# Should I turn off my computer or put it to sleep?

**Answer:** This question can invoke quite a bit of debate, but the short answer is to put the computer to sleep each night or any time you leave the computer for more than 15 minutes. If you are not going to use the computer for more than a day (such as leaving it for the weekend), it is best to turn the computer off.

Special Note: Turning off your computer is a way to "refresh" your system!

Idle 15 minutes to 24 hours: **Sleep** Idle 24 hours or more: **Shut Down**

When a computer is in "sleep" or "standby" mode, it consumes almost no energy, so the difference between letting it sleep overnight or turning it off during the night is negligible. However, if you have a laptop running off a battery charge, the difference may be noticeable. Some observers have noticed that their laptop's battery life only lasts about five to six days in sleep mode, but will last for weeks if the computer is off. Therefore, if you are not going to be using your laptop for more than a few hours and do not have AC power available, it is best to turn the computer off.

The most important way to save energy is to not leave the computer running normally when you are not using it. You might have your computer set to automatically sleep if it is idle for 15 minutes and your screen dim after 5 minutes. This way, you will know that you won't accidentally leave your computer running for a long period of time.

Finally, if you put your computer to sleep every night and hardly ever turn it off, it may be good to at least restart the computer every few weeks. This may help improve performance in case some errant processes are consuming unnecessary RAM or CPU time.

WHY USE SLEEP MODE?

You can make your computer more energy efficient by putting Windows into sleep mode when you are not using the computer. Sleep mode means that your computer is in a temporary low-power state. This saves electricity when your computer is plugged in, and it saves battery power when your computer is unplugged.

In sleep mode, Windows keeps your active apps open. This is handy because it means that when you return from sleep mode, you can immediately get back to where you were.

WHAT HAPPENS IF "SLEEP" IS NO LONGER ONE OF YOUR SHUTDOWN OPENS ON THE START MENU?  FOLLOW THESE STEPS:

Click on Start

Click on System

Click on Power and Sleep

Click on Additional Power Settings (look for it in the far right column)

Click on Choose what the power buttons do.

Click on Change settings that are currently unavailable

Select the Sleep box at the bottom of the column.