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A portable generator is a multipurpose machine. It provides power for you when there's no readily available electrical source nearby. Portable generator plays a great role for running your basic appliances at home. When there's a power outage, and life at a campsite is more comfortable with a generator. Just you have to know how to start a portable generator safely, as it may not be as simple as you think. It's true that in most cases the best portable generators are extremely easy to use. They're very simple, really. But still, you need to take certain steps so that you can start and use the generator safely. It's not just a matter of flicking a switch each time. How Do You Start a Generator with a Key? To start a generator with a key, follow the steps below. Step 1 - Check the engine oil gauge. Step 2 - Press the power button to turn your generator on. Step 3 - Open the fuel valve to allow fuel to flow into the engine. Step 4 - Turn the choke on. Different generators have different types of choaks. For some, you'll pull out the choke to turn it on and push it back in to turn it off. For others, you'll slide the choke to the extreme left to turn it on and slide it to the right to turn it off. Step 5 - Insert the key and turn it to the right to start it. If everything's fine with your generator, it should start immediately or at the second or third attempt. How To Start a Generator without a Key? The good news is that most portable generators that offer key-start also offer recoil start as a backup. So, if the key is not available or the key-start option isn't working, you can shift to the recoil start option. Step 1 - Check the engine oil gauge. Step 2 - Press the power button to turn your generator on. Step 3 - Open the fuel valve to allow fuel to flow into the engine. Step 4 - Switch the choke on. Step 5 - Grab the recoil handle and pull it swiftly at once. The generator should start immediately or after several attempts. At this juncture, we'd like to remind you of the fact that starting your generator with the key is the best, smartest, and easiest option. Aged people and pregnant women may not be able to use the recoil start. So, if the key-start option isn't working, try to fix it as soon as possible. How To Start a Generator with a Drill? Many portable generators do not have the key-start option. You can only start them through a recoil start. Unfortunately, it is possible for the starting cord to cut off while you're trying to start it. If that happens, there's a workaround. You can start your generator with a drill. How? We'll tell you now. Step 1 - Remove the housing of the recoil assembly. Step 2 - Since the handle of the cord is cut off, remove the entire cord. It is useless without its handle. Step 3 - Locate the nut at the side of the naked recoil assembly. Step 4 - Get an Allen key that fits the nut. Step 5 - Fit the key to the mouth of your drill. Step 6 - Place the key on the nut at the side of the recoil assembly and start your drill. The catch here is to spin the recoil assembly with the drill. Immediately you start your drill, it will spin the recoil start. This should start your generator. The major drawback of this option is that you may have to try it several times before it works. How to Start a Generator with a Choke? First off, you need to understand the function of a choke to start your generator. The choke reduces the amount of air that goes into the engine of your generator. It can only perform its function when you switch it on. So, when the engine is cool, it may be difficult to start because a lot of air is flowing into the engine. You need to switch the choke on before starting your generator. When the generator starts working, switch off the choke. Once the engine is hot, it no longer needs the help of a choke. If you turn off your generator to refill its tank, you may not need to switch on the choke because the engine will still be hot. As such, the engine will start immediately. How Long Does It Take for a Generator to Turn On? This depends on the condition of your generator. There are basically two ways to start a generator. It is either you turn it on through the key ignition, like you start a car, or through a recoil start. For a recoil start, you'll pull its starting cord. If your generator is in good condition, the generator will start in a few seconds, usually at the first attempt. However, if the generator isn't in good condition, it may start after several attempts or it may not start at all. So, what makes a generator difficult to start? Here are some of the reasons why your generator may not start quickly. Its spark plug is either dead or dirty. Clean the plug and try it again. If the generator does not start at all, the spark plug may be dead. Replace it. For a generator that uses a key starter, it may not start easily