

Emergency Power from a 12-volt Inverter!



The battery in your automobile or truck can provide 110-volt AC power to run a lamp, radio, etc., indoors in an emergency. You need a 12-volt DC to 110-volt AC inverter that plugs into your vehicle's cigarette lighter. Buy an inverter at an auto parts store. This is one of the cheapest ways to have at least some electricity in an emergency. Not much electricity - but better than nothing.

One skeptic said, "You can have a radio and a light inside your car without an inverter." Right, if you want to stay in your car all evening. I'd rather be indoors.

Check that your vehicle's cigarette lighter works without having the ignition switch on. If not, you may need to start and run the engine every 2 hours to keep the battery up! Plug the inverter's cigarette lighter end into the cigarette lighter. Usually an LED light will come on to show the inverter is on. The other end of the inverter has one or more electrical outlets like those on your walls of your home.

Park your vehicle as closely to your home as possible. Get a long extension cord* and plug it into the inverter. Bring the other end indoors. A 13-watt compact fluorescent light bulb and a 10-watt radio would use about 25 watts per hour. With your home's electrical power off, you'd still have a light and information during an evening. Assume you can use 50 watts of power indoors for 4 to 6 hours before your vehicle battery needs recharging. (Sorry, you can't run a fan or a microwave oven.) When you're ready for bed, unplug the inverter **INSIDE THE VEHICLE**. Check that your vehicle will start, and let it idle for 15 minutes or more to begin recharging its battery.

***Tip:** An extension cord using 12-gauge wire will run the battery down slower than one using 18-gauge wire. The shorter the extension cord, the better. Set up and use the inverter before it is needed, so you will know how if it is needed.