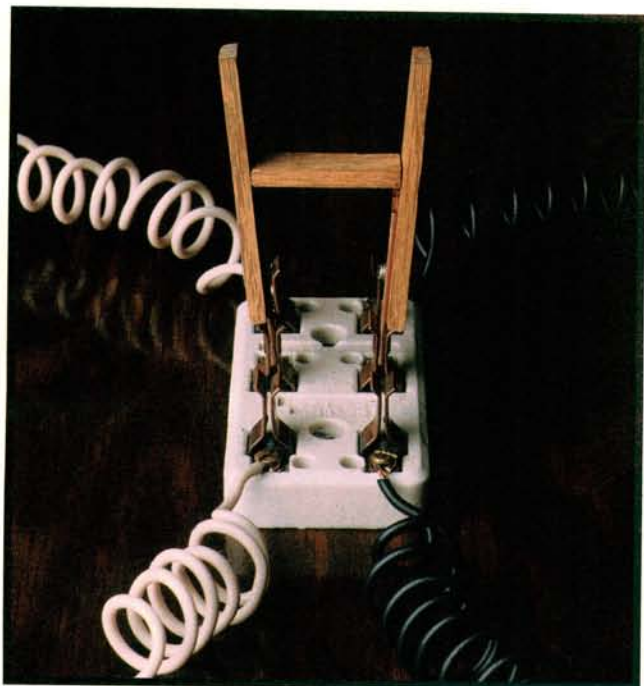


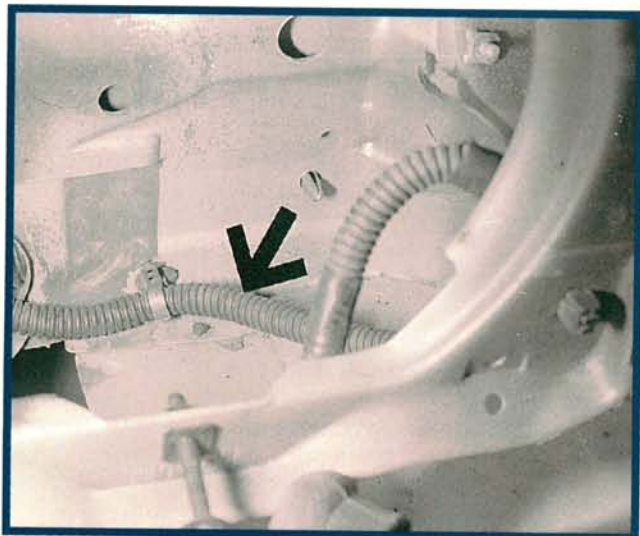
Honda Electrical Service



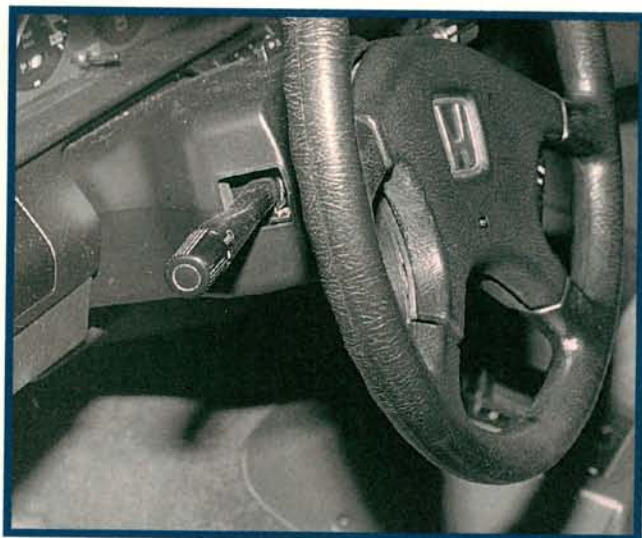
The following pointers will help you diagnose and repair a wide variety of electrical problems on Honda vehicles. Just like an open knife switch, this information may be dangerous in the wrong hands. It's the same danger that is associated with any information, since there is no way of knowing how it will be used (or misused).

