery is in another vehicle, have an assistant start that vehicle and run it at a fast idle.



6. Start the vehicle. If the starter motor still operates slowly, check that the jumper cables have good metal-to-metal contact.

Jump Starting, If the Engine Overheats

7. Once your vehicle is running, disconnect the negative cable from your vehicle, then from the booster battery. Disconnect the positive cable from your vehicle, then from the booster battery.

Keep the ends of the jumper cables away from each other and any metal on the vehicle until everything is disconnected. Otherwise, you may cause an electrical short.

If the Engine Overheats

The reading of the vehicle's temperature gauge should stay in the midrange. If it climbs to the red mark, you should determine the reason (hot day, driving up a steep hill, etc.).

If the vehicle overheats, you should take immediate action. The only indication may be the temperature gauge climbing to or above the red mark. Or you may see steam or spray coming from under the hood.

NOTICE

Driving with the temperature gauge reading at the red mark can cause serious damage to the engine.

WARNING

Steam and spray from an overheated engine can seriously scald you.

Do not open the hood if steam is coming out.

1. Safely pull to the side of the road. Put the transmission in neutral (M/T) or Park (A/T), and set the parking brake. Turn off all accessories, and turn on the hazard warning indicators.
2. If you see steam and/or spray coming from under the hood, turn off the engine. Wait until you see no more signs of steam or spray, then open the hood.

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