



Photo courtesy of Davis Instruments

## When to turn off personal computers

If you're wondering when to turn off personal computers for energy savings, here are some general guidelines.

While a small surge in energy consumption occurs when a computer starts up, this hardly compares to the amount used when a computer runs for a long time. For energy savings and convenience, consider turning off the monitor if you aren't going to use your PC for more than 20 minutes, and switch off both the CPU and monitor if you're not going

to use your PC for more than two hours.

Make sure monitors, printers, and other accessories are plugged in to a power strip/surge protector. When not using equipment for extended periods, turn off the switch on the power strip to prevent any power drain. If you don't use a power strip, unplug extra equipment when it's not in use.

Most PCs today reach the end of their useful life due to advances in technology long before any negative effects of being switched on and off multiple times can be seen. But as a general rule of thumb, the less time a PC is on, the longer it will "last." PCs also produce heat, so turning them off reduces the need for air conditioning.

### Power-Down or Sleep Mode Features

Many PCs come with a power-down or sleep mode feature for the CPU and monitor. ENERGY STAR® computers consume 15 watts or less in this mode—around 70 percent less electricity than a computer without power management features. ENERGY STAR monitors also have the capability to power down into two successive sleep modes, first to 15 watts and then to 8 watts—less than 10 percent of its operating power consumption.

Keep in mind that screen savers are not energy savers. Using a screen saver may in fact require more energy than not using one, and your power-down feature may not work if you have a screen saver activated. In fact, modern LCD color monitors do not need screen savers.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy