

**Wheels:** J.D. of West Milton says, “You helped me out before and I appreciate it, so I will try with another question. I have a 1987 Chevrolet Caprice Classic Wagon, V-8 (“Y” engine code) with approximately 160,000 miles on it. It runs great and is used daily. About a year ago, an alternator belt broke. It was replaced and within a few weeks, this belt broke also. At that point, a bolt was found to be missing from the bottom of the lower alternator bracket, and it was replaced along with the belt. I also replaced the alternator with a “premium” quality version as the one on the car was not a “premium” quality alternator according to the previous owner. About 6 months later, the alternator belt broke again and was replaced. This happened again in about another 6 months. I have since replaced the belt a total of 7 times; twice with the old alternator and the rest with the newer one. I also had the lower alternator bracket replaced recently and the problem with the belt continues. With closer monitoring, the belt seems to be getting a flaw (cut) on the top shoulder of the belt and progresses from there. My mechanic is baffled as am I. The alignment is good and the pulley on the alternator is smooth. Upon further inspection, I noticed some very small irregularities on the pulley behind the fan that the belt rides on. This pulley and possibly the water pump are scheduled for replacement. The only other thing to replace is the alternator, but I have had the same problem with 2 alternators. Any input or suggestions you could offer would be much appreciated. None of the other belts on the car have had any problem, so it seems to be isolated with the alternator belt/system.”

**Halderman:** On that engine, it is difficult to get the belts aligned enough to keep them from making noise or to damage the belt. As I recall, there are several spacers that can be mixed up at the top of the pivot of the alternator and/or AC compressor. If these are switched, it will look like the belt is aligned, but it will be off by a little. I suggest you take another look at these spacers.

