A Battery Can Become A Time-Bomb

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Most people, particularly those in the northern climates, take for granted jump-starting a battery. The truth is one should never take this practice for granted.

WHAT'S THE DANGER?

A battery can turn into a bomb while it is being boosted. A lead acid, wet cell battery
generates increased hydrogen and oxygen when it is being charged. All it takes to set
off this explosive combination is a spark from static electricity, a cigarette, or the booster
cable connection itself.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

The following is a checklist of do's and don'ts. The correct procedure to boost a battery is the "Battery Boost Bible" (BBB).

- Always wear safety goggles to protect yourself from acid and fragments in case of an explosion. It's a good idea to store safety goggles with your jumper cables.
- Check to see if the battery is really dead, or if the terminals and clamps might just be
  corroded.
- Restore correct fluid levels to the battery. If you are dealing with the more recent sealed type batteries, it is not always possible to restore these fluid levels. If this is the case, the battery should be replaced.
- Make sure the battery is not frozen. Trying to jump a frozen

battery could result in an explosion.

- The electrical systems of both vehicles must be the same voltage and both must have a negative ground. Mis-matched batteries are less likely than they were 20 years ago but six-volt batteries are still in use today. Using a 12-volt battery to boost a six-volt battery could cause the six-volt battery to explode.
- Park the vehicles close together, but not touching. Put both vehicles in “park” or in “neutral”, with parking brakes set.
- Turn off the engine, and any electrical accessories including interior lights on both vehicles.
- Remove the battery vent caps to allow any previously built-up gas to escape. Then cover the holes with a damp rag or replace the caps.
- Do not lean over the battery at any time.
- Connect the red clamps to the positive “+” posts of each battery. Reverse connection causes a battery explosion hazard.
- Connect one black clamp to the negative terminal of the good battery.
- Connect the other black clamp to a good ground; a clean, unpainted spot on the engine, frame or body of the disabled vehicle, placing it as far away as possible from the battery. This will prevent sparks from occurring.
- When connecting the clamps, do not allow them to touch any other metal. This would not only cause a spark which could trigger an explosion, but it could destroy parts of the vehicle’s electrical and computer system.
- Start the vehicle with the good battery.
- Start the disabled vehicle.
- Remove the cables in reverse order.
- Detach the “-” cable first from the disabled car’s frame.
- Then take the “-” off the good car’s negative terminal.
- Remove the disabled car’s”+” cable.
- Then remove the live car’s”+” connection.

Other tips:

Avoid any sparks or open flame. This means no smoking!

Additional PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) such as a face shield, rubber boots, or special rubber gloves may be required under various circumstances.