if the starter battery is weak. Thankfully, such generators usually have an option of recoil starting. So, if the key does not start, you can try the pull start. The generator has not been serviced in a long time. The engine oil of the generator is dirty and requires replacement. So, if you can avoid all the situations listed above, your generator will always start in less than 5 seconds. It will always start at the very first attempt, whether you're using a recoil starter or a key starter. What Causes the Generator Not to Start? There are several reasons why your generator would not start. Here are some of them. Weak battery: If the starter battery of your generator is weak, the key-start will not work. You have to start your generator with the recoil-start option or find a way to charge the battery. Dead spark plug: If the spark plug of your generator is dead or dirty, your generator will not start. Remove the plug and clean it with gasoline. Allow it to dry. Insert it and try again. If the generator does not start, change the plug totally. Cold spark plug: If the weather is very cold, your generator may not start because its plug is cold. Remove the plug and warm it by placing it near a naked fire for 2 minutes. Insert it inside the generator and try again. It should start. Dirty engine oil: If the engine oil of your generator is dirty, it may not start until you service the generator and change the oil. 5 Easy Steps To Start a Portable Generator: 1. Put It in the Right Location It should be far enough away that its noise doesn't bother you at all. Keep in mind that a generator's rated decibel level is often measured at 23 feet away. Place it nearer to you, and it will sound much noisier. If you're using a gasoline home generator, you also should think about proper ventilation for the fumes. The exhaust pipe must be leading away from your house or camp. The exhaust must be kept away from doors and windows. You really don't want to risk carbon monoxide poisoning. 2. Fill Up the Tank It's always best if you fill up your tank right at the start. That's so you can have a better idea of the run time before you need to refuel again. So check your tank and fill it up. Don't fill it to the brim. Instead, you should have about 1.5 inches of space from the top of the fuel line. This space prevents the accumulation of too much pressure inside, and it also can prevent accidental spills. Just make sure that you're using the manufacturer's recommended type of gasoline. Some may specify the use of unleaded gasoline or 87-octane gasoline. And don't pour in gasoline if it uses diesel. 3. Check the Oil Take the oil cap off and lift the dipstick. Wipe away the old oil. Now put the cap back all the way on and then lift it up again. You can then check the oil level. It must be filled with enough oil that even if you didn't have a dipstick you can still touch the oil with your finger. 4. Starting the Engine Now turn the fuel valve to the ON position. This is usually the vertical position. Pull the choke to the ON position all the way out. It's time now to start it. With a recoil start, you pull on the cord to start the engine. But many modern name generators now come with an electric start option by adding electric start to a generator. This allows you to just push a button or flick a switch or click to start the generator. Moreover, if you don't want any trouble regarding how to start a movable generator, this is the more convenient option. Once the engine runs, push the choke back in. You can now plug in your generator cords or appliances and you can power the appliances you need. Final Words As a rule of thumb, you need to service your generator as and when due. Check the user manual that comes with the generator. You'll find the manufacturer's recommendations and instructions in the manual. Follow all the instructions to the letter, especially how often you need to service it. How to Winterize Your Standby Generator A winter power outage is no picnic, especially during a sub-zero arctic blackout. A standby generator is a great insurance policy against spending the night in a crowded hotel or, worse yet, a relative's house. If you live in Northern climates where the temperature dips below 10 degrees, we strongly recommend adding a cold weather kit to ensure your standby generator starts. Battery Warmer You've seen the commercials of cars not starting in cold weather because of dead batteries. The same goes for standby generators. Cold weather kits include thermostatically-controlled battery warmers. The battery sits on top of the warmer, which automatically turns on when the temperature drops below 40 degrees. The beautiful part is, you can just set it and forget it. Oil Heater During the summer, the oil in your generator acts as a slippery lubricant. In the winter, it can turn into friction-fighting sludge. Most cold weather kits