



Cleaning hardware

Turn all equipment off so you won't burn out any electrical components if water or cleaning liquid inadvertently drips into it. Never spray liquid onto equipment (especially screens), always spray the cloth.

Old monitors (CRT-cathode ray tube)

Glass screens are easily cleaned. Use water or a mild window cleaning solution, then wipe the screen. You can use the same damp cloth to clean the entire monitor case (etc), as well. Never open the monitor casing as it can hold high voltage charges even after it has been switched off.

Flat Panel LCDs

LCD monitors are often called flat panel monitors because they are flat and thin. LCD screens are soft and are susceptible to damage and scratches.

Use a soft dry cotton cloth to remove fingerprints and smudges from the screen. If this does not completely remove them, use a small amount of isopropyl alcohol on the cleaning cloth that has been dampened with water. (A small amount of vinegar can be substituted for the isopropyl alcohol.) Never use paper towels on an LCD screen as they can scratch the screen. Never use abrasive cleaners, ammonia, ammonia-based cleaners, or strong cleaners.

Have a special clean cloth that is dedicated to use on the LCD screen. If there is any chance it has been used for something else and has particles of dirt on it, don't use it as it will scratch the screen. Buy a special LCD cleaning cloth.

The best cleaning method is to stroke the cloth across the display in one direction, moving from the top of the display to the bottom.

Keyboards

If crumbs or dirt accumulate in the keyboard, a mixture of weak soapy water and a damp sponge is all that is usually needed. Be sure to disconnect the keyboard before you start. For the best results, hold the keyboard upside down and use a paper towel to dry while still inverted. You may even want to leave the keyboard upside down overnight to dry. If you have a major mishap involving drinks or some other sticky liquid, try the simple soap and water treatment first. If a key has become sticky it can be taken off and cleaned. Use a flathead screwdriver or butter knife to gently pry up each of the keycaps. Do not remove any of the oversized keycaps like the spacebar, shift, or enter keys unless you absolutely have to since they can be quite difficult to reattach (they can have spring mechanisms). Use a moist lint-free cloth and cotton swabs with water or a mild cleaning solution to clean the entire keyboard. Replace each keycap by pressing firmly back in place. Remove them one at a time unless you know the keyboard layout off by heart!

Mouses

If your mouse becomes difficult to move around or seems to have a mind of its own, it may be time to give it a good cleaning. After you have unplugged your mouse, turn it over and rotate the little donut shaped disk. This will allow you to remove the ball that is inside the mouse. A soft dry cloth is usually adequate for cleaning the ball itself. If the ball looks really dirty, you can clean it with some water and dry it thoroughly. The problem is usually caused not by the ball, but by dirt in the areas that touch the ball. If you look inside the mouse after the ball has been removed, small bars or rollers that the ball touches as it rotates are visible. Dip a cotton swab in water or isopropyl alcohol and clean all the dirt off these bars. It is a good idea to always use a mouse pad. If your mouse needs cleaning often, consider replacing the pad. Of course if your mouse is ball free you won't have the problem!

The Rest

Use your common sense, a Hoover and a clean duster. Dust builds up around the vents in all electrical devices. Then they overheat and then damage occurs. Always turn off (unplug from the mains) electrical items before cleaning them. How about cleaning your equipment when it is PAT tested?