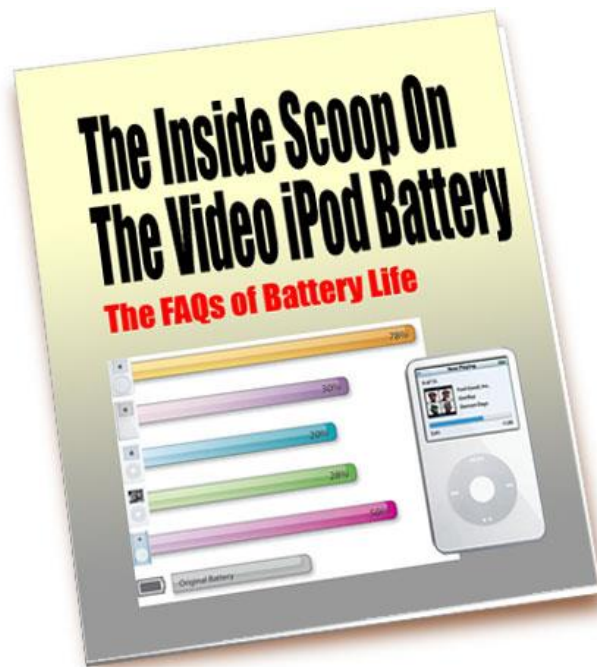


The Inside Scoop on The Video iPod Battery: The FAQs of Battery Life



So your new iPod can do lots of tricks. It can play music, videos, display photos – all on the fly. In fact, with all its features and capabilities, it's practically a media center you can carry around wherever you go! But if you really want to enjoy every minute of every day with your new iPod, then you need to learn a few things about your iPod's battery life. So, squeeze every last second from each full charge of your iPod's battery with this FAQ on getting the most from your iPod's battery.

How can I get 3+ hours of video playback on my 30 GB iPod?

Apple's advertisement rates the 30 GB iPod as capable of two hours' worth of video playback on one full charge. However, media savvy people have found out that they can play videos on their 30 GB iPod for nearly three hours straight after a full charge!

How do they do it? The answer is: COMPRESS!

If you're willing to make a couple of compromises with the way your videos play on your iPod, then compressing files is the way to go. Do that and we guarantee you get 25 minutes extra from your 30 GB iPod's battery life (more so if you have the 60 GB model).

What are these compromises I'm talking about? Well, it should come as no surprise to you that smaller videos (that is, smaller picture sizes, lower bitrates and framerates) will play longer on one charge than a video that tops out of the highest settings available.

Let's take a two-hour full-screen video file as an example. Compress it using the MPEG-4 format and scale it down to only 192 x 144 and 15 frames per second. Then, play it on your video iPod. Don't be surprised if the video plays on your iPod for three hours and four minutes straight!

It's amazing what compressing files can do to your iPod experience. It's certainly one way of getting the most out of your iPod.

Does pressing the fast-forward button really shorten battery life?

We've all heard the myth. If you keep fast-forwarding, then you are shortening your battery's life. But is it true? And if it is, how so?

Consider this fact: Your battery's life is mostly dependent upon how often the iPod's mechanical hard drive has to spin-up and read more data. This does not only apply to videos. In fact, this is mostly true for when you're listening to music – *especially* when you're SHUFFLING.

You see, here's what happens when you shuffle your music or your videos. The iPod usually spins the hard drive at regular intervals and loads up the next few songs into its solid-state memory. When you hold your iPod in your hand, you can actually feel this happening. Now, if you fast-forward through songs, you're actually emptying the memory of your iPod. As a result, the hard drive will have to spin-up again to read ahead a bunch more songs. This drains precious battery life.

Want a tip? Make some Smart Playlists so you can avoid the artists or albums that you constantly find yourself fast forwarding through.

How do I optimize my iPod battery so I can watch a long video in several sessions and know where I left off?

Okay, so you're watching a long movie, right? And then you find that you have to do something so you can't finish watching the whole thing. You stop the movie and think that you can just play it again when you're not busy. The good thing about the video iPod is that it works just like any other video file. You can just seek through the whole length of the file, looking for where you last left off watching until you find that particular scene and play it from there. However, there's a problem with this set up. It drains battery life.

