

HOW TO REPAIR A WHIRLPOOL SIDE-BY-SIDE REFRIGERATOR THAT WILL NOT COOL - COMPRESSOR RUNS - THEN CUTS-OUT!



The problem started when my son told me early one morning
“everything in the freezer is liquefying!”



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I'm no professional technician, just a hard working dad trying to save a few bucks because I cannot afford a technician to repair stuff that break-down in my home. The first thing I did was **verify the problem**. All the ice in the icemaker container was melting, so I ran outside and grabbed my cooler and poured in all the ice. I packed all my perishable items into the cooler to prevent a total panic from my wife.

Once the food was safely removed, I **unplugged the refrigerator**. I pulled off the lower back refrigerator cover with a flat-tipped screwdriver to gain access to the compressor. I then removed the wire connection at the compressor to **test for voltage** with my multi-meter (plug the refrigerator back in but be careful not to touch wires with your hand. **You can be electrocuted**). It should show 115 - 127v AC. Next, unplug the refrigerator and **remove the overload / relay** from the compressor – remove the large clip surrounding the relay and pull it forward. The relay should come off easily.

At this point, shake the relay – if it rattles violently skip the next paragraph and go ahead and replace the relay. If no rattle is heard, follow the test procedures below...



With the overload relay removed from the compressor, take an ohmmeter and touch any two prongs on the compressor with the test leads. There should be continuity between each of the three prongs on the side of the compressor. No continuity between any of the 3 (A, B or c) means the compressor is bad. Now touch one prong on the compressor and any part of the copper tubing to the compressor - if you get continuity, the compressor is shorted and must be replaced. If no continuity to the copper tubing and continuity to all 3 prongs, **replace the overload / relay**.

My next step was to visit an electrical supply store to see if they had the part I needed. Like everything else in my small town, the parts guy told me it had to be ordered and would take 3 days to arrive. Can you imagine the look on my face – not having a refrigerator for 3 days. The parts guy offered a temporary alternative, a **hard start capacitor** for the ¼ hp compressor. The original part cost \$60.00, and the hard start capacitor \$7.50 without tax. Quite naturally, I ordered the new part and installed the temporary capacitor. The hook-up instructions were simple...



1. Place the red lead on Terminal A (Start)
2. Place the white lead on Terminal B (Run)
3. Place the black lead on Terminal C (Common)
4. The last 2 black leads on the capacitor were power leads. Use the twist caps provided with the kit to connect the capacitor wires to compressor terminals you previously removed. This requires cutting of your wires so follow the instructions provided with the capacitor to ensure a safe installation.

You're almost finished...

Before reinstalling the back cover, take a vacuum cleaner and clean out all the dust from around the compressor area. While inside, clean and lubricate the fan motor and make sure that all your connections are tight. Now reinstall the back cover.





Most importantly, remove the lower front cover and clean the condenser coils. This is a little harder than it looks because you are cleaning underneath the refrigerator. Like most service guys, I wanted to use compressed air, but this would have been a disaster inside my home (besides, my wife would have killed me – so to speak). Surprisingly, I took a spray bottle and sprayed streams of water across the coils and the weight of the water pulled the dirt straight to the floor. I wiped up the floor and the coils looked like new.

The manufacturer recommends setting all controls to factory defaults and letting the refrigerator run for 16 – 24 hours before final adjustments. Clean the coils once every year, and not every 8 years (like my dumb self) or when a part fails. Don't forget to throw out the first batch of ice from the ice maker.



You just save yourself nearly \$600 in repair costs and/or replacement of a new refrigerator!

Plug it up and you're done...!

Send Comments to bbyrd@freestuffinder.org

Notes:

I concluded that the part failed because of excessive head pressure from dirt build-up on the coils.

Lack of maintenance was half the blame – the other half was poor design and placement of the coils near the floor where they attract dirt. Watch news video <http://bcove.me/pfj9hpz2> on the fire danger of Whirlpool, Kenmore, and Maytag refrigerators 2002 – 2004 with defective relays.

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