

Wheels: Don writes, “I have a 2005 Subaru Baja, all-wheel drive (AWD), turbo, with 10,000 miles. I left the door ajar and the ignition key light stayed on for 2 or 3 days. This apparently depleted the battery as I got nothing when trying to start the vehicle – not even a grunt or click. I charged the battery to 12 volts, reconnected, and still nothing (I had a big arc when reconnecting). The battery went to 11.8 volts and is not 11.7 volts. All fuses are OK. Interestingly, the only electrics working are the hazard lights, the seat motor, and the horn. I went through the anti-theft regiment and that did not fix the problem. Also, how do you get it out of park to get it towed (AWD concerns)? Until now, I never had a vehicle towed in 60 years of driving.”

Halderman: The items that are now working are all connected directly to the battery. It appears that the circuits that are operated with the ignition switch are the circuits that are not working. These are controlled by the ignition switch and associated fuses and relays. Before going any further, I suggest that the battery be charged again and/or replaced. A fully charged 12-volt battery should have a voltage of 12.6 volts or higher. The 11.7 volts may not be high enough to allow the relays to function. The big arc also indicates that the voltage level could be low or the battery was installed backward. On a top post battery, the positive post is slightly larger than the negative post. To get the vehicle out of park, insert the key into the slot that is usually near the shifter that allows the transmission to be moved from park in the event of a failure of the shift interlock system. See the owner’s manual for details. If these simple items do not work, then the vehicle should be towed on a flatbed truck or at least with all four wheels off the ground.

