

Southern Districts Computer Users Club Inc

Supporting inexperienced users with local expertise



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Club Web Site <http://sdcuci.com>
Email Address: sdcucinc@gmail.com

MEETINGS are held on the third Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm, in the Hall at the rear of St Mary's Catholic Church Morphett Vale. (Corner Bains Rd and Main South Rd)

Visitors most welcome.

After three visits, visitors will be requested to become members.

Cost \$3 per person, which includes the Newsletter, plus coffee/tea and biscuits. Subscriptions for twelve months Single \$20. Family membership \$30.

Novice and experienced computer users will be warmly



FROM THE COMMITTEE

WE WISH YOU THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND FRIENDSHIP IN THE PAST YEAR



WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEW YEAR TO CONTINUE OUR FRIENDSHIP AND SHARE OUR COMPUTER EXPERIENCE

How to Calibrate Your Laptop's Battery for Accurate Battery Life Estimates

So you're using your laptop and, all of the sudden, it dies. There was no battery warning from Windows—in fact, you recently checked and Windows said you had 30% battery power left. What's going on?

Even if you treat your laptop's battery properly, its capacity will decrease over time. Its built-in power meter estimates how much juice is available and how much time on battery you have left—but it can sometimes give you incorrect estimates.

This basic technique will work in Windows 10, 8, 7, Vista. Really, it will work for any device with a battery, including older MacBooks. It may not work on some newer devices, however.

Why Calibrating the Battery Is Necessary

If you're taking proper care of your laptop's battery, you should be allowing it to discharge somewhat before plugging it back in and topping it up. You shouldn't be allowing your laptop's battery to die completely each time you use it, or even get extremely low. Performing regular top-ups will extend your battery's life.

However, this sort of behavior can confuse the laptop's battery meter. No matter how well you take care of the battery, its capacity will still decrease as a result of unavoidable factors like typical usage, age, and heat. If the battery isn't allowed to run from 100% down to 0% *occasionally*, the battery's power meter won't know how much juice is actually in the battery. That means your laptop may think it's at 30% capacity when it's really at 1%—and then it shuts down unexpectedly.

Calibrating the battery won't give you longer battery life, but it will give you more accurate estimates of how much battery power your device has left.

How Often Should You Calibrate the Battery?

Manufacturers that do recommend calibration often calibrating the battery every two to three months. This helps keep your battery readings accurate.

In reality, you likely don't have to do this that often if you're not too worried about your laptop's battery readings being completely precise. However, if you don't calibrate your battery regularly, you may eventually find your laptop suddenly dying on you when you're using it—without any prior warnings. When this happens, it's definitely time to calibrate the battery.

Some modern devices may not require battery calibration at all. For example, Apple recommends battery calibration for older Macs with user-replaceable batteries, but says it's not required for modern portable Macs with built-in batteries. Check your device manufacturer's documentation to learn whether battery calibration is necessary on your device or not.



How to Calibrate Your Laptop's Battery for Accurate Battery Life Estimates

Basic Calibration Instructions

How to Manually Calibrate a Battery

While it's a good idea to use any included utilities or just follow instructions specific to your laptop, you can also perform battery calibration without any specialized tools. The basic process is simple:

Charge your laptop's battery to full—that's 100%.

Let the battery rest for at least two hours, leaving the computer plugged in. This will ensure that the battery is cool and not still hot from the charging process. You're free to use your computer normally while it's plugged in, but be sure it doesn't get too hot. You want it to cool down.

Go into your computer's power management settings and set it to automatically hibernate at 5% battery. To find these options, head to Control Panel > Hardware and Sound > Power Options > Change plan settings > Change advanced power settings. Look under the "Battery" category for the "Critical battery action" and "Critical battery level" options. (If you can't set it to 5%, just set it as low as you can—for example, on one of our PCs, we couldn't set these options below 7% battery.)

Pull the power plug and leave your laptop running and discharging until it automatically hibernates. You can keep using your computer normally while this happens.

NOTE: If you want to calibrate the battery while you aren't using the computer, be sure your computer isn't set to automatically sleep, hibernate, or turn its display off while idle. If your computer automatically enters power-saving mode while you're away, it will save power and won't discharge properly. To find these options, head to Control Panel > Hardware and Sound > Power Options > Change plan settings.

- Allow your computer to sit for five hours or so after it automatically hibernates or shuts down.
- Plug your computer back into the outlet and charge it all the way back up to 100%. You can keep using your computer normally while it charges.

Ensure any power management settings are set to their normal values. For example, you probably want your computer to automatically power off the display and then go to sleep when you're not using it to save battery power. You can change these settings while the computer charges.

