

Wheels: Jerry of Beaver Creek writes, "I have an '89 Honda Civic that refuses to start when it is hot. It will crank, but not fire unless you let it sit 15-20 minutes. I've traced the problem to the fact that a computer signal to the master control relay is keeping the relay, fuel pump, and injectors from turning on. I suspect some sensor is telling the computer to not allow the engine to start, but I don't know which one except that the oil pressure sending unit appears to be working fine (I remember that from one of your previous articles). Can you tell me what other signals the computer uses on this model to determine if the engine is cranking?"

Halderman: The usual sensor is the crankshaft position sensor. I think the distributor is the source of the signal to the main relay on your vehicle. The distributor is a pattern failure on your vehicle. This can be an expensive part, so I would suggest you check the output signal when it is not starting and again when it is starting to verify that it is in fact this component. I don't think parts are available so the entire unit has to be replaced. The main relay could also be at fault, but you indicated that it was not receiving a signal.