also include a crank case heater that automatically prevents the oil from turning into Jello. The generators are filled with ordinary 10W-30 oil at the factory. The manufacturers recommend changing the oil to 5W-30 Synthetic Oil when adding a heater. You should also purchase the appropriate standby generator maintenance kit with synthetic oil. You can use the oil during the installation and save the filters for later. Compatibility We carry a large assortment of cold weather kits. Just pick a model specifically built for your generator to ensure compatibility. If you plan ahead, you can still be the envy of the neighborhood by illuminating your holiday lights in the middle of a blackout. NEXT: Shop Cold Weather Kits Was this article helpful? Yes No Share My Personal Information: ({"href":"https://www.ferguson.bigdiprivy.clduiwvcomuser/VW#idMf0z0zbnWForm-NHWPwWAAFNVIQK","title":"Do Not Sell or Share My Personal Information"},"About Us":{"Our Story":{"href":"https://www.powerequipmentdirect.com/About-Us"},"How-We-Measure-Product-Compatibility.html"},"Electric-Generators-Direct's-Story"},"Careers":{"href":"https://www.powerequipmentdirect.com/Vstories/1924-Job-Openings.html"},"title":"Careers @ Power Equipment Direct"},"Newsroom":{"href":"https://www.newsreleases.php"},"title":"Electric Generators Direct News Center"},"Contact Us":{"phone":"800-800-3317"},"hours":{"M-F: 9-5 CST"},"Sat: Closed"},"Sun: Closed"},""},"storeLinkJSON":{"AC Wholesalers"},"AC Wholesalers"},"":{"href":"https://www.acwholesalers.com"},"title":"AC Wholesalers"},"Air Compressors Direct":{"href":"https://www.aircompressorsdirect.com"},"title":"Air Compressors Direct"},"ecomfort":{"href":"https://www.ecomfort.com"},"title":"ecomfort"},"Electric Generators Direct":{"href":"https://www.electricgeneratorsdirect.com"},"title":"Electric Generators Direct"},"Power Equipment Direct":{"href":"https://www.powerequipmentdirect.com"},"title":"Power Equipment Direct"},"Pressure Washers Direct":{"href":"https://www.pressurewashersdirect.com"},"title":"Pressure Washers Direct"},"Sump Pumps Direct":{"href":"https://www.sumpumpsdirect.com"},"title":"Sump Pumps Direct"},"Water Pumps Direct":{"href":"https://www.waterpumpsdirect.com"},"title":"Water Pumps Direct"},"socialLinkJSON":{"Facebook":{"href":"https://www.facebook.com/Velectricgeneratorsdirect"},"icon":"facebook"},"Twitter":{"href":"https://www.twitter.com/Vgeneratorsdirect"},"icon":"twitter"},"Pinterest":{"href":"http://www.pinterest.com/Vgeneratorsdirect"},"icon":"pinterest"},"title":"Pinterest"},"YouTube":{"href":"https://www.youtube.com/Vselectricgenerators"},"icon":"youtube"},"instagram":{"href":"https://www.instagram.com/Vpowerequipmentdirect"},"icon":"instagram"},"title":"Instagram"},"LinkedIn":{"href":"https://www.linkedin.com/Vcompany/Vpower-equipment"},"icon":"linkedin"},"title":"LinkedIn"},"miscLinkJSON":{"Terms of Use":{"href":"https://www.terms-of-use.php"},"title":"Terms of Use"},"Privacy Policy and Security":{"href":"https://www.privacy.php"},"title":"Privacy Policy and Security"},"Cookie Policy":{"href":"https://www.cookie-policy"},"CA Privacy Rights":{"href":"https://www.privacy.php#california-privacy-rights"},"title":"CA Privacy Rights"},"copyright":{"© 2025 Power Equipment Direct. All Rights Reserved"},"checkOutMiscLinkJSON":{"Privacy Policy & Security":{"href":"https://www.privacy.php"},"title":"Privacy Policy and Security"},"Cookie Policy":{"href":"https://www.cookie-policy"},"title":"Cookie Policy"},"Contact Jared @ Electric Generators Direct","expertName":"Jared","expertTitle":"Generator Expert"},"bbbJSON":{"imageURL":"https://www.powerequipmentdirect.com/images/badge-bbb.png"},"imageAlt":"Better Business Bureau00ae"},"http://www.bbb.org/chicago/business-reviews/industrial-equipment-and-supplies/power-equipment-direct-in-bolingbrook-il-57001088"},"title":"Electric Generators Direct - A+ Rating - Better Business Bureau00ae"},"zipCode":null,"phoneNumber":"800-800-3317","loginIndex":"","page cache precludes the use of csrf tokens"},"iterable":"e4b27e68b9c84fb9940829a0a9ee29d7f","newNav"-false) data-top-bar=We Make Buying Technical Products Simple/Fresh Shipping on Generators & Accessories When Purchased Together/Fresh Shipping on Generators & Accessories" hidden=> This guide will provide you with a comprehensive understanding of how to start a portable generator in cold weather, ensuring that you have the power you need when it matters most. Cold temperatures reduce the battery's ability to hold a charge, making it harder to start the generator. When winter's grip descends upon us, the need for a reliable power source becomes paramount. Portable generators offer a lifeline during power outages, providing essential electricity to keep homes and businesses running smoothly. However, starting a generator in cold weather can be a daunting task. This guide will provide you with comprehensive