Your laptop should now be reporting a more accurate amount of battery life, sparing you any surprise shutdowns and giving you a better idea of how much battery power you have at any given time.

The key to calibration is allowing the battery to run from 100% to almost empty, then charging it all the way up to happen in normal use. Once charge cycle, the battery will and report more accurate



100% again, which may not you've gone through this full know how much juice it has readings.



The Legend of Carols by Candlelight

By Bob Byrne on December 14, 2014 in Events

Carols by Candlelight this year at Elder Park promises to be a fantastic event, continuing the tradition that commenced in Adelaide 70 years ago.

The legend behind Carols by Candlelight dates back to the 19th century, when Cornish Miners in Moonta are said to have gathered on Christmas Eve to sing carols, lit with candles stuck to the brims of their safety hats.

The idea then spread to Melbourne and was first popularised in 1938 by Norman Banks, a young radio announcer on 3KZ. Whilst walking home from his night-time radio shift on Christmas Eve in 1937, he passed a window and saw inside an elderly woman sitting up in bed, listening to "Away in a Manger" being played on the radio and singing along, with her face lit by candlelight.

Young Norman wondered how many others spent Christmas alone and he had the idea to gather a large group of people to all sing Christmas carols together by candlelight. The first ever such event was held the very next year at Christmas time, 1938, and was attended by around 10,000 people.

The first Carols was held in Elder Park in 1944. 50,000 people turned up for that first event, one person in ten in SA at that time

The first Carols in Adelaide was held at Elder Park on Christmas Eve in 1944. That initial event was organised jointly by The Commercial Travellers' Association of South Australia and The Advertiser Broadcasting radio station 5AD (now Mix 102FM).

On that Christmas Eve, a candle lit crowd radiated out from the rotunda across the lawns of the Park. The estimated crowd that evening was put at 50,000, or one in 10 people in South Australia at that time. Carol singing was led by the CTA men's choir from the existing rotunda in the park, with the proceeds distributed to several Adelaide charitable institutions.

Throughout those two decades you'll remember that the Carols were always presented from the Advertiser Sound Shell, which had been donated to the people of Adelaide by the newspaper for the staging of concerts in the park. The 'sound shell' or concert stage, was constructed to the west of the rotunda and nearer to the lake. It was backed by a wall of large trees that shielded the nearby Cheer-Up Hut from the park.

The *Advertiser* Sound Shell opened on 17 December 1954 to commemorate the visit of Queen Elizabeth II and in time for the Carols that year. The sloping grounds in front of it could seat up to 50 000 people. It stood in Elder Park for almost two decades until it was demolished in 1972 to make way for the construction of the Festival Centre complex.

The presentation of the Carols has progressed over the years and high profile artists have been added to the program but the theme of Christmas has been steadfastly maintained. The programme continues to be a much-loved family Christmas attraction at which the elderly join the very young to sing their favourite traditional carols and are delighted by the sight of a sea of flickering candles across the park.

Carols by Candlelight has become not just a traditional Christmas event in our city but is also a significant moment for many families who gather each year, lay out the picnic rug on the lawn, break bread and celebrate another Christmas time together.

For 70 years it has been enjoyed by thousands and is an icon on the state's Christmas calendar.

Foolish Tech Predictions

"Television won't be able to hold on to any market it captures after the first six months. People will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night."

Darryl Zanuck, executive at 20th Century Fox, 1946

By 1946, movie executive Darryl Zanuck had already cemented his place in entertainment history as the producer of more than 100 films for the big silver screen. So who could have blamed him for underestimating the power of the small blue screen? I'm guessing that if Zanuck were alive today, he'd find himself just as mesmerized as the rest of us by the mind-crushing distortion loop that modern TV programming has become.



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How to care for your AC power adapter and cable

- ONLY use the A/C adaptor supplied with your notebook. Mobile PCs are very sensitive to power variation, and the incorrect cable can cause serious damage.

Label adapters

- Take care with power and network cables. Place them where no-one can trip over them. If someone trips over a cable, it can drag your notebook to the edge of the desk and cause it to fall to the floor.
- Do not wrap the cord around the AC Adapter as this can cause kinks and cable failure. Instead, loosely gather the cord and secure with Velcro strap.



Label adapters



THE PRESIDENTS PAGE



And so ends another productive and interesting year. We have been spoilt by the variety of presentations at our meetings and hopefully we have learnt a few new things.

The number of members attending meetings has been quite encouraging. I think it indicates that we are heading in the right direction. However, it is fairly obvious that the computing world is changing very quickly and that we as a club need to change accordingly. This is the challenge facing the committee.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the support from our members with regard to our fundraising efforts. The club would not be in the strong financial position it is without that support. Thank you.

