

Principles of Operation

Battery Eye Operation

The battery eye indicates the state-of-charge of the battery by responding to the specific gravity of a single battery cell electrolyte. The battery eye has a viewing plate, 2 colored balls of different specific gravity and a small passage. As the state-of-charge and specific gravity changes, the balls change their position in the passageway and subsequently display a different color in the viewing eye. The primary purpose of the battery is to be a quick indicator of state-of-charge for assembly plants and dealership pre-delivery processes.

The color of the battery eye indicates the approximate state-of-charge.

- Red — indicates low state-of-charge.
- Yellow/Black — indicates between high and low state-of-charge.
- Green — indicates high state-of-charge.
- No color can occur after the battery has been in service for several years and some of the plate material has coated the balls.
- A clear battery eye can occur if the battery case becomes damaged and the electrolyte has fallen below the plates.

NOTE: The battery eye may remain red for a period of time (up to several days), even after the battery is fully charged, because the acid is not yet fully mixed.

Do not install a new battery based solely on the indication of the battery eye. The battery eye color simply indicates the battery state-of-charge, not its condition. For example, a red or yellow/black battery eye usually indicates the battery is discharged, not defective. If the battery eye indicates the battery may be discharged, it is necessary to recharge the battery before testing its condition.

Charging a Battery

Batteries discharge while the vehicle is on the dealer lot or parked by the customer for an extended period of time due to normal parasitic key-off loads. Also, vehicles still in dealer inventory or in long-term storage may be driven short distances with heavy electrical loads. Over a period of time (30 days or more), this could result in vehicles having shallow or deeply discharged batteries.

- Deeply discharged — A battery that is drained over a prolonged period of time, such as an unsold vehicle or a vehicle in storage, to the point the battery is dead.
- Shallow discharge — A battery that is drained by leaving an accessory on for several hours or a few days and has a very low charge.

The vehicle charging system is designed to supply the electrical power needed to maintain the battery near full charge during normal vehicle use. The charging system is not capable of bringing a deeply discharged battery back to near full charge in a short amount of time such as allowing the vehicle to idle for 15 minutes to "recharge the battery". Discharged batteries should be charged using an external charger.

NOTE: Battery chargers have improved greatly with the addition of the new generation pulse chargers. These chargers pulse current into the battery, breaking down the sulfation layer on the battery plates and generally reduce charging times to less than an hour.

NOTE: Cold batteries will not readily accept a charge. Therefore, batteries should be allowed to warm to approximately 5°C (41°F) before charging. This may require 4 to 8 hours at room temperature.

The following chart summarizes 2 recommended methods of charging.

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Type of Battery Discharge	Pulse Charger	Standard Charger
Deeply discharged	Follow directions supplied with the pulse charger	2 to 8 hours and may take up to an hour to accept initial charge
Shallow discharge	45 minutes to an hour charge	2 hours below (40A) on manual setting or medium automatic setting
