

TIP # 7

Occasional Discharge and Recharges Can Help “Calibrate” the Battery. But Should I Leave It Plugged In or Not?

Ultimately, it's not clear which is worse for a battery. Leaving the battery at 100% capacity will decrease its lifespan, but running it through repeated discharge and recharge cycles will also decrease its lifespan. Basically, whatever you do, your battery will wear down and lose capacity. That's just how batteries work. The real question is what makes it die more slowly.

Laptop manufacturers are all over the place on this. Apple used to advise against leaving MacBooks plugged in all the time, but their [battery advice page](#) no longer has this piece of advice on it. Some PC manufacturers say leaving a laptop plugged in all the time is fine, while others recommend against it with no apparent reason.

Apple used to advise charging and discharging the laptop's battery at least once per month, but no longer does so. If you're concerned about leaving your laptop plugged in all the time (even if it's a PC laptop), you might want to put it through a charge cycle once per month (till the battery displays 10% or less, then plug in to reach 100% again) just to be safe. Apple used to recommend this to “keep the battery juices flowing”. But whether this will help depends on the device and its battery technology, so there's really no one-size-fits-all answer.