

**Wheels:** Richard writes, “I have a 1995 Chevy Lumina with a 3.1 liter V-6 that idles higher than I would like (around 1800 RPM by the tach that I have been told registers somewhat high – 250 RPM) at start-up and fails to come down as quickly as I would like or go as low as I would like. I have had it to two different mechanics and they tell me that it is within specs. Recently, I also had an intermittent problem where the car will not idle below around 2000-2300 RPM (again, as indicated by the tach). This has been diagnosed as either being the computer or the idle control motor, but since it is intermittent, they have not recommended just throwing parts at it to try and see if it helps. This is particularly annoying since I also have a 1997 Lumina with the same engine that idles down almost immediately to around 900 RPM. Thanks for any help you can provide.”

**Halderman:** There could be several causes of your idle problem including:

1. Low battery voltage – If the battery is original, you may want to consider replacing it because it is about seven years old and at the end of its normal life span.
2. Low battery voltage caused by a defective alternator – The charging voltage should be 14.2 to 15.2 volts.
3. A fault with the idle air control (IAC) – Check the IAC with a scan tool to see if it could be stuck in the cold idle position.
4. The computer memory could have been lost for some reason – If so, you may wish to try something that may work. Disconnect the negative battery cable and depress the brake pedal. This procedure will discharge all capacitors in the electrical system and clear the computer memory. Then reconnect the battery cable and start the engine. Allow the engine to run in drive with your foot on the brake pedal for 10 minutes. The computer should relearn the idle speed and the engine should perform correctly.