The silly season is almost upon us. On behalf of the entire committee I wish you all a very happy and exciting Christmas and may the new year be prosperous, peaceful and fulfilling.

Happy computing (on whatever device you may be using).

MEETING RULES

We are allowed to use the facilities at the Hall at the rear of St Mary's Catholic Church Morphett Vale. (Corner Bains Road and Main South Road) in return of a small fee plus respect for their property. We ask for your co-operation in respect to the above. While we can not control what our members do away from our club meetings, Piracy of copyright material can not be condoned at our meetings.

The History of 'The Twelve Days of Christmas'

The song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" is an English Christmas carol.

From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of the Church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality which the children could remember. The "True Love" one hears in the song is not a smitten boy or girlfriend but Jesus Christ, because truly Love was born on Christmas Day. The partridge in the pear tree also represents Him because that bird is willing to sacrifice its life if necessary to protect its young by feigning injury to draw away predators.:

The two turtle doves were the Old and New Testaments

The three French hens stood for faith, hope, and love.

The four calling birds were the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

The five golden rings represented the first five books of the Old Testament, which describe man's fall into sin and the great love of God in sending a Savior.

The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation.

Seven swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit-----Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership, and Mercy.

The eight maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes.

Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit-----Charity, Joy, Peace, Patience [Forbearance], Goodness [Kindness], Mildness, Fidelity, Modesty, Continency [Chastity].

The ten lords a-leaping were the Ten Commandments.

The eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful Apostles.

The twelve drummers drumming symbolized the twelve points of belief in The Apostles' Creed.

Original Source: Fr. Calvin Goodwin, FSSP, Nebraska

Printed with permission from Catholic Tradition.

Our November Meeting



Was a very well received presentation by Lindsay Chuck.

A Look at Google.

Google is an American multinational technology company specialising in internet related services and products. Founded 4th September 1998 in Menlo Park, California by Larry Page and Sergey Brin who control 56% of stockholder voting power through supervoting stock. Current Market value is \$527 billion. Data centres are spread throughout the world to handle the massive amount of data the company has control over and in researching this article there were 210 listed products and services. This figure continues to change. Alexa (a company that monitors commercial web traffic) lists Google as the most visited website in the world. Who hasn't heard of Google?

Privacy – Consider privacy. Everything you do in your Google account is tracked by Google.

Google services and products I use include; Books, Cloud print, Gmail, Google+, Payments, Youtube, Blogger, Chrome, Drive, Play Music, Maps, Tasks, Photos, Calendar, Search, Groups, Contacts, Translate, Docs and Android.

Google Search – Is one of the world's most popular search engines. Statcounter Global Stats for October 2017 provide these usage figures – Chrome 91.47%, Bing 2.75% and Yahoo 2.25%.

Gmail

– The reason I moved to Gmail – Previously I was with iprimus, on moving house I was unable to remain with iprimus and changed to three. Three merged with Vodafone who don't provide an email service. As I wanted a stable email address I opened a free Gmail account.

To create a Google Account – Go to your browser ie Chrome/Firefox – type *create Gmail* > select and click on the applicable website. Follow the instructions. Have your smartphone handy for verification or use a second email address for recovery purposes.



Our November Meeting



Was a very well received presentation by Lindsay Chuck.

A Look at Google.

Themes – Themes (pictures including your own photos), display in the background of your Gmail account. To access themes Go to Settings > Themes then scroll through until you find one you like.

- *Contacts* – Go to Gmail in top left hand corner, click arrow, click contacts. You can create groups to send emails to multiple people at the one time.
- *Tasks* – Go to Gmail in top left hand corner, click tasks > create task lists > minimise/print.
- *Search your emails* – At the top of emails there is a white blank field. Search emails by person or subject. Click on arrow head > right end of field to access a filter – Date/size fields available.
- Google Products > Click on the nine dots top right hand corner >
 - Drive – 15GB free storage. Create folders. Color code (optional). Share folders and files.
 - Translate – type text you want to hear in a different language. Edit text to another language.
 - Docs – Doc (word)/Sheets (spreadsheet)/Slides (presentation)
 - Photos – Available for Apple/Microsoft/Linux/Android. – Backup your photos. Create albums. Facial recognition. Search by places. Things. Backup videos. Share one photo, or all of your photos. Great app when travelling > take photos with smartphone or tablet > backup to internet.

My Account Activity – Click on circle icon top right hand corner > My account > scroll down to my activity > Go To My Activity – View your history of devices and products used. Also see option on left hand side.

Converting PDFs to editable text will feature in another article.

In conclusion, spend time to explore the above products/services, and many more that are available. You won't be disappointed

Why Would You Need to Eject a Drive?

