

Troubleshooting Basic Charging System Problems

Problem	Cause	Solution
Noisy alternator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loose mountings• Loose drive pulley• Worn bearings• Brush noise• Internal circuits shorted (High pitched whine)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tighten mounting bolts• Tighten pulley• Replace alternator• Replace alternator• Replace alternator
Squeal when starting engine or accelerating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Glazed or loose belt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replace or adjust belt
Indicator light remains on or ammeter indicates discharge (engine running)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broken belt• Broken or disconnected wires• Internal alternator problems• Defective voltage regulator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Install belt• Repair or connect wiring• Replace alternator• Replace voltage regulator/alternator
Car light bulbs continually burn out—battery needs water continually	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alternator/regulator overcharging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replace voltage regulator/alternator
Car lights flare on acceleration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Battery low• Internal alternator/regulator problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Charge or replace battery• Replace alternator/regulator
Low voltage output (alternator light flickers continually or ammeter needle wanders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loose or worn belt• Dirty or corroded connections• Internal alternator/regulator problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Replace or adjust belt• Clean or replace connections• Replace alternator/regulator