There are no "magic bullets" here, just a list of symptoms and some high-probability causes. While we hope these tips save you time and point you in the right direction, it's still up to you to make the actual diagnosis. Make sure you read each of these tips closely. Do these symptoms mirror the ones you're seeing? Do they apply to the same model or model year that you are working on? Be sure that you can answer yes to these questions before you throw the switch.

We've divided the information into three groups. Hopefully, this system of organization will make as much sense to you as it did to us. Tips 1 through 7 concern themselves with quirks peculiar to the 1986-89 Accord. Tips 8 through 10 deal with 1990 and newer Accords, and tips 11 through 18 are applicable to other Honda models or are of a more general nature.



1 If an 1986-89 Accord is blowing headlight fuses, look for broken wiring inside both headlight wiring harnesses. Many of these harnesses were stretched too tight during assembly. Opening and closing the headlight doors eventually will cause the wiring to break. When more than one wire breaks, they can short against each other inside the harness and blow a fuse. If the fuses aren't blown, check for a burned out headlight bulb or a worn out headlight switch.



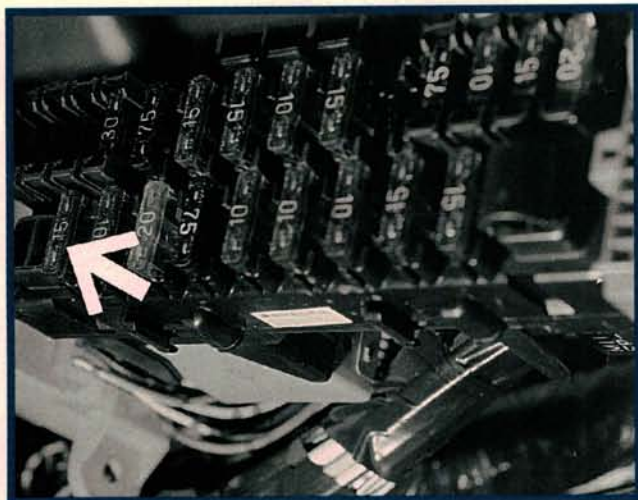
2 Headlight switches also wear out on high mileage Accords. This may cause the headlights to go out when hitting bumps (very exciting on a dark and rainy night). Try banging on the steering column with your hand or switching back and forth between high and low beams to see if the headlights will come back on. The one-piece combination switch that includes the headlights, turn signals, and wiper controls can't be disassembled for repairs and must be replaced as an assembly.



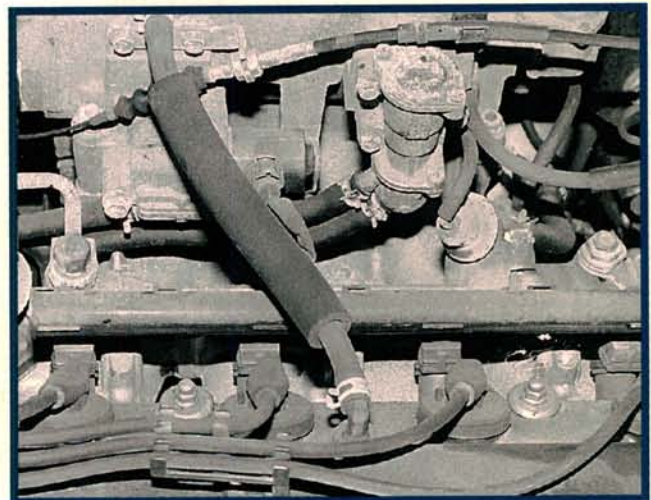
3 Erratic power window operation may be caused by a defective master switch in the driver's door. Because of the way the system is wired, operation of the window switches in all of the other doors can be affected by a messed up master switch. If the right rear window won't go up or down, check the motor by powering the motor directly. If the motor operates, the master switch is most likely to blame. Some switches can be disassembled and cleaned, but you may want to replace the switch to be safe.



