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## Car air conditioner not working

Air conditioning is one of those things that's easy to take for granted — until you don't have it. When it's the middle of summer and the temperature outside is rising, the last thing you want is to be stuck in a car that's blowing hot air out of the vents ... or in a car with an air conditioner that's not blowing at all. Even though Ohio is known for its moderate summer temperatures of about 80 degrees, the high levels of humidity can make it feel hotter and stickier. Being in a car without air conditioning in hot weather isn't just annoying; it can also be dangerous, since cars heat up quickly. This puts you at risk for dehydration and even heat stroke. It's even more dangerous for children, the elderly and people with compromised health, so making sure your air conditioning is in good working condition is definitely something you want to make a priority this summer. That means if you're hitting the road this summer, you'll probably want to have your mechanic give it a quick checkup before you go. Why Your Air Conditioning Isn't Working Like most things under the hood, air conditioners can stop working for a number of different reasons. Knowing what to look for can help you troubleshoot why your car A/C is not working and let you know what steps you need to take next. Let's look at five common reasons your car A/C might have stopped working. No. 1: Your Car Has a Refrigerant Leak This is one of the most common causes of car A/Cs not working. Leaks can originate from a number of different places; it could be the result of rubber seals and hoses breaking down over time, and that allows the refrigerant, Freon, to escape. The bigger danger when this happens goes beyond not having cool air in your car, but those weak spots can also allow moisture to get inside your car's cooling system and mix with the refrigerant. When moisture and Freon mix together, they create a dangerous acidic combination that can corrode your A/C system and cause permanent damage. As with any type of leak, you want to get this fixed quickly so it doesn't continue causing problems for your car. No. 2: Your Cooling Fans Are Broken Just like you need blowers to push the air conditioning through the vents in your home, your car uses cooling fans to move the refrigerated air into your vehicle's cabin. When there's a problem with the fans, you won't feel any air coming out of the vents. Cooling fans can stop working properly for a number of different reasons; they might have blown fuses, an electrical short, or could have been cracked by debris from the road. Fortunately, this is fairly simple to fix; your mechanic should be able to replace it quickly and get you back on the road. No. 3: There's a Problem With the Compressor Your air conditioning relies on a compressor to keep the air moving, but if the compressor isn't working properly, that refrigerant isn't going to move around. One of the main reasons a compressor goes bad is from not being used for long periods of time, and the long cool seasons of fall and winter means that many Ohioans don't run their air conditioning for several months. A compressor can also have problems if the clutch on the compressor gets stuck. If it gets stuck in the "on" position it will make your air conditioning run continuously, and if it's stuck in the "off" position it will keep the compressor from engaging. You'll need to have your mechanic look at what is causing the problem with your compressor. No. 4: There's Something Wrong With Your Condenser The condenser plays an important role; it takes the humid air in the air compressor and depressurizes, cools and liquefies that air. In simpler terms, it helps turn the air cool. When your air conditioning is cooling as much, it could be a sign of a failing condenser. No. 5: You Have an Electrical Problem There are several things that can cause electrical problems for your car's air conditioning. These can include failed switches, a blown fuse, a problem with the control module or something else. Fuses can short out and make the A/C stop working or a loose connection can create an electrical short that is easily fixed. While electrical issues in the air conditioning system are often easy to fix, they need to be addressed immediately, since they can cause acid buildup. Acid buildup can cause serious damage to your vehicle and can even lead to needing to replace the entire air conditioning system. Staying on top of problems will keep this from happening. Plan Ahead to Stay Cool This Summer Unlike many of the systems in today's cars, there aren't any warning lights that will alert you to problems with your air conditioning system. Since you don't want to wait until a problem occurs, and all too often those problems pop up at the most inconvenient times, it's a good idea to take your car in before the hot weather arrives and make sure that the hoses and fans are in good working order, no leaks are evident and your refrigerant levels are good. (This can also be done as part of your spring tune-up.) Taking the time to have your air conditioning checked before summer gets underway, or as soon as you notice a problem, can save you a lot of grief, time and money. And it will also help you keep your cool all summer long. 1 Turn the air conditioning on while the car is running. The air conditioner won't run properly unless your engine is running. The best setting for diagnosis is "fresh air" (not recirculated) with the air blowing out of the center vents in the dash and the AC turned on. Start with the fan speed turned to its highest setting. If your car has a "Max AC" setting, select that option. 