

Common hardware issues

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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

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.

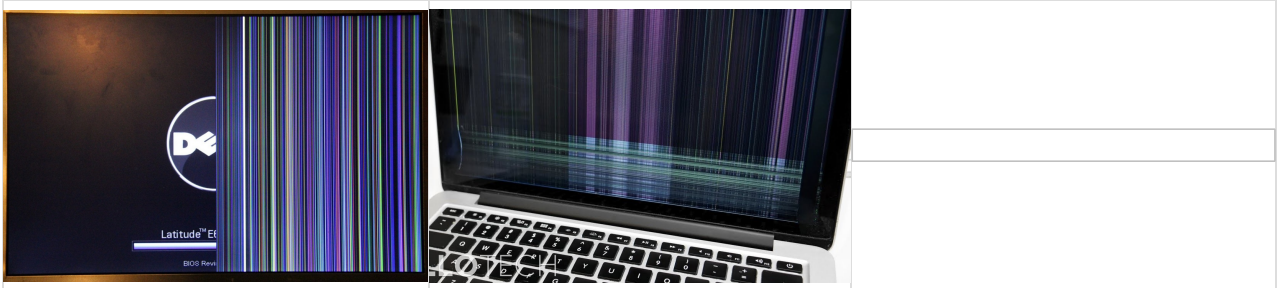
How to avoid:

- 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:

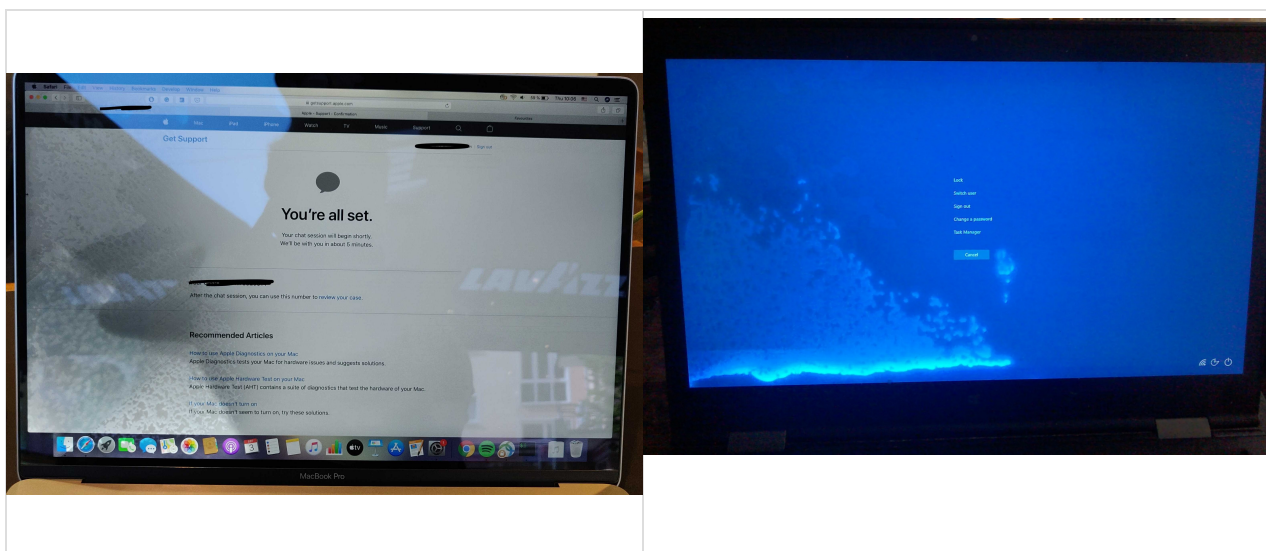
- When transporting your device, use a padded carrying case
- Always close your laptop's lid when carrying it
- Do not close your laptop's lid when item(s) or debris is on the keyboard

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