understanding of how to start a portable generator in cold weather, ensuring that you have the power you need when it matters most. Understanding the Challenges of Cold Weather Starting The cold weather poses unique challenges for starting a portable generator. Here's why: Battery Weakening: Cold temperatures reduce the battery's ability to hold a charge, making it harder to start the generator. Oil Thickening: Engine oil becomes thicker in cold weather, making it harder for the engine to turn over. Fuel Volatility: Cold temperatures can make fuel less volatile, affecting its ability to ignite. Steps to Start a Portable Generator in Cold Weather To overcome these challenges and start your portable generator in cold weather, follow these steps: 1. Prepare the Generator Move the generator to a well-ventilated area outdoors, away from doors and windows. Ensure that the generator is on a level surface to prevent oil and fuel leaks. Check the oil level and add oil if necessary. 2. Warm the Battery Remove the battery from the generator and bring it indoors for several hours to warm up. Alternatively, use a battery warmer or heat lamp to warm the battery externally. 3. Thin the Oil If possible, use a synthetic oil designed for cold weather operations. If using regular oil, warm it up in a warm water bath before adding it to the generator. 4. Prime the Fuel System Push the primer bulb several times to force fuel into the carburetor. If the generator has a choke, close it fully. 5. Start the Generator Turn the ignition key to the "Start" position for a few seconds, then release it. Repeat this process until the generator starts. 6. Adjust the Choke Once the generator starts, gradually open the choke until the engine runs smoothly. If the engine stalls, close the choke slightly and try again. 7. Monitor the Generator Once the generator is running, monitor it regularly to ensure it is operating properly. Check the oil level, fuel level, and any warning lights. Safety Precautions When starting a portable generator in cold weather, always prioritize safety: Never operate a generator indoors, as it can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning. Keep the generator away from flammable materials and liquids. Use proper grounding to prevent electrical shock. Wear appropriate clothing and gloves to protect yourself from the cold. Fuel Considerations Fresh, clean fuel that is appropriate for your generator model. Avoid using ethanol-blended fuels, as they can cause problems in cold weather. Store fuel in a cool, dry place to prevent water contamination. Maintenance Tips Regularly check the generator's air filter and replace it as needed. Clean the spark plug periodically to ensure proper ignition. Change the oil and oil filter according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Enduring Power With proper preparation and care, your portable generator will provide you with reliable power even in the coldest of weather conditions. By following these steps and adhering to safety precautions, you can ensure that you have the power you need to weather any storm. FAQs Q: Why is my generator not starting in cold weather? A: Check the battery, oil, fuel, and spark plugs. Ensure that the generator is primed and the choke is adjusted correctly. Q: How can I prevent my generator from freezing? A: Store the generator in a warm, dry place when not in use. If possible, use a winterization kit or a heated generator enclosure. Q: What type of fuel should I use in my generator in cold weather? A: Use fresh, clean fuel that is appropriate for your generator model. Avoid using ethanol-blended fuels, as they can cause problems in cold weather. Was this page helpful?YesNo Thanks for your feedback! If you're not using winterized fuel, add a fuel stabilizer to your gasoline to prevent it from degrading in the cold. If your generator has a fuel primer, use it to introduce a small amount of fuel into the carburetor. Turn the key slowly at first, then crank the engine a few times to circulate the oil. The crisp air of winter brings a sense of serenity, but it can also pose challenges, especially when it comes to starting your portable generator. While these machines are designed to be reliable, the cold can make it harder for them to fire up. Fear not, though! With some knowledge and a few simple tips, you can conquer the frigid temperatures and keep your generator running smoothly. The Cold's Impact on Your Generator Cold weather affects your generator's performance in a few key ways: Thicker Oil: Engine oil becomes thicker in cold temperatures, making it harder for the engine to turn over. Battery Power: Cold weather reduces battery power, making it harder for the battery to provide enough juice to start the engine. Fuel Evaporation: Cold temperatures can cause fuel to evaporate more slowly, making it difficult for the engine to