

# The “Care and Feeding” of Your Two-Way Radio Batteries

## Part 1 – Charging

Charging your two-way radio battery in the proper manner is essential for optimal life of your battery and protection of your radio. The rules for charging aren't many, but they are VERY important to follow:

1) ALWAYS be sure your radio is turned OFF before inserting it into the charger. Placing a radio which has a very discharged battery into the charger when it is turned “on” will cause a current surge which may “pop” the internal fuse in the radio. Replacing the fuse is NOT a user-serviceable thing, neither is it covered by any warranty. The repair needs to be done in the shop and will cost a minimum of one hour labor plus the cost of the fuse.

2) Once the radio is in the charger, LEAVE IT TURNED OFF. You should never “monitor” the radio while it is charging. This causes the charger to “get confused” since you are trying to drain the battery at the same time you are trying to charge it. This causes erratic charge currents and voltages and is not good for the battery. PLUS it will slow the charge cycle down substantially and could damage the radio as described in #1 above.

3) Different battery and radio combinations use different chargers. Many chargers have tabs or slots configured to prevent the wrong battery and radio from being inserted. NEVER force the wrong kind of battery into the charger. This could break the tabs on one of the devices, rendering it useless. Not only that, the forced-in battery will not charge correctly.

4) Waiting until the light on your fast charger turns from red to green before removing the battery from it assures a full charge every time. Leaving the battery in the charger over a weekend will not harm the battery since the charger is on “trickle” mode once the light changes color from red to green.

5) Charge your batteries no more than ONCE PER DAY – unless they “go dead” part way through the day. The average battery SHOULD last an entire 8-hour shift. Charging the batteries several times throughout the day – for example, once when the bus lanes person is done with it, and again after it is used for lunch duty, and then again after school when the crossing guard is done with it – is BAD for your battery. Each time it is charged it heats up and heat is bad for your battery. Charging 3X per day reduces the life expectancy of your battery by 2/3, requiring you to buy a replacement battery WAY too soon.

6) If you have a slow-rate charger, only charge the batteries in them for 12 to 14 hours. After that, leaving them in the charger will “cook” the battery and shorten your battery life.

7) Please see part two of this series to learn how to store your batteries over an extended time such as over Christmas break.

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