2 Listen for unusual noises coming from the AC. Noise could indicate that there is a problem with your compressor and that it needs repair or replacing. Advertisement 3 Feel the air coming out of the vents. You will need to know if the air is cold, room temperature, or hotter than the air around it. Also note if it starts cold but turns warmer, or if it is usually warm but blows cold intermittently. 4 Notice the air pressure. Turn the air pressure to the high and low settings and see if the airflow changes like it normally does. 5 Smell the air coming from the vents. If there are unusual smells, you could have a leak. You may also need to change your cabin air filter.[1] 6 Inspect your car's fuses. Check your owner's manual for the location of your car's fuse panel, as it may be under the hood, in the trunk, or even in the driver's foot well area. A blown fuse can cause your AC to stop working.[2] Advertisement 1 Check all of the vents. Be sure that air pressure is coming out of the vents that you have selected. Move the vent selector to see if the air moves to the proper vents. If changing the selected vent does not alter the flow of air, you likely have a blend door problem, which will require replacing the doors inside the dash that determine the direction of the air flow.[3] [4] Blend doors change position when the temperature selection is changed, blocking the flow or permitting the flow of either hot or cold air. Sometimes an AC system with a mode door problem could be working fine, but the air flow is being directed somewhere else, like back out to the engine, instead of into the car. 2 Look at your cabin air filter. Especially if the air coming from your vents smells funny or if you think you have had a slow decrease in pressure for some time, check the air filter. You will be able to see if it has a buildup of dirt or debris on it. It is possible that your cabin air filter is so blocked that it is interfering with your air pressure, and replacing it will be a relatively easy an inexpensive fix to your problem. Your car manual may have instructions on replacing the cabin filter. If it doesn't, try searching online for "replace cabin air filter" followed by the year, make, and model of your car (for example, you might search for "replace cabin air filter for 2006 Toyota Camry"). 3 Check for a blower motor problem. The easiest way to do this is to try turning on your heat. If you have weak air flow when the heat is on as well, your blower motor may have gone out.[5] A blower motor may have a resistor problem if your air only blows on the high setting but will not blow on a lower setting. Unfortunately, mice and other rodents sometimes build homes in car HVAC hoses and can get caught in the blower motor when the car is started. A loud noise (or bad smell) coming when the heat or air are running could be a sign of this problem. Advertisement 1 Find the front of your AC condenser. It is normally located in front of your radiator. If there are leaves or other dirt or buildup blocking it, remove them and clean the area. 2 Look under the hood at the AC compressor clutch. If your air pressure is normal but the air is hot, you may have a compressor problem. Checking to see if the compressor clutch is engaging is a simple visual inspection.[6] The compressor is usually located towards the front of your engine, just inside the grill of your car. Your car should be running with the AC on to check the compressor clutch. The compressor looks like a small motor with a large wheel on the end. The wheel (which is the compressor clutch) should be spinning. If it is not spinning, you have a problem with your compressor.[7] 3 Check the tension on the belt of the compressor. It should be tight. If it is loose, you need a new compressor belt.[8] 4 Find any coolant system leaks. One of the most common AC temperature problems is low refrigerant. The AC system is closed, so refrigerant should not be lost unless there is a leak.[9] Look for oily residue on or around hoses that attach AC components together. Oily spots may indicate a refrigerant leak. You may consider using an electronic leak detector, which can detect much smaller quantities of refrigerant. There are also some testers that use dye, UV light, and protective glasses to find leaks. If you do find a leak, you will likely need to hire a professional to repair the leak. You will probably need new parts too, as many of the components cannot be repaired or patched. 5 Check for freezing. If your AC blows cold initially but then stops being cold after some use, it could be freezing. Excess air and moisture in the system may lead components to freeze (literally).[10] Freezing can also be caused by an oversaturated receiver/drier or accumulator. Turning the system off for a while and letting it thaw will temporarily solve the problem. If the problem is persistent, you may need your system to be flushed or evacuated with a vacuum pump. Advertisement Add New Question Question Can a bad temp sensor cause AC not to work? Ed Beery Automotive Specialist Ed Beery is an Automotive Specialist and the Owner of InTechgrity Automotive Excellence based in Denver, Colorado. With more than eight years of experience, he specializes in providing maintenance and repair services for both individuals and companies. Ed and the InTechgrity Automotive Excellence Team are approved by the American Automobile Association (AAA) for repairs and are Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified. Definitely! If the temperature sensor does not send a signal, then the AC will not turn on. Just keep in mind that these sensors are located deep in your HVAC system behind the dashboard, and can be difficult to inspect and replace. Question How do you test a blend