

# Laptop Power Saving Tips

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## Laptop Power Tips (Part 1)

With their size, convenience and drop in price it's not surprising that recently laptop sales took over desktops. However the main issue with laptops still remains &ndash; battery life. Cheap laptops have small batteries, but even those with larger capacity batteries get worse over time. So how do you optimise your battery life?

1. Dim your screen. The display is one of the biggest power drains on your laptop. All laptops let you set the brightness so set yours to the minimum comfortable.
2. Cut down on programs running in the background. Things like program auto-updaters, Desktop Search, iTunes all use your CPU so drain the battery. If you don't need it, disable it when using the battery or uninstall it completely.
3. Unplug external USB devices. USB devices are one of the biggest power drains on any laptop. So if you don't need it, unplug your printer, memory stick, iPod and never charge your mobile phone via the laptop on battery &ndash; this will wipe your charge in no time.
4. Add more RAM (memory). If you don't have enough RAM for the tasks you are doing your computer has to &ldquo;swap&rdquo; the information in RAM onto the hard drive, back and forth. It uses a lot more power to continually copy information back and forth from the hard drive than it does to just have enough room for it to stay in RAM.
5. Run off the hard drive rather than CD/DVD. Spinning the CD/DVD drive uses a lot of power. If you have data on a CD you need to work on, copy it to the hard drive before you leave home or the office and work on it from there. If you watch DVDs on your laptop when travelling, copy the DVD to the hard drive before you leave as well.
6. Charge and use the battery to optimise its life. Don't leave a charged up battery sitting doing nothing for long periods. When charged you should use the battery at least once every two to three weeks. Don't let a Li-On battery completely discharge either. The old method of completely discharging a battery then charging it up doesn't apply to current laptop batteries, only older ones with memory effects.
7. If you need to suspend your computer, use Hibernate and not Standby. Both methods allow you to resume your laptop when you left off with your programs open, but hibernate copies the state to the hard drive then completely shuts the PC off where Standby copies the state to the memory so needs to keep running off the battery to remember where you were up to. More power saving tips next time!