This article reviews common hardware issues that can affect both personal and College devices. Read on to learn how to avoid and address each of these issues!

See also:
- Back up files: Why, where, and how
- Shipping devices to LITS

Battery swell

Warning: A swollen battery is a fire hazard and can ignite if damaged.

Batteries slowly change shape over their lifespan, but this process can be worsened through bad charging habits or a poor quality battery. Check the frame of your laptop or phone for signs of warping - try placing the device on a flat surface and see if it is wobbly or unbalanced.

How to avoid:
- Turn off your device when not in-use (e.g., overnight)
- Unplug your device when it reaches 100% charge
- Do not store your device in environments with extreme temperatures

**How to resolve:**

- Stop using the device and turn it off immediately
- Unplug any cables or accessories
- Avoid putting pressure on the device
- **Personal device:** Contact the device's manufacturer or a local repair shop
- **College device:** Contact the Help Desk for a replacement and/or repair

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### Cable fray

**Warning:** Avoid using frayed cables, as there's a risk of electrical shock.

The shielding around modern cables can withstand a fair amount of wear and tear. However, bending the cable or wrapping it tightly can cause specific “joints” in the cable to wear out more quickly and potentially **break the shielding** or the cabling itself.

**How to avoid:**

- Wrap cables with some slack
- Avoid pinching cables or using angles of 90° or less

**How to resolve:**
- Replace with a new cable
- **College-owned devices:** Contact the Help Desk for a replacement

## Cracked display

Laptop and phone displays are **fragile** and prone to cracking, especially when subjected to **sudden force** (e.g., a drop) or **sustained pressure** (e.g., between or underneath heavy books in a backpack).

### How to avoid:

- When transporting your device, use a padded carrying case
- Always close your laptop's lid when carrying it
- Do not close your laptop's lid when item(s) or debris is on the keyboard

### How to resolve:

- **Personal device:** Contact the device's manufacturer or a [local repair shop](#)
- **College-owned devices:** Contact the Help Desk for a repair

## Liquid damage

**Warning:** If you suspect your device has liquid damage, turn it off immediately and **DO NOT** turn it back on.
Liquid damage is one of the most common and harmful issues to befall an electronic device. It can happen directly (e.g., spilling a liquid on the device chassis) or indirectly (e.g., storage in a humid environment).

How to avoid:

- When transporting your device, use a water-resistant carrying case
- Do not keep open liquid containers near your device
- Avoid placing your device near sources of condensation (e.g., air-conditioning units or beverages)

How to resolve:

- Stop using the device and immediately turn it off by holding down the power button for ~10 seconds
- Unplug any cables or accessories
- Open the laptop, place it on a flat surface like a tent, and let it sit for at least 48 hours
  - Ensure the device is turned OFF
- Point a fan at the device for additional airflow
- **Personal device:** Contact the device's manufacturer or a local repair shop before you power it on
  - Contact the Help Desk to ensure your device is properly dried
- **College device:** Contact the Help Desk for a replacement and/or repair before you power it on

Questions?

If you have any additional questions or problems, don't hesitate to reach out to the Help Desk!

**Phone:** 610-526-7440 | **Library and Help Desk hours**
**Email:** help@brynmawr.edu | **Service catalog**
**Location:** Canaday Library 1st floor