If your drive (or device) connects using the USB Mass Storage protocol then it should ideally be ejected. Flash drives today are not just about storing your important files: you can use them to run programs and even entire operating systems.

This applies even if you're not actually using the device at the time.

The reason is because operating systems use a process called *write caching*. The operating system doesn't always write a file to a drive immediately, but instead caches it and waits until it has multiple write operations to complete.

Doing these all at once improves performance, but if the cache is still full when you remove the drive, your data will become corrupted. Clicking the Eject button causes the cache to be emptied and any remaining data to be written to the drive.

That's the reason why there's often a delay of several seconds between ejecting the drive and being notified that it's safe to remove it.

There are also potential issues with the abrupt removal of the power supply from a flash drive. Flash memory is susceptible to this, and it can cause parts of the drive to become corrupt.

Ejecting a Drive

By default, Windows has write caching disabled. This results in slightly inferior performance when writing to the drive, but also adds a layer of security to the many users who forget to ever eject them.

If you're not concerned about the risks, you can activate write caching on drive-by-drive basis.

To do this, locate the Device Manager on your PC — **Control Panel > Hardware and Sound > Hardware and Printers > Device Manager** on Windows 7; or right-click in the bottom left corner of the screen and choose Device Manager on Windows 8.

Right-click on the attached drive, click the Policies tab, change the removal policy to "Better Performance", and enable write caching setting accordingly.

If you do this, you will always need to ensure you eject the drive via the Safely Remove Hardware option in the system tray.

And just to note, write caching is already enabled on internal drives by default and you shouldn't disable this as you will notice a significant drop in responsiveness.

A Quick Word about Hard Drives

So far we've been talking about flash drives. If you're using an external hard drive then you should **always** eject it before you disconnect.

Most modern external hard drives are powered over the USB connection. Cutting the power while the drive is in use could cause a head crash. This is where the head, which swings back and forth just above the spinning disk to read and write data, comes into direct contact with the disk and causes damage.

Disclaimer: The information contained herein is of a general nature. Always do your own research and seek advice before proceeding on information you don't understand.

Firefox Chooses Google As Default Search Engine To Replace Yahoo

By Trevor Charles on November 15, 2017 2:18 pm in Technology

With the release of Firefox Quantum, Mozilla Firefox launched what is probably the greatest update of its browser in recent times. Firefox has become lighter and faster, and you should indeed try it. As you browse using Firefox, you will notice also that Firefox chooses Google as the default search engine. This means that Google replaces Yahoo, at least for users living in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Canada, and the United States.

This move seems to have come as a big blow for Verizon's Yahoo, whose engine has been the default choice in Mozilla Firefox for the past four years since the firm signed a five-year deal with Mozilla Firefox. Clearly, the deal has ended prematurely in an unprecedented manner, and Yahoo is now talking about the terms of its previous contract with Mozilla.

Firefox chooses Google for better service

According to Denelle Dixon, Mozilla's chief business and legal officer, Firefox chooses Google for various reasons, including what is best for its brand, its effort to offer quality website searches, and the bigger content experience for its users.

The Firefox browser has been using Google as its default in some countries, but since it signed the five-year deal with Yahoo, it has maintained Yahoo as its default search engine for American users and those in a number of other countries. In 2015, Yahoo paid Mozilla \$375 million and stated that it would be paying the same amount for the next four years for the right to be Mozilla Firefox's default search engine in some strategic markets.

In 2016, it was discovered that there was a clause which stated that Mozilla could renege on the agreement if another firm or person bought Yahoo and still get about \$1 billion in annual compensation from Yahoo. Needless to say, earlier this year, Yahoo was purchased by Verizon and regardless of whether that has any effect on the five-year deal, Firefox chooses Google as a replacement.

You can still use Yahoo's search engine

Yahoo is still one of the many search engine options available to Firefox users who might prefer it over Google. However, it's the default spot that seems to make the difference for search engines, mainly because not many people go through the hassle of choosing another search engine.

Dixon stated that even though Firefox chooses Google to replace Yahoo, Mozilla still believes that there is still an opportunity to work with Yahoo.

The decision to switch to Google comes after Mozilla released its latest Firefox Quantum browser, which is 30% lighter when using memory and twice as fast as Google Chrome.

Mozilla states, "The latest version takes advantage of a new receptive engine enabling for fast switching between tabs and new features such built-in support for WebVr."

Conclusion

By choosing Google, Firefox has made Google's search engine the most common default search engine in most parts of the globe, with the exception of Russia, Kazakhstan, and Turkey, where the default engine is Yandex, and China, where Baidu is the default



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