ignite. Condensation: Moisture in the air can condense inside the generator, leading to corrosion and engine problems. Pre-Start Preparation: The Key to Success Before you even think about cranking the generator, there are a few essential steps to take: 1. Choose the Right Fuel Using the right fuel is crucial in cold weather. Winterized Fuel: Opt for winterized gasoline, which contains additives that prevent fuel from freezing and clogging the fuel lines. Fresh Fuel: Avoid using old or stale fuel, as it can gum up the engine and make starting difficult. Fuel Stabilizer: If you're not using winterized fuel, add a fuel stabilizer to your gasoline to prevent it from degrading in the cold. 2. Battery Checkup A healthy battery is critical for starting your generator in cold weather. Charge It Up: Fully charge your battery before the cold sets in. Battery Jumper Cables: Keep jumper cables handy in case your battery needs a boost. Battery Blanket: Consider using a battery blanket to keep your battery warm in extreme cold. 3. Generator Location Where you store your generator can make a big difference. Warm Environment: If possible, store your generator in a warm, dry location to prevent condensation and keep the engine oil from thickening. Protect from Elements: If you must store it outside, cover it with a tarp or generator cover to protect it from the elements. Now that you've taken the necessary precautions, it's time to start your generator. 1. Warm Up the Engine Warm Air: Use a hair dryer or heat gun to gently warm up the engine block and carburetor. Avoid Overheating: Don't overheat the engine. A few minutes of warm air should be sufficient. 2. Prime the Engine Fuel Primer: If your generator has a fuel primer, use it to introduce a small amount of fuel into the carburetor. Manual Choke: If your generator has a manual choke, engage it to restrict airflow and help the engine ignite. 3. Start the Engine Cranking: Turn the key slowly at first, then crank the engine a few times to circulate the oil. Don't Force It: If the engine doesn't start after a few attempts, stop and let it rest for a few minutes. 4. Adjust the Choke Slowly Release: Once the engine starts, slowly release the choke as the engine warms up. Full Throttle: Run the generator at full throttle for a few minutes to help it warm up completely. Troubleshooting Common Cold Weather Problems Even with the best preparation, you may encounter some problems starting your generator in cold weather. Here are some common issues and solutions: Engine Won't Turn Over: If the engine won't turn over, check the battery connections and ensure the battery is charged. If the battery is weak, use jumper cables or a battery charger. Engine Starts but Dies: If the engine starts but dies, check the fuel lines and ensure they are not frozen. You may also need to prime the engine again. Engine Runs Rough: If the engine runs rough, check the air filter and ensure it is clean. You may also need to adjust the carburetor. Once your generator is running, there are a few things you can do to keep it running smoothly in cold weather: Regular Maintenance: Perform regular maintenance checks on your generator, including changing the oil and spark plugs. Fuel Additives: Use fuel additives to prevent fuel from degrading and to keep the fuel system clean. Winterization: If you're not using your generator for an extended period, winterize it by draining the fuel and storing it in a warm, dry location. Beyond the Cold: Generator Safety Tips Proper Ventilation: Always operate your generator in a well-ventilated area to prevent carbon monoxide buildup. Never Run Indoors: Never run your generator indoors, in a garage, or any enclosed space. Fire Safety: Keep your generator away from flammable materials and ensure it is on a level surface. Extension Cords: Use heavy-duty extension cords rated for the generator's wattage. A reliable portable generator can be a lifesaver in the winter, providing power when you need it most. By following these tips, you can ensure your generator starts smoothly and runs efficiently even in the coldest temperatures. Information You Need to Know Q: Can I use a battery heater to warm up my generator's battery? A: Yes, a battery heater can help warm up your generator's battery and improve its performance in cold weather. Q: How often should I change the oil in my generator? A: Check your generator's owner's manual for specific recommendations, but it's generally recommended to change the oil every 50 hours of use or annually, whichever comes first. Q: Can I use a portable generator to power my entire house? A: Portable generators are typically designed to power a few appliances at a time. If you need to power your entire house, you'll need a larger, stationary generator. Q: How long can I run my generator on a single tank of fuel? A: The fuel consumption of your generator will vary