

Troubleshooting a laptop which keeps shutting itself down or restarting

The Problem

You have a laptop which keeps shutting down after a few minutes of use, or which keeps restarting itself randomly.

This document aims to help you eliminate all possible **easy** problems yourself, thereby saving you time and, above all, expense, before you consider taking your laptop to the a Repair Centre.

This document assumes the following :

- You have kept your laptop in pristine software environment condition by using [The Ultimate Troubleshooter](#) (TUT) to pare down your background programs to only those that you need. If you cannot afford the \$29 cost of TUT, then this document assumes that you will have at least maintained your laptop using our free [Task List Pages](#) which contain a subset of TUT's database.
- You have a daily updated reputable antivirus program protecting your PC at all times.

Random Shutting Down or Restarting Problems – What you should try



Faulty Battery

80% of all spontaneous shutdown and restarting problems on laptops are due to a faulty battery. Laptop batteries are like mobile phone batteries – they do not last forever. A heavily used laptop, where the laptop is often used solely on battery power, will use up its battery at any stage between the first and second year of use. What is not very well known is that even if you always use your laptop from the mains rather than on-battery, a faulty battery will still adversely affect your laptop's operation, from unwanted shutdowns to spontaneous restarts or freezes.

Try this : *take the battery out, plug the laptop directly into the power mains, and see if you still experience spontaneous shutdowns or reboots.*

**Faulty Power Adaptor**

Although this is not a common occurrence, the power adaptors do go faulty, either through lack of tender care, or through wear and tear, or through a manufacturing fault.

Try this : *With the battery still out of the laptop, if you have a spare power adaptor from an identical laptop, see if replacing it solves the problem. Otherwise, try wiggling the cord which leads from the adaptor to your laptop and see if that stabilizes the problem (sometimes the electrical wires inside the cord are broken and wiggling the cord makes them connect) – if it does then your power adaptor needs replacing.*

Try this also : *If you are in the UK replace the fuse in the mains plug of your power adaptor – that fuse may be faulty and causing irregular power input.*

**Problem with Mains Power**

Is the switching off or restarting happening anywhere, or only in a particular place or room even ?

Try this : *Observe the behaviour of your laptop in different places (work vs home), different rooms.*

**Faulty internal cooling fan**

Most modern laptops have one or more internal cooling fans – it is those fans which produce the quiet whirring noise you can hear when you turn your laptop on. If any of these fans stops working, the laptop may overheat and, if it does, it will automatically shut down to prevent total damage.

Try this : *Observe whether your laptop shuts down after near enough the same amount of time every time (with the same amount of activity while it is ON – and allowing the laptop to cool down between experiments). If it does then it is quite probable that it is shutting down because of overheating. Feel the underside of the laptop with your hand – most times it is possible to tell that the laptop is abnormally hot. **If your laptop is indeed shutting down because of lack of cooling then you need to take it to the Repair Store.** Until you do so, should you need to use it urgently for a deadline, or to back it up before taking it in for repairs, try having a desktop fan aimed directly at one of the sides of the laptop and see if this allows you to work a little longer.*

If after trying all the above your laptop still exhibits the same problem, then, unfortunately, the Repair Store is your next port of call

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