How to Replace a Corroded Car Battery Terminal

This guide will teach you how to safely replace a corroded terminal on your car battery.

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INTRODUCTION

Is your car having trouble starting? Is there corrosion build-up on your terminals, preventing a proper connection? This handy guide will help you remove the troublesome terminal and replace it with a brand new one.

Warning: It is dangerous to work on a vehicle battery. Exercise extreme caution when following this guide.

TOOLS:
- Shop Towels or Rags (1)
- Adjustable Wrench (1)

PARTS:
- Car Battery Terminal (1)
Step 1 — Car Battery Terminal

⚠️ Remember to remove your car key from the ignition and shut off the car before performing this guide.

- Locate the terminals on the top of the car battery. Next to each terminal is a positive(+) or negative(-) sign, indicating the charge.

- The positive terminal looks to be in working order, but the negative end has a lot of corrosion buildup. This terminal needs to be replaced.
Step 2

- Find the nut located on the side of the terminal.

- Using an adjustable wrench, rotate the nut counterclockwise to loosen it.
  
  ![Warning icon]
  Use an appropriately-sized wrench or socket, not channel locks as shown in the photo.

  ![Warning icon]
  You do not need to loosen the nut all the way off the bolt, but just enough to loosen the terminal's grip on the node.
Step 3

⚠ **Always remember to remove the negative terminal first before the positive terminal.** This will prevent shorting to the ground and possibly causing shock or a fire.

- Carefully use a rag to lift up the terminal off of the battery node.

⚠ Be cautious when handling battery corrosion, as it can irritate the skin and is harmful if it comes in contact with your eyes.

- Place the terminal on a rag or towel and **make sure it doesn't come in contact with the battery node.**
Step 4

- On the positive terminal, locate the nut along the side.
- Using the wrench, rotate the nut counterclockwise.
  - You do not need to fully loosen the nut off the bolt, but just enough for the terminal to be easily removed from the node.
Step 5

- Using a rag, carefully remove the positive terminal from the battery node.
- Place the terminal on a rag or towel, and make sure it does not come into contact with the battery node.

Step 6

- On the negative terminal, locate the nut on the side facing upwards.
- Using the wrench, rotate the nut counterclockwise and remove it from the bolt.
Step 7

- Take the wire plate on top and remove it carefully from the bolt.
  - At this point, it is fine to handle the metal plate with your hands since the terminals are disconnected from the battery and there is nothing completing the circuit.

- Remove the bottom wire plate from the bolt, placing it carefully to the side.

Step 8

- Set aside the old battery terminal, and replace it with the new one.

- Replace the wire plates in the order they were taken off.
  - Although it is not necessary that the plates be placed in the same order again, it is generally a good idea to go with the order that it came in.
Step 9

- Place the flat washer and the screw-on head that came with the battery terminal onto the vertical bolt.

- Tighten the head clockwise and make sure the wire plates are secured.

ℹ️ Not all battery terminal packs come with a washer and screw-on head. If your pack comes with a nut, use the wrench and tighten the bolt clockwise.
Step 10

- Using a rag, place the positive terminal back onto the positive node.

Step 11

- Place the negative terminal back onto the negative node.
Step 12

- On the negative terminal, use the wrench to rotate the side nut clockwise to tighten it.

- Next, perform the same action on the side nut of the positive terminal.

  To ensure a secure connection, be sure the nut is snug and that the terminal can't come off easily.