

Groomer To Groomer

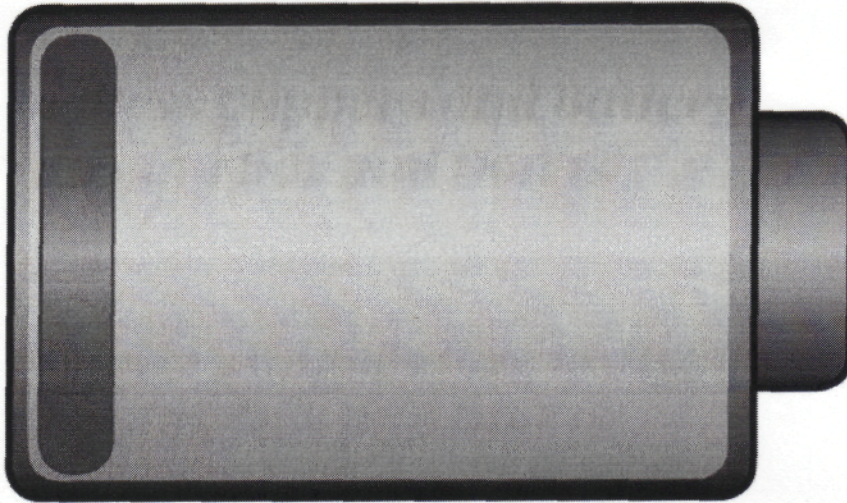
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Cordless Clippers and Battery Charging Dos and Don'ts

By Jeff Andrews



When we buy a new cordless clipper, most forget to read the fine print in the instruction manual or forget to read the manual altogether. We look at the convenience of things we get for our shops, and cordless clippers are at the top of the list.

Even though the manual says you can leave the handset in the charging stand all the time or that batteries never obtain a memory and can't be over charged, don't believe it! We summarized what we've learned about external and internal batteries and charging techniques that saved us from experiencing dead batteries and burned up handsets over the years. Take caution over convenience, and you'll be okay.

No matter what the manufacturer states or what kind of battery you have, there is a chance you will have trouble with it if you overcook the battery with charging. You will get a longer battery life and running time from your clipper by a simple technique change. It involves a little more work, but it's worth it to have your clipper running when you need it. This new technique can be applied to cordless trimmers as well as A5 cordless clippers.

CHARGING

When you get your new cordless clipper, chances are the batteries will have a charge in them already. How much? We don't know, but I think the first initial charge of a battery is important to the life of the battery. I run the charge out of the battery by running the clipper until it is completely dead. You won't hurt a thing by running your clipper without a blade on it. My clipper ran for about 10 minutes until the motor slowly came to a stop. If you have external batteries, do this for each battery. Don't rely on a button on your charging stand that says it will deplete the charge in the battery. It most likely doesn't drain it like running the clipper would.

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Now put the battery or clipper in the charging stand (or hook up the power cord) and start the initial charging. This first charge is very important. Only charge the batteries until the indicator says it's fully charged, then stop charging the battery. Even though the manual says the charger will automatically stop charging when it's fully charged, don't believe that. Take the battery completely out of the charger (you know for certain that stops the charging). If charging continues, it can overcook the battery, causing cell damage, and the battery may not hold a charge very long. With your batteries all charged up, you're ready to start grooming.

RUNNING YOUR CLIPPER

You may now use your clipper as you would any clipper. Let's say you've been running it for awhile and you're done with the job you were using it for. What do you do now? You want to put it back on the charger like the manual says you can do. Should you? I wouldn't. Replacing the handset or battery back in the charger after short runs when the charge hasn't been depleted is what causes "memory" in your battery. The battery was designed to let the clipper run for a long time, but you can teach the battery that it only needs to run for short periods of time. I'm assuming the battery cells adjust themselves to run for short periods, because they start to act that way. This is why you think the batteries aren't holding a charge very long or are bad. Once they get trained this way (memory), there is no re-training them to hold a charge longer, at least in my experience.

Here is what I started to do with my cordless trimmer when I first got it. It has an internal battery, a charging stand, and a power cord that attaches to it so it can run on house current. In the five years that I've used it, I've had no problems with battery life, charging, or any hot handset problems.

I set up the initial charging like I stated above. I ran the clipper until the battery was dead, charged it until it was fully charged, and then stopped the charging process.

I ran the clipper for several grooms and never put it back in the charger. I wanted to run the clipper until there was no charge left in the battery. This actually took a long time to complete. I was surprised by how long it took.

When the charge was gone and the clipper stopped during a groom, I hooked up the power cord and finished the job. If you're using external batteries, change the battery and finish the job, and then charge the dead battery. Keep the fresh battery in the clipper and use it until the charge is completely gone before changing that one.

I left the power cord hooked up to the clipper until it was completely charged, then disconnected it. I never leave the power cord hooked up or the handset in the charging base when I'm not using it. I only charge the battery when there is no charge left in it and only charge it long enough to get it fully charged again.

If you change what you're doing now and do what I'm doing, you may not have battery problems anymore. ☺

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