depending on the size of the engine and the load you're running. Q: Is it okay to use ethanol-blended gasoline in my generator? A: Ethanol-blended gasoline can cause problems in generators, including fuel line corrosion and engine damage. It's best to use gasoline with a low ethanol content (10% or less) or diesel fuel. This comprehensive guide will provide you with step-by-step instructions and expert tips on how to start your portable generator in cold weather, ensuring you stay safe and warm during winter power outages. Engage the choke to restrict airflow and enrich the fuel mixture, making it easier to start the engine in cold weather. Keep the generator in a dry, well-ventilated area when not in use. Portable generators are essential for providing backup power during power outages, especially in cold weather when the need for heat and electricity becomes paramount. However, starting a portable generator in freezing temperatures can be a challenge. This comprehensive guide will provide you with step-by-step instructions and expert tips on how to start your portable generator in cold weather, ensuring you stay safe and warm during winter power outages. Safety First: Preparing for Generator Use Before starting your generator, it's crucial to prioritize safety. Follow these essential guidelines: Read the Manual: Thoroughly read your generator's user manual for specific instructions and safety precautions. Choose a Safe Location: Place your generator outdoors in a well-ventilated area, at least 20 feet away from buildings, doors, and windows. Ground the Generator: Ensure proper grounding to prevent electrical shocks. Connect the grounding wire to a metal rod driven into the ground. Fuel Considerations: Use fresh, clean fuel in accordance with the recommended fuel type for your generator. Step-by-Step Instructions: Starting a Portable Generator in Cold Weather 1. Warm Up the Engine: Remove the spark plug and drip a few drops of oil into the cylinder. Crank the engine over several times without the spark plug to distribute the oil. 2. Prime the Carburetor: Use the primer bulb to pump fuel into the carburetor. This will help start the engine. 3. Check the Choke: Engage the choke to restrict airflow and enrich the fuel mixture, making it easier to start the engine in cold weather. 4. Start the Engine: Pull the starter cord or turn the ignition key to start the engine. 5. Adjust the Choke: Once the engine starts, gradually reduce the choke to normal operating position. Troubleshooting: Common Challenges and Solutions Engine Won't Start: Check the fuel level, spark plug, and air filter. Try warming up the engine again. Engine Runs Rough: Adjust the carburetor or clean the spark plug. Check for fuel line obstructions. Generator Not Producing Power: Verify that the generator is connected to the appropriate appliances and that the circuit breakers are not tripped. Winterizing Your Generator for Optimal Performance Use Synthetic Oil: Synthetic oil remains fluid at lower temperatures, ensuring proper lubrication during cold starts. Insulate the Generator: Cover the generator with an insulated blanket or enclosure to retain heat. Store the Generator Properly: Keep the generator in a dry, well-ventilated area when not in use. Final Note: Empowering Winter Preparedness By following these steps and tips, you can confidently start your portable generator in cold weather and enjoy uninterrupted power during winter outages. Remember to prioritize safety, warm up the engine, prime the carburetor, and adjust the choke accordingly. With proper preparation and winterization, your portable generator will provide you with the peace of mind and warmth you need to weather any power outage. Frequently Asked Questions Q: Can I use an extension cord to power appliances from my portable generator? A: Yes, but use heavy-duty extension cords rated for the generator's output power. Keep the cords short and avoid overloading them. Q: How often should I run my portable generator? A: Run your generator for at least 30 minutes every month to maintain its functionality. This prevents fuel from going stale and ensures the engine remains in good condition. Q: What should I do if my generator starts smoking? A: Stop the generator immediately and allow it to cool down. Check for fuel leaks, electrical shorts, or other potential hazards. Contact a qualified technician or generator technician for assistance. So when the power goes out, you don't freak out, you just go to the generator that you purchased months ago, with the confidence that you'll have lights and running appliances in a few minutes. But what do you do when the generator just won't start? Extremely cold temperatures make just about everything malfunction, including the generator that you so badly need. Knowing how to start a generator in cold weather will save you an avoidable headache. Keep reading