LAPTOP CARE BASICS

It is important to take care of your laptop to keep it in good shape; prevention is always better than cure. There are a number of easy things that you can do to keep your laptop in great shape; following these easy steps will help to ensure that it lasts longer and will need less maintenance. As an added bonus, many of the steps will also maintain your laptop's speed.

1. **Keep liquids away from your laptop**. Spilled liquids may damage the internal components or cause electrical injury to the laptop. Short circuits can corrupt data or even permanently destroy parts. The solution is very simple: Keep your drinks away from your computer. Even if you're careful, someone else might bump into your desk or you. Or you can use a cup with a cover on it, so even if it does spill, the liquid doesn't go any where!

2. **Keep food away from your laptop.** Don't eat over your laptop. The crumbs can go down between the keys in the keyboard and provide an invitation to small bugs. The crumbs can also irritate the circuitry. Worse, it makes the laptop look dirty if there are crumbs and food stains on it.

3. **Always have clean hands when using your laptop**. Clean hands make it easier to use your laptop touchpad and there will be less risk of leaving dirt and other stains on the computer. In addition, if you clean your hands before use, you will help reduce wear and tear on the coating of the laptop caused by contact with sweat and small particles that can act upon the laptop's exterior underneath your wrists and fingers.

4. **Protect the LCD display monitor**. When you shut your laptop, make sure there are no small items, such as a pencil or small ear-phones, on the keyboard. These can damage the display screen when shut; the screen will scratch if the item is rough. Close the lid gently and holding from the middle. Closing the lid using only one side causes pressure on that hinge, and over time can cause it to bend and snap.

5. **Hold and lift the computer by its base, not by its LCD display (the screen)**. If you lift it by the screen part alone, you could damage the display or the hinges attaching it to the base. The display is also easily scratched or damaged by direct pressure – avoid placing pressure on it.

6. **Don't pull on the power cord**. Tugging your power cord out from the power socket rather than putting your hand directly on the plug in the socket and pulling can break off the plug or damage the power socket. Also, if you have the power point near your feet, avoid constantly bumping into the plug or you could loosen it and eventually break it.

7. **Plug in accessory devices into their proper slots**. Always look at the symbols on the laptop carefully before inserting devices. Jamming a phone line into an Ethernet port or vice versa could damage the sockets, making it impossible to use them again. It is very important to observe this step.

8. **Laptop Battery** –Laptops must be brought to school charged. Students will need to charge their laptop at home in the evening. In cases where continuous use of the laptop has caused its battery to lose its power, students may connect to a power outlet in the classroom.

9. **Don't expose your laptop to rapid temperature fluctuations**. When bringing your laptop indoors during winter, don't turn it on immediately. Instead, let it warm to room temperature first. This will avoid any potential for damage to the disk drive from condensation forming inside the machine. Avoid heat from sunlight as well.

10. **Don't leave your laptop in a car**. Not only do the insides of cars experience large temperature swings that could damage a laptop, but a laptop (or laptop bag) is an inviting target for a smash and grab thief.

11. **Avoid placing heavy materials, such as books, on top of your laptop and keyboard.** This can push the LCD screen into the keyboard, and will eventually damage it. Also, the CD-ROM insert will also be squished and, eventually, will break.

12. **Use a properly-sized laptop case**. Whatever you use to carry your laptop around in, be it a case, a bag or something you have made yourself, make sure that it it large enough to contain the laptop. This will avoid scratching, squeezing or even potentially dropping it.

13. **Try and keep the laptop on a flat surface**. This prevents damage to the laptop. This step can be hard, particularly if you are going out with your laptop, but if there is a flat surface available to put your laptop on then do so.

14. **Never attempt repair or reconfiguration of the laptop PC.** Under no circumstances are you to attempt to open or tamper the internal components of the laptop. Nor should you remove any screws; doing so will render the warranty void and will result in disciplinary action.

15. **Shut down completely for prolonged periods of inactivity.**   This will help to conserve the battery.