



211 West Wacker Drive
Suite 1700
Chicago, Illinois 60606
1-800-331-2020
www.preventblindness.org



AUTO BATTERY SAFETY FACTS

The Battery's Purpose:

A motor vehicle battery does the following things.

- Activates the starter and ignition system so the engine will turn over;
- Provides extra power when the charging system (alternator) is not capable of meeting the needs of the vehicle; and
- Controls voltage bursts when the air conditioner or radio are turned on.

Battery Safety Precautions

To prevent an accident that could cause serious eye injuries, you should follow several safety precautions when jump-starting, inspecting or testing the battery.

- Protect your eyes with ANSI Z-87.1 splash-proof safety goggles when working on or near a battery.

- Never work on a battery near an open flame such as a match, lighter or cigarette. Batteries contain hydrogen and oxygen: a spark could ignite them, causing the battery to explode.
- Check the battery for damage—cracks, corrosive materials and loose wires, once a month.
- Make sure your jumper cables are rust and corrosion-free with no exposed wires. Cables repaired with electrical tape are unsafe.
- Do not drop metallic objects on a battery, as a spark can ignite the gases produced by the battery.
- When jump-starting, inspecting or testing your battery, never lean over the battery—even if you are wearing safety goggles. The battery could explode and damage your face and body.

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness America is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness America touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening training, community and patient service programs and research.

- Squeezing the battery casing may cause the sulfuric acid stored inside the battery to spill through the vents. Use a battery carrier when available and always handle with extreme care.
- Dispose of auto batteries properly. Some service stations and stores where batteries are sold will dispose of the old batteries for free or for a nominal charge.
- Call a professional if you are uncertain or if you cannot remember how to jump-start your car correctly.

Chemical Burns

- Flush the eye for at least 15 minutes. The affected eye should be held open and flushed with the first available “drinkable” liquid: water, milk, juice or a soft drink.
- After flushing the eye, seek immediate medical attention.
- Do not cover or bandage the eye. The emergency room doctor will have to waste valuable time removing bandages.
- Contact lens wearers: should not attempt to remove their lens. Begin flushing the injured eye, allowing the liquid to dislodge the lens gently.

Cuts and Punctures to the Eye or Eyelid

- Cover the eye lightly to protect it from dirt particles and see a doctor right away.
- Do not flush the eye with any liquid. Flushing may remove fluids that maintain the eye's structure and function.
- Do not try to remove an object stuck in the eye. You could cause even worse damage to the eye.

Specks in the Eye

- Lift the upper eyelid outward and down over the eyelid.
- Let your tears wash out the speck or particle. If the speck does not wash out, keep the eye closed, bandage lightly and see a doctor as soon as possible.

**Call the PBA
Vision Health
Resource Center
at 1-800-331-2020
to receive your free
Jump-Start Sticker**

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