

BOAT TALK WITH

Alex Salomatoff



If you have a question for Master Mechanic and Owner of Alex's Marine Plus in New Windsor, NY, simply call Alex at 845-565-9199 or e-mail, AlexsMarine@aol.com

ALEX: My Engine Does Not Start

There are many causes for a no-start scenario in outboard engines. The table below shows the common causes for this problem and their corresponding fixes.

Possible Cause	Solution
Fuel tank is empty	Fill the fuel tank with the right type of fuel. If the engine has overheated and is still hot, wait for it to cool down before filling the tank.
Fuel tank has old fuel	Fuel that has been in the tank for over 30 days should be drained and replaced with clean, fresh fuel. Kill switch is engaged
Kill switch is engaged	Disengage the kill-switch.
Kill switch clip is not inserted	Insert the kill switch clip firmly into place. Alternatively, try removing the clip and putting it back in place.
Engine is in gear	The engine needs to be set to neutral in order to start. Slip the engine lever to neutral and try starting again.
Dead battery (electric motors only)	Charge the battery to give the engine enough power to start up. Also, check the electrical connections of the engine for any signs of damage, corrosion, or loose wires.
Damaged spark plugs or ignition system	Use a spark plug tester to check if the ignition system is in good condition or if the plug is sparking. If not, replace the spark plugs with new ones. In more extreme cases of damage, the ignition system may need to be replaced.

Alex: My Engine Is Overheating, It Is An Outboard Motor

Outboard motors rely on a continuous amount of water flowing through the engine to keep cool. When there is not enough water going through the engine, overheating occurs. To fix this, turn the engine off and check if there is any blockage in water flow. This can be due to foreign objects like weeds blocking the water intake. Try running the engine again after it has cooled down.

Another possible cause of overheating is a broken water pump impeller. The water pump impeller is a round disc with blades that circulate water through the outboard motor. When this part is broken, it cuts off the water supply to the engine and causes the engine to overheat. If this is the problem, replace the broken pump impeller with a new one.

Alex: I Have Excessive Vibration of the Outboard Engine

Engine vibration can be caused by a variety of factors. The most common cause is a damaged or loose propeller. The first step in troubleshooting this problem is to check if the propeller is attached securely. Examine the blades for any breaks, bends, or cracks. If the propeller seems loose, tighten the components.

However, if the propeller is damaged, replace it with a new one, and then run the engine to see if the vibration stops.

Another cause of engine vibration is worn-out rubber isolation mounts. These absorb engine vibration and prevent it from being felt by the user. Worn-out parts can aggravate engine shaking. To fix this problem, remove the cover plates of the engine. If necessary, consider removing the powerhead and lowering the engine cover. Inspect the rubber isolation mounts and proceed to tighten the loose ones. Also, replace the worn-out mounts with new ones.

Alex My Engine Suddenly Cuts Off

One possible cause of an engine cut-off is a collapsed primer bulb. This happens when a vacuum forms inside the fuel tank, cutting off the fuel supply to the engine. To fix this problem, simply loosen the vent screw to allow some ventilation, and then pump the primer bulb until it is hard.

Some boaters may have also pulled out the kill switch by accident, causing the engine to stop suddenly. If this is the case, just disengage the kill switch in order to start the engine again.

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