



A Battery of Ways to Protect Your Car from Summer Heat

5 timely tips to help you take a vacation from car trouble

You get a dashboard cover and park under the shade of a tree whenever possible. But what else can you do to protect your car from summer heat? There are many precautions you should take as mild spring temperatures give way to sweltering summer days. After all, experts say that more batteries fail in July than in January because summer heat can kill a battery 33% faster than winter cold.

So slather on the sun screen, find your coolest pair of sunglasses and let's check under the hood:

1. It might "only" be in the 90s outside, but inside your car's engine compartment, the heat can soar to 140 degrees or higher which can lead to complete failure of a weak battery. As a rule of thumb, if your car's battery is more than three years old, you should get it tested by a trained technician to determine how long it might last. This test can easily be performed at any AAA Car Care Center free of charge. If you need a new battery, the technician can replace it. If you happen to get stranded this summer, AAA Mobile Battery Service will come to solve your battery problem on the spot- and if necessary, replace it with a high quality AAA battery at a members-only discount. For more information on the AAA Mobile Battery Service, visit AAA.com/Battery.
2. Make a visual inspection of the outside of your battery case. Is it bulging, cracked or leaking fluid? If so, it needs replacing. Immediately. While you're looking, check to see if your battery is the older type with removable filler caps on top. If so, hot weather can make the battery fluid inside evaporate. A good idea is to have your old battery replaced with a maintenance-free, high performance battery from AAA prior to the summer driving season. These batteries are made in the USA to meet or exceed your vehicle's design and power requirements.
3. Take your A/C's temperature. Besides making for a more comfortable drive, cooler temperatures inside your car help make you more alert driver. Make sure your car's air conditioning system is operating properly and has enough refrigerant level to handle extreme summer heat. Also, check to see if your A/C

system has a filter that keeps outside pollens and irritants from entering the interior of your car. Inspect and replace this filter if necessary. You'll breathe easier.

4. Your engine has its own cooling system (radiator, water pump, hoses, etc.) which works hard to prevent overheating during summer driving. You can help avoid summertime boil overs by having this cooling system "flushed" and its coolant replaced. See your owner's manual to determine the correct service interval for your vehicle.
5. Heat can tire out your tires, too. Driving on under-inflated tires affects your car's handling and braking. It can also cause tires to overheat, which increases the chance of a blowout. Check the pressure in your tires when they are cool. While you're down there, look at the sidewalls of your tires to check for any cuts or cracking. If you see any, have your tires checked by a professional mechanic immediately. Only inflate your tires to the pressure recommended by the vehicle's manufacturer (found in the owner's manual). Never over inflate them.

Don't risk being stranded this summer, stop by a AAA Car Care Center to make sure your vehicle is protected from the summer heat. AAA members get a 5% discount on services, a 24 month/24,000 mile parts and labor warranty and a free maintenance inspection upon request with any paid service. To find a AAA Car Care Center near you, visit AAA.com/CarCare.