When you skin through scenes, you're causing the hard drive to spin-up at each stopping point so that each time you search ahead, you've just blow a few minutes of precious battery life. How to solve this? Before you exit a long movie midway, press the center button on your iPod and note the time in the clip so you can return to it later.

Videos that are optimized for iPod playback should play for nearly three hours straight. If you really want to squeeze out an extra 20-30 minutes of video playback, you'll have to scale down your video and compress it to the point where you WILL notice a difference. Compression can cause the file to lose some of its properties so that itty-bitty blur there, or that strange contrast in the picture – that could be a result of compressing the file, rather than an actual fault in the file itself.

If you're not willing to make the compromise, you can try the other two tips we've given you and keep your settings at the following:

H.264

- Size: 320 x 240 (most widescreen movies will come in at 320 x 176 or 320 x 144)
- Bitrate: 600 Kbps
- Audio: 128 Kbps, AAC Stereo, 44 KHz

- Framerate: Same as source (or 29.97 for TV output)

MPEG-4

- Size: 320 x 240 (unless you're optimizing for TV output)
- Bitrate: 1000 Kbps
- Audio: 128 Kbps, AAC Stereo, 44 KHz
- Framerate: Same as source (or 29.97 for TV output)

How can I avoid accidentally turning on the iPod in my pocket?

Well, that's what the Hold Switch is for. The Hold Switch of your iPod can be found on the top near the headphones port. This helps prevent your iPod from accidentally turning on in your pocket or bag and draining the battery.

You can set the Hold Switch to hold just by sliding it toward the center of the iPod. You will know that the iPod is on hold because an orange bar is visible in the Hold Switch and a small Lock icon appears in the upper-left corner of the display.

At what temperature does the iPod's battery work best?

Generally, you can use iPod anywhere between 0 degrees to 35 degrees Celsius (about 32 degrees to 95 degrees Fahrenheit). However, if you want to prolong your battery's life, iPod works best at room temperature, near 20 degrees Celsius.

If you have left iPod in the cold, let it warm up to room temperature before waking it from sleep. Otherwise, a low-battery icon may appear and iPod will not wake from sleep. If after warming up, iPod does not wake from sleep, connect the power adapter, and press Menu and Play/Pause buttons until the Apple logo appears.

Here are some additional tips about the proper temperature for your iPod:

- Do not leave iPod in a vehicle's interior when parked in the sun. Temperatures may reach up to 150 degrees Fahrenheit (65 degrees Celsius).
- Do not leave iPod exposed to direct sunlight for extended periods of time.

How long does it take to fully recharge a battery?

iPod fast charges the battery to 80 percent of capacity in an hour. However, it can take 4 hours to fully recharge a battery. Even in sleep, iPod uses a small amount of current, and the battery slowly empties. Stored at optimal storage temperature, the battery will empty in 14 to 28 days.

If you want to get the most out of your battery's life, make sure that you do not charge iPod while it is in a carrying case or cover. Also, you should charge iPod when it has fully discharged even if it won't be used right away.

What other settings can I change with my iPod to save on battery?

First up is backlighting. This can use a lot of battery power so if you don't need to use it, turn it off. You can do that by following these set of instructions:

- On your iPod's display, Choose Settings
- Scroll around for Backlight Timer
- Choose Off to turn it off

Another setting in your iPod you can do without is the Equalizer. Turning off the Equalizer will extend your battery life. To turn it off, just follow the instructions above, only instead of choosing Backlight Timer, look for EQ.

Is the iPod's battery replaceable?

No matter how much you don't want to have to replace your battery at all, there are certainly instances where you might have to. The good news is that Apple has an official battery replacement program which they offer at \$59. The program requires that you send in your iPod (any model), and Apple will replace the battery and return it to you for \$59 plus shipping and handling. Technically though, what Apple does is to replace your whole iPod with an equivalent new or refurbished model. AppleCare programs for iPod are also available in some markets outside the US and in Apple Retail locations.

Will the iPod's battery degrade over time?

That unfortunately is true. Everything degrades over time without exception. After a long time has passed, the battery will not hold the same amount of charge as when it was still new. This is natural and is true among all lithium ion batteries. During the life of the iPod, not many users will notice the effect this slow degradation brings. However, based on usage, environmental factors, and many other variables, some heavy users may notice a greater degradation than others. Just remember that lithium ion batteries degrade in exactly the same way, whether they are used to power up the iPod, any laptop, cellphone, or portable music player.