Tech Quick Tips

4 Ways to Increase Your Laptop Battery Life and Charge

1. Keep the Vents Clear

Never ever sit your laptop on a couch cushion, or on a mattress, or anything soft that hinders airflow through the little slot on the bottom and sides of your machine. Those vents can suck up dust and debris, clogging up the fans and causing your laptop to work harder. And, the harder the machine works, the more battery power it is going to require. If you hear a loud buzzing (like a fan spinning really fast), or your laptop base is so hot you could cook an egg on it, chances are you should consider moving to a tabletop or hard surface to work on.

2. Keep the Screen Brightness Down

When you do not need the screen brightness cranked up, turn it down. The screen is the number one battery drain on any mobile device, including your laptop. Adjusting this setting through the Power Options will prove beneficial, I promise. If you are using Windows 7, Windows 8, or Windows 10, type "Power" in the search field by the power menu. Click on "Power Options," and notice the slide bar at the bottom of that window, aptly named "Screen Brightness." You can adjust accordingly from here. Make sure to keep the backlight to a minimum.

3. Hibernate and Sleep

While you are in the Power Setting menu, you can tweak your Power Plan to help optimize battery life. Two settings to note are the "Choose when to turn off the display" and "Change when the computer sleeps" commands. These are listed on the left-hand side of the window and can also be accessed by clicking the "Change Plan Settings" link in the middle of the same window. In this menu, you have the ability to tell your computer what to do when it is plugged in, and when it is not plugged in. When you are just running on battery power and are not hooked up to any outlets, adjust the display to turn off or dim after a short period of time. Essentially, you want your laptop to hibernate and sleep sooner when it's inactive and not being charged.

4. Unplug When Charged

When the battery is full and the laptop is not in use, unplug it from the charger. Generally speaking, and according to Battery University, a battery will give you 300 to 500 full discharge cycles or charges. Keeping it plugged in can significantly decrease the amount of charges that this battery can take. Keeping that juice flowing when the laptop battery is full can be damaging to some batteries. Battery University even recommends operating your laptop between forty and eighty percent battery life to get the most life out of the battery.