4 Smashed wires behind the driver's inner door handle plate may cause unusual power door lock symptoms on 1986-89 Accord models. After closing and locking all of the doors, one or more of the door lock actuators may make a clicking noise as they try to relock themselves. The phantom locks are caused by smashed wires or a defective actuator. Remove the driver's door panel, then reposition the wires so that they are clear of the door handle plate.



5 If you have a 1986-89 Honda Accord with intermittent running and charging problems that seem to be unrelated to each other, check the alternator fuse in the underdash panel for continuity. On carbureted Accords, the fuel pump and alternator share the same fuse. This is a high current draw circuit. The fuse panels have been known to heat up and distort if there's a poor connection at the fuse. You may be able to clean up the fuse connections and reinstall the fuse to correct this problem. If the fuse panel is badly heat damaged, replace the fuse panel.



6 On 1986-89 Honda Accord LXi models, an intermittent hard or no-start after a hot soak may be caused by a bad coolant temperature sensor. It may be difficult to catch the sensor "in the act." The ECU won't register a failure code unless the coolant sensor goes open or completely out of range. When the engine is hot, the coolant temperature sensor should show approximately 100 ohms of resistance. Measure the sensor resistance, then substitute a 100 ohm resistor in place of the sensor. The engine should start.

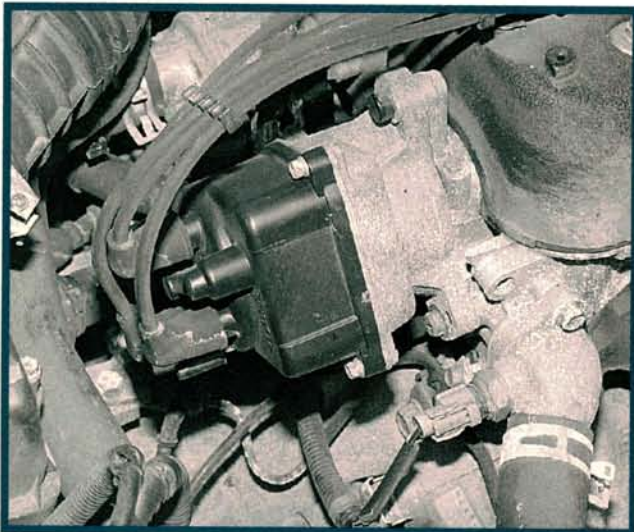
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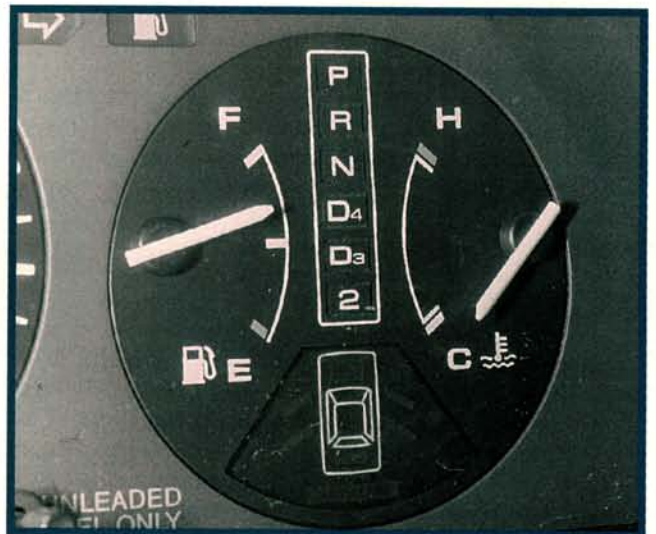
7 Battery discharge on 1986-89 Accord models may be caused by the rear window defogger. Driving at low speeds for extended periods with the defogger turned on may discharge the battery. A new defogger switch with a 25 minute timed cutoff (P/N 35500-SE0-A11) is available for 1986-87 models. A battery cover kit (P/N 06377-SE3-A00) to reduce the effects of high underhood temperatures is available for all 1986-89 models. Make sure the battery is fully charged before returning the car to the customer.