door? Ed Beery Automotive Specialist Ed Beery is an Automotive Specialist and the Owner of InTechgrity Automotive Excellence based in Denver, Colorado. With more than eight years of experience, he specializes in providing maintenance and repair services for both individuals and companies. Ed and the InTechgrity Automotive Excellence Team are approved by the American Automobile Association (AAA) for repairs and are Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified. Start your vehicle and turn on the AC with the fan on high. Then, cycle through the selector options on your HVAC control, feeling for cold air from each position. Positions that don't blow cold air may have a temperature sensor issue, while positions that don't blow any air might have a blend door actuator problem. Question How do I know if my AC fan is bad? Ed Beery Automotive Specialist Ed Beery is an Automotive Specialist and the Owner of InTechgrity Automotive Excellence based in Denver, Colorado. With more than eight years of experience, he specializes in providing maintenance and repair services for both individuals and companies. Ed and the InTechgrity Automotive Excellence Team are approved by the American Automobile Association (AAA) for repairs and are Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified. Your AC fan will either have inconsistent air movement or no air movement at all. Question How do I know if my pulley is bad? Ed Beery Automotive Specialist Ed Beery is an Automotive Specialist and the Owner of InTechgrity Automotive Excellence based in Denver, Colorado. With more than eight years of experience, he specializes in providing maintenance and repair services for both individuals and companies. Ed and the InTechgrity Automotive Excellence Team are approved by the American Automobile Association (AAA) for repairs and are Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified. The pulley either doesn't turn or turns inconsistently when the AC clutch engages. Question What happens when an AC belt goes bad? Ed Beery Automotive Specialist Ed Beery is an Automotive Specialist and the Owner of InTechgrity Automotive Excellence based in Denver, Colorado. With more than eight years of experience, he specializes in providing maintenance and repair services for both individuals and companies. Ed and the InTechgrity Automotive Excellence Team are approved by the American Automobile Association (AAA) for repairs and are Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified. You might notice a high-pitched squeal or chirp from the belt when the AC is turned on. There might also be intermittent cooling in the system as the belt gains and loses traction. Question How do I know if my AC clutch is bad? Ed Beery Automotive Specialist Ed Beery is an Automotive Specialist and the Owner of InTechgrity Automotive Excellence based in Denver, Colorado. With more than eight years of experience, he specializes in providing maintenance and repair services for both individuals and companies. Ed and the InTechgrity Automotive Excellence Team are approved by the American Automobile Association (AAA) for repairs and are Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified. The tell-tale signs of a bad AC clutch are the clutch not engaging when the AC is turned on (and voltage is present); the clutch clicking or banging but not engaging when the AC is turned on; the clutch slipping in and out of gear when the AC is turned on; and/or the vehicle idle dropping noticeably when the AC is turned on. Question How do you know if your car AC is low on gas? Ed Beery Automotive Specialist Ed Beery is an Automotive Specialist and the Owner of InTechgrity Automotive Excellence based in Denver, Colorado. With more than eight years of experience, he specializes in providing maintenance and repair services for both individuals and companies. Ed and the InTechgrity Automotive Excellence Team are approved by the American Automobile Association (AAA) for repairs and are Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified. Low or no gas might be the problem if air is flowing throughout the system when the AC is turned on; the air is not cold or cool and doesn't get cold or cool anywhere in the system; the AC compressor is turning; the AC clutch is not making noise; and the AC clutch engages when the AC is turned on. Question Can a blown fuse box cause your AC not to work? Sure, if the fuse that feeds your AC compressor or relays is blown and not delivering +12VDC you will have no AC. Question What do I do if my A/C isn't blowing air? Possibly either a fuse or the blower motor isn't working. Check the fuses under the hood, and check under your glove compartment for a cylinder shaped motor. With the A/C on, gently wiggle the cord to test for a short in the adapter. If this doesn't work, then you can use a fuse tester to see if your blower motor is getting power. Question My truck heat works; it defrosts, but only on 3 and 4. It only blows hot air on 3 and 4. I've put coolant in it, and it works for a few seconds, then stops. I checked for leaks, and it doesn't have any. What can I try next? A blower motor may have a resistor problem if your air only blows on the high setting but will not blow on a lower setting. See more answers Ask a Question Advertisement Thanks! Helpful 76 Not Helpful 101 Thanks! Helpful 47 Not Helpful 117 Thanks! Advertisement This article was co-authored by Ed Beery. Ed Beery is an Automotive Specialist and the Owner of InTechgrity Automotive Excellence based in Denver, Colorado. With more than eight years of experience, he specializes in providing maintenance and repair services for both individuals and companies. 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