

TOP TIPS FOR SERVICING AGM BATTERIES IN TODAY'S POWER-HUNGRY VEHICLES

Modern vehicles demand far more from their batteries than simply starting the engine — and that reality affects everyone from the retail counter to the service bay. Vehicles with start-stop technology, advanced safety systems, infotainment, and increasing electrification have made the 12-volt battery a critical component of overall vehicle performance, reliability, and safety. As a result, Absorbent Glass Mat (AGM) batteries are now found in roughly one in four OE vehicles on the road and are common across a wide range of vehicles, from traditional internal combustion engines to hybrids and electric vehicles.

For retail locations, repair shops, and service professionals alike, understanding how AGM batteries differ from traditional flooded batteries is essential. Proper testing, correct replacement, and clear customer communication can help reduce comebacks, improve diagnostic accuracy, and build long-term customer confidence. The following tips highlight best practices for servicing AGM batteries in today's evolving vehicle service and repair landscape.

1

Begin every battery service with accurate testing.

Test every battery. Whether the interaction starts at the retail counter or in the service bay, effective battery service should always begin with testing — not assumptions. AGM batteries require testers and chargers that can accurately identify AGM chemistry and evaluate battery condition. Using outdated equipment or incorrect settings can lead to misleading results, unnecessary replacements, missed failures, or comebacks.

In cases of repeated battery discharge, it can also be important to check for excessive parasitic draw. Modern vehicles with advanced electronics can place a constant load on the battery, which may lead to ongoing drain even when the vehicle is not in use.

Testing also plays an important role in warranty validation and customer trust. In some cases, a battery may benefit from a full charge before testing, particularly if the vehicle has been jump-started or driven primarily on short trips. If possible, a full vehicle system test will help ensure you accurately diagnose a customer's issue. Taking the time to test properly helps ensure that you are solving the right problem for the customer.

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Replace like for like — AGM must be replaced with AGM.

If a vehicle was originally equipped with an AGM battery, it must be replaced with another AGM battery to meet the vehicle's electrical demands and maintain proper system function.

AGM batteries are engineered to support all start-stop applications, higher electrical loads, frequent cycling, and advanced vehicle systems. Replacing an AGM battery with a flooded battery can lead to warning lights, inconsistent performance, and premature battery failure. Explaining the importance of replacing like-for-like helps customers understand why the correct battery matters beyond price alone.

Always replace an AGM battery with an AGM battery and never replace an AGM battery with an EFB or standard SLI battery.

3

Understand when AGM is the best choice — even beyond OE.

Some vehicles are equipped with Enhanced Flooded Batteries (EFBs) as the OE battery, particularly in basic start-stop applications. While EFBs offer improved cycling over traditional flooded batteries, they do not provide the same level of vibration resistance, high temperature performance, or long-term durability compared to AGM batteries. In general, AGM batteries deliver longer service life and faster recharge capability — versus standard flooded batteries — due to precision engineering to meet higher electrical demands.

When vehicles have increased electrical demands, aftermarket accessories, or operate in harsh winter or extreme summer climates, upgrading to an AGM battery may be the better long-term solution. AGM batteries are also fully sealed and certified non-spillable, adding an additional safety benefit. Helping customers understand these differences allows them to make informed decisions that support vehicle performance and reliability over time.



4

Communicate battery service clearly to build customer trust.

Today's battery service often involves testing, charging, and evaluating next steps — not just immediate replacement. Customers benefit from clear explanations of test results, recommended actions, and what those outcomes mean for future reliability.

If a battery is charged rather than replaced, it's especially important to clarify that charging may restore short-term performance but does not reset the battery's overall life expectancy. It can also be helpful to explain the difference between the state of charge and the state of health. A battery may be fully charged and still be near the end of its service life, which is why testing results should always be viewed in context. Setting clear expectations at the counter or during vehicle write-up helps prevent misunderstandings, reduces comebacks, and reinforces confidence in the service provided.

5

Pay attention to installation details and system resets.

Some modern vehicles may require battery registration or reset, or recalibrating systems after replacement. Failing to complete these steps can lead to electrical issues, misdiagnoses, customer dissatisfaction, or comebacks. It is important to check if a vehicle requires battery registration or reset before you start a battery replacement.

Physical installation details matter as well. Proper group size, secure hold-downs, correct terminal connections, and attention to auxiliary batteries all contribute to long-term battery performance. Many vehicles now rely on multiple batteries to meet increasing electrical demands, making it critical to ensure that all required batteries are tested and serviced correctly.

6

Stock and prepare for the vehicles in your market.

Battery service success starts before the vehicle enters the bay. Shops and parts stores should regularly review the most common vehicles in their region and ensure they stock the appropriate number of AGM batteries to meet growing demand.



Consumer research shows that most drivers are receptive to battery testing and proactive replacement when potential issues are identified. Testing every vehicle ensures you are proactively addressing a future battery failure, building trust and goodwill with your customers.

Many modern vehicles require more than one battery to operate safely and reliably, typically in the form of an auxiliary battery. Preparing for these applications helps ensure consistent service outcomes without compromise.

The demand for AGM batteries will continue to grow as vehicles place increasing demands on their electrical systems. Staying informed about the right battery for a vehicle, proper testing procedures, and special installation requirements can help retail and repair professionals deliver better service and build lasting customer trust.

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For additional information on AGM technology, visit <https://www.clarios.com/products-and-services/agm>