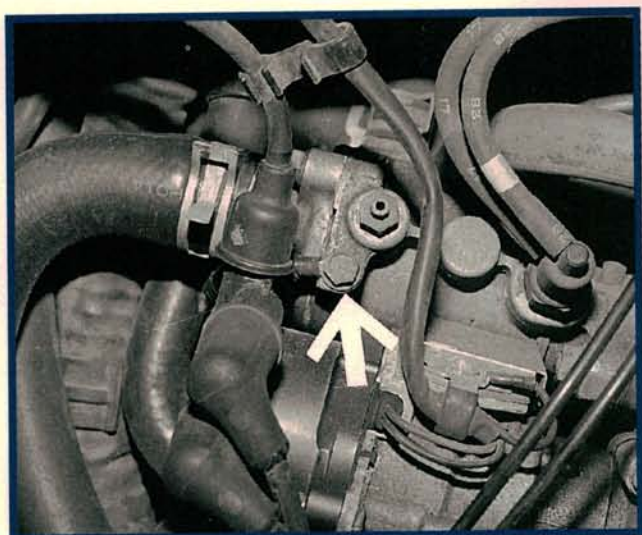
8 On 1990 Accord models, jump starting a discharged battery may affect the speedometer and tachometer operation. The low battery voltage, then sudden voltage surge may cause the speedometer and tach needles to rotate fully clockwise, then stay there. Do not replace the gauges to correct this problem. Use a small magnet to carefully rotate both gauge needles counterclockwise to their zero marks. Place a cloth over the magnet to avoid scratching the plastic gauge face.



9 Distributor igniter failures are a common problem on 1990 and later Accords. Honda has had several recalls to address this problem on Accords and other Honda models, so you may want to direct your customer back to the dealer for repairs if the igniter is causing your no-start. However, not all Accord no-starts are caused by bad igniters. Fuel pump failures account for their share, too. Be sure that it's a no-spark problem and not a no-fuel problem before condemning the igniter.



10 A later model Honda Accord automatic that is "stuck" in high gear may have a stuck transmission shift solenoid, or the transmission control unit may be bad. When this occurs, the "S" light on the dash will blink and the transmission will not shift through the gears. The control unit is mounted under the passenger floor. After checking the wiring to the transmission for shorts or other damage, substitute a "known good" control unit to see if the transmission will shift.



11 Many carbureted and fuel injected Honda models have a very important ground connection at the thermostat housing. If this connection is corroded, it can produce interesting drivability problems. On carbureted models, the idle speed may fluctuate or the engine may not idle at all. A corroded thermostat housing ground may cause a no-start on fuel injected models. Clean the ground connection and thermostat housing as necessary, then protect the connection with a coat of dielectric grease.



12 A later model Honda equipped with a TEC distributor that won't start, hesitates, or generally won't run right may have a bad rotor. These rotors will often look okay, or the plastic may be slightly discolored. This may seem like an obvious repair, but the symptoms that a bad rotor may cause can lead you in the wrong direction. If possible, replace the cap and rotor as a set about once a year. They don't seem to last much longer than that without causing problems.