for some basic tips on how to avoid this scenario and what to do when your generator still won't start. Prevent the Problem Before the dead of winter hits and subzero temperatures threaten your power source, perform basic maintenance tasks on your generator. You want to ensure that when the power goes out, you're ready. Begin with these basic steps. Read the Manual Begin at the beginning by reading your user's manual. Make this a discipline by reading every page like your life depends on it, because it may. Seek to understand the procedures including how to start the generator when cold temperatures assault you. Pay special attention to the troubleshooting section of the manual, and prepare yourself for the things that could go wrong. This way you're not panicking when the generator won't start as the temperatures begin to drop. Protect the Generator While you may run your generator outside, you should not store your generator outside. If you do not have space in your basement or home, cover the ventilator and put it in a storage shed away from the elements. Protect your generator's battery by bringing it inside. Store it at an optimum temperature to help it maintain a charge without a specific battery charger. If you're using a portable generator, you will want your storage area to be different than the running area. When the power goes out, make sure you position your generator in a place with plenty of ventilation so you do not cause undue harm to yourself or your family. Use Fresh Fuel If your generator has sat with fuel in the tank for a year, you need to siphon out the gas and use fresh fuel that sits in a can for as little as 30 days can make an additive in your generator after you have used it, and always put fresh fuel in your generator. A corrosion can cause problems with your carburetor and will compromise the function of your generator. If you do not use fresh fuel and instead attempt to use old fuel currently in the generator, not only will your generator not start, but you may end up needing an entirely new unit. What do you do if you've done everything perfectly but the portable generator still won't start? Extremely cold temperatures make just about everything malfunction, including the generator that you so badly need. Knowing how to start a generator in cold weather will save you an avoidable headache. Keep reading for some basic tips on how to avoid this scenario and what to do when your generator still won't start. Prevent the Problem Before the dead of winter hits and subzero temperatures threaten your power source, perform basic maintenance tasks on your generator. You want to ensure that when the power goes out, you're ready. Begin with these basic steps. Read the Manual Begin at the beginning by reading your user's manual. Make this a discipline by reading every page like your life depends on it, because it may. Seek to understand the procedures including how to start the generator when cold temperatures assault you. Pay special attention to the troubleshooting section of the manual, and prepare yourself for the things that could go wrong. This way you're not panicking when the generator won't start as the temperatures begin to drop. Protect the Generator While you may run your generator outside, you should not store your generator outside. If you do not have space in your basement or home, cover the ventilator and put it in a storage shed away from the elements. Protect your generator's battery by bringing it inside. Store it at an optimum temperature to help it maintain a charge without a specific battery charger. If you're using a portable generator, you will want your storage area to be different than the running area. When the power goes out, make sure you position your generator in a place with plenty of ventilation so you do not cause undue harm to yourself or your family. Use Fresh Fuel If your generator has sat with fuel in the tank for a year, you need to siphon out the gas and use fresh fuel that sits in a can for as little as 30 days can make an additive in your generator after you have used it, and always put fresh fuel in your generator. A corrosion can cause problems with your carburetor and will compromise the function of your generator. If you do not use fresh fuel and instead attempt to use old fuel currently in the generator, not only will your generator not start, but you may end up needing an entirely new unit. What do you do if you've done everything perfectly but the portable generator still won't start? Extremely cold temperatures make just about everything malfunction, including the generator that you so badly need. Knowing how to start a generator in cold weather will save you an avoidable headache. Keep reading for some basic tips on how to avoid this scenario and what to do when your generator still won't start. 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