

What to Do if Your Car Overheats

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There's nothing worse than driving down the road and having your car overheat. Seeing steam coming from under the hood while red warning lights start to flash on your dashboard can get any driver's blood pumping. That's why *it's a good idea to know why your car can overheat and what to do when and if it does.*

Common Causes of Engine Overheating

There are many reasons your car may overheat. ***When your car overheats, it means that something is making it impossible for your vehicle's cooling system to do its job.*** Here are three of the most common causes:

- **Coolant Concentration out of Whack:** Each vehicle has its own needs when it comes to the type of coolant and the mix of coolant and distilled water. If this is off, it can result in overheating. Be sure to check your car's manual to determine the best concentration.
- **A Leaking Cooling System:** A leak in your cooling system is the most common reason for overheating. The leak can be in a number of areas such as the head gasket, radiator, heater core, water pump, or some other area. A pressure test should be able to determine whether or not you have a leak.
- **Malfunctioning Thermostat:** The thermostat is actually a valve that is heat-sensitive. It opens and closes depending on the temperature of your engine. When in the open position, coolant is sent to the radiator. When closed, coolant remains in the engine. When the thermostat is stuck closed, your car overheats.

Additional reasons your car may overheat include:

- Coolant passageways are blocked
 - Worn or cracked hoses
 - Radiator is faulty
 - Radiator fan is bad
 - A broken or loose belt
 - Water pump is faulty

What to do if Your Car Overheats

Regardless of the reason for your car overheating, once it does, ***you need to take a few steps to ensure your safety*** and to keep your car from suffering additional damage.

1. Find a safe place to pull over as soon as possible. ***You don't want to drive your car further than a quarter mile.*** Be sure to turn your car off.
2. Wait until the temperature gauge falls to cool. ***You do not want to open your hood while there is still steam coming out of it.*** Also, you never want to try to remove your radiator cap when it is hot.
3. ***Once your engine is cool, check the level of your coolant.*** Remove the cap and if your coolant is low, go ahead and refill it and replace the cap.
4. ***Check the hoses, both the lower and upper radiator hose as well as the heater hoses for blockage*** or to determine if they have become disconnected or if they have burst.
5. Go ahead and ***restart your vehicle.***
6. Watch your temperature gauge. ***If it begins to rise again, you will need to pull over once more and shut off the vehicle.*** At this point, it will be necessary to have your vehicle towed to a professional such as Ace Auto.

Contact Ace Auto for all of Your Vehicle Repairs

From [overheated engines](#) to [small engine repair](#) and even [AC recharge](#), here at [Ace Auto Utah](#), we can handle any vehicle repairs you may need. ***Our team of trained professionals makes it their mission to get you and your vehicle back on the road as soon as possible.*** So, if you are in the Salt Lake City area, know that we can service any make or model car or truck, and we're here to help. Give us a call today 801-803-6016 if you need your car or truck towed, or [contact us here to schedule an appointment](#).