



# How to Disconnect a Car or Truck Battery

It's always a good idea to disconnect the...

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## INTRODUCTION

It's always a good idea to disconnect the battery before working on your vehicle's ignition system or other electrical components. (If you need to fully remove or replace the battery, [follow this guide instead.](#))

This guide uses a Toyota Corolla to demonstrate the procedure, which is similar for most motor vehicles.

**Note:** Disconnecting your battery may erase certain stored settings, such as radio/navigation presets and power window memory. Consult your owner's manual for details.



### TOOLS:

- [Socket Set](#) (1)
- [Adjustable Wrench](#) (1)
- [Leather Work Gloves](#) (1)
- [Shop Towels or Rags](#) (1)



### PARTS:

- [Battery terminal grease](#) (1)

## Step 1 — How to Disconnect a Car or Truck Battery



**⚠ Before you begin, switch the ignition **off** and remove the key.**

- Make sure the transmission is in Park (or first gear if you have a manual gearbox) and that the parking brake is engaged.

**⚠ Put on work gloves and safety goggles if you have them available.**

- In addition to being dirty, the battery contains corrosive agents and may release flammable gases.
- Gloves can also help protect you from an unpleasant shock if you accidentally mishandle the battery.

## Step 2 — Open the hood (bonnet)



- i** Most motor vehicle batteries are located in the engine bay, under the hood (a.k.a. bonnet). If your battery is located elsewhere, [skip to Step 5](#).
- If you're not sure, simply continue reading.
  - Pull the hood release lever. It's usually located inside the car, near the steering wheel.

## Step 3



- Raise the hood by simultaneously lifting and pressing up on the hood latch release (usually located beneath the front edge of the hood, near the center or center-right).

## Step 4



- i** At this point, depending on the vehicle, your hood may raise and support itself automatically.
- If not, use one hand to hold the hood open temporarily while securing the hood with the prop rod:
    - Lift one end of the prop rod up or out to release it from the front area of the engine bay.
    - Swing the end of the prop rod up and slide it into the cutout on the underside of the hood.

**⚠** Make sure the hood is well secured before you let go with your other hand, or it may fall and injure you.

## Step 5



- Locate the battery. It's normally rectangular and roughly 8-14" across.
- i** The battery may be easy to spot, or it may lie under a plastic cover—usually marked with positive (+) and/or negative (-) symbols.
  - On some models, the battery may be located in the trunk—usually under or behind the trunk lining. Look around or consult your owner's manual.

## Step 6



- Using a correctly sized wrench or socket, loosen the nut/bolt securing the cable on the **negative** battery terminal.
- ⚠ **Always disconnect the negative cable first (before removing the positive cable).**
- ⓘ The negative terminal may be marked with a minus (-) symbol, or it may be unmarked. The positive terminal is almost always marked with a plus (+) symbol, often in red.
- If the nut or bolt spins without loosening, it may be necessary to counter-hold the opposite side with a second wrench or socket.

## Step 7



- Remove the cable from the negative battery terminal.
- ⓘ When connecting the battery, it is advised to roughen up the battery terminals and clean the cable clamp beforehand.
- 🔧 Upon reconnecting the battery, make sure to seal the pole connections with an appropriate terminal grease or terminal spray.

## Step 8



**⚠** Prevent the cable from making accidental contact with the terminal by pushing it aside and/or wrapping the cable clamp with a dry rag.

To reassemble your device, follow these instructions in reverse order.