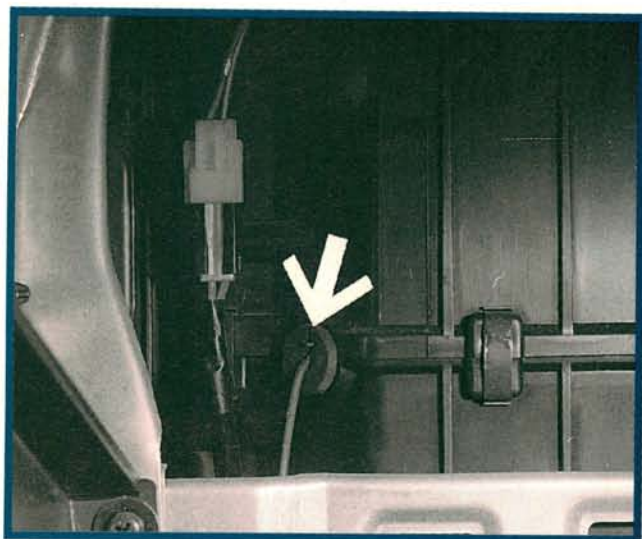


13 Worn ignition switches can cause intermittent electrical problems on all Honda models. Accessory operation (radio, heater, etc.) will usually be affected first, although some Civics may develop intermittent primary ignition problems caused by a worn ignition switch. Try wiggling the ignition key or banging on the steering column with the palm of your hand if you're having trouble duplicating an intermittent condition. Ignition switch replacement is the only permanent cure.

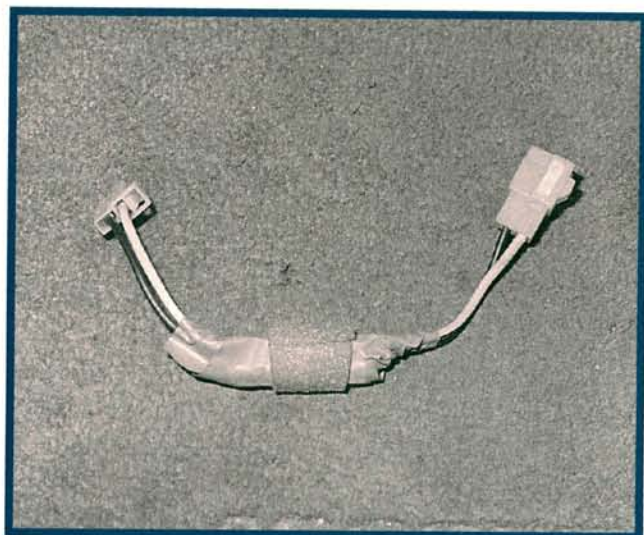


14 Erratic operation of the retractable headlights on all Hondas equipped with this feature may be caused by the Retractable Headlight Control Unit. The control unit is located in the left kick panel or upper fuse panel area. It's very difficult to troubleshoot this solid state unit without a service manual (unless you have a "known good" unit to substitute). Manual pin tests are used to eliminate all other possible causes of the problem (damaged wiring, headlight switch, headlight motors, relays, etc.).

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15 Any Honda model that is suffering from erratic A/C operation (insufficient cooling, evaporator icing, sporadic cooling) may be suffering from a bad thermistor in the cooling unit. The thermistor measures the temperature of the evaporator cooling fins and affects the operation of the compressor clutch. If the thermistor opens too soon, the compressor cycles too often (poor cooling). If the thermistor opens late, the compressor won't cycle and the evaporator may ice up (sporadic cooling).



16 Intermittent operation of the blower fan control switch on 1986-87 Accord models equipped with A/C may be caused by the sub cord blower harness. This harness is located next to the blower motor assembly, and is equipped with what looks like a fuse holder. The fuse holder contains a diode, which may be causing the intermittent blower operation. The harness, which includes a female connector on one end and a male connector on the other for proper diode polarity, is available separately.



17 The engine and transmission control units are mounted on the floor and under the seats on many Honda models. The combination of this location and the recent flooding in the Midwest has put a lot of control units to the test. Trying to revive a wet control unit is a roll of the dice. You may be able to dry it out, but it may decide to act up later on. If you suspect that the control unit has been dunked at one time, open it up and look for light blue corrosion on the circuits.



18 Intermittent radio problems are usually caused by poor harness connections at the back of the radio. If a speaker drops out intermittently, try tugging on the harness at the back of the radio to see if you can duplicate the symptoms. The harness is short, so you'll have to do this test with the radio installed. If the radio cuts out, remove the harness connectors to inspect for loose terminals. Giving male terminals a slight twist will ensure proper contact with the female terminals.