

Windows laptops & PCs | Easy | 2 min read

Sleep, hibernate, Fast Startup and what happens when you close the laptop lid

Windows has several ways of switching a PC off or pausing it. Knowing what each one does helps you pick the right one and fix problems where the PC will not wake or start.

The differences

- **Sleep**: the PC pauses but stays on. It wakes in seconds, but still uses a little power, so a laptop battery can run flat.
- **Hibernate**: your open work is saved to the drive and the PC switches off fully. It takes longer to wake, but uses no power. It may not appear in the Power menu until it is switched on.
- **Shut down**: closes everything. With **Fast Startup** on, Windows keeps some system information to start faster.
- **Restart**: closes everything and starts afresh. It does not use Fast Startup, so it is the best fix for odd behaviour.

Choose what the lid does

1. Press the **Windows key**, type **Choose what closing the lid does**, and open it.
2. For **When I close the lid**, choose **Sleep**, **Hibernate**, **Shut down** or **Do nothing**. You can choose a different option for battery and for plugged in.

Do not close a laptop in a bag while it is set to **Do nothing**, because it will get hot.

Set how soon it sleeps

Windows 11: **Settings, System, Power & battery, Screen, sleep & hibernate timeouts**. Windows 10: **Settings, System, Power & sleep**.

Fast Startup

On the same **Choose what closing the lid does** page, click **Change settings that are currently unavailable**. Under **Shutdown settings**, you can tick or untick **Turn on fast startup**. If your PC has update problems or odd faults that survive shutting down, try unticking it. This is safe and changes nothing in your files.

Hibernate option

The same list shows **Hibernate**, if available. Ticking it adds Hibernate to the Power menu.

When to get more help

Get in touch if the PC will not wake from sleep, wakes by itself in your bag, or the battery drains overnight while asleep. Please tell us the make and model.

Still stuck? Email admin@visiontech336.com and tell us what you can see on the screen. Menus and button names can differ slightly between versions and makes. If something does not match, stop and ask rather than guess. Please never send passwords or card details.