

ISSUES WITH LAPTOPS

Generate a battery report for laptop computers

Windows 10 includes a very useful feature for laptop users that lets you see the charging history and capacity of your battery. Over time batteries hold less and less of a charge so this report can be very helpful as you anticipate the possible need to purchase a replacement battery or a new computer.

Follow these steps:

1. Press Windows + X
2. Click on Command Prompt (Admin).
3. At the Command Prompt, type `cd\` then press Enter.
4. Type `powercfg /batteryreport` then press Enter. (note the space after the g in powercfg)
5. A Battery Life Report will be saved to C:\BATTERY-REPORT.HTML
6. You will be able to access this report via File Explorer (Windows key + E).

Disable your touchpad while typing

When you are typing a text on your laptop and your thumb accidentally brushes the touchpad, this contributes to an unwanted change in the position of the cursor in your document and you need to start typing again.

Some touchpads can be turned off by opening the mouse in the control panel and disabling the function.

Most laptops recognize the keyboard shortcut of either Fn + F6 or Fn + F8 to temporarily disable the touchpad. Unfortunately, this approach is not permanent and must be done after each reboot.

To find out how you can turn off the touchpad on your laptop, go to the manufacturer's Website and type *disable the touchpad* in the search or find box.

Some laptops don't have dedicated buttons but you can use Function keys (like Fn + F5 on Dell computers) to toggle the state of your touch pad. In the case of HP laptops, you can hold the top-left corner of the touchpad for few seconds and it will disable the touch pad – repeat this to re-activate it.

New laptop computers either have a physical on/off button to easily disable the touch pad or there's an icon in the system tray that lets you manage the various settings of the touchpad. If you don't have that icon, you can go to Control Panel – > Mouse Properties – > Touch Pad to enable or disable the touchpad.

The touch pad can also be disabled through the device manager (Windows + X, then M). Expand “Mice and other Pointing devices”, right-click and disable the driver entry that says Touch pad or something similar.

If none of the above solutions work for your brand of laptop, try TouchPad Pal – it's a free Windows utility that will temporarily disable the touchpad of your laptop as you go into typing mode. The utility runs in the system tray and requires no configuration.

Suggestions for extending your laptop's battery life

It's important to understand what drains the most power in your laptop. In modern laptops, the monitor consumes about 43 per cent of normal operating power. Inside the unit, the video, graphics, audio, math coprocessor, etc. eat another 22 per cent. The central processing unit accounts for 9 per cent of power consumption, while a graphics processor takes another 8 per cent. The hard drive takes only 5 per cent, and network adapters consume only 4 per cent. **So obviously, power conservation efforts should focus first on the monitor.**

How to tweak your settings to save battery power on your laptop

Microsoft Windows has a **Power Options** section (Windows + X, then O) that can help you optimize your laptop's performance with regard to the trade-off with power consumption. You can use one of the pre-defined Power Plans that will be activated depending on whether you're operating on battery or wall power. The plans control how bright the display is; when to turn off the display during periods of inactivity; when to turn off the hard drive to

save power; and what CPU performance level to use when on battery power. Tweaking these plans to fit your computing habits and performance needs can extend battery life significantly.

You can also **manually adjust the display brightness** to suit the environment; you don't really need the brightest setting in a dim family room or den. On most laptops, you can change the screen brightness by holding down the **Fn** button and pressing one of the function keys on the top row of the keyboard. On a Toshiba laptop, for example, Fn+F6 reduces the brightness, and Fn+F7 will make it brighter. On Lenovo laptops, it's the up arrow and down arrow. When power is low, turn it down as much as possible.

To further stretch your battery time, **avoid video games, listening to music, watching videos** (especially high-resolution videos) and other graphics-intensive applications while on battery.

Turn off the wifi adapter if you don't need to access the Internet.

Don't try to charge your smart phone via the laptop's USB, if your computer's battery life is dwindling.