

Laptop and tablet trolleys and charging stations

Laptop trolleys are **electrical devices** and are to be used appropriately and according to the manufacturer's instructions. Laptop trolleys are useful to securely store, charge and potentially move multiple laptops or tablets. If not used appropriately the key risks are:

- electric shock
- fire
- strains and sprains when moving poorly designed or heavy laptop trolleys.



What are schools to do?

Purchase

- Ensure the device complies with appropriate Australian electrical standards – seek advice from the supplier to confirm.
- Ensure the product is fit for your purposes, for example:
 - holds appropriate number of laptops
 - power supply configuration is suitable for your room/needs
 - easy to move if required in multiple locations.
- Models with an interlock on the unit doors are recommended as the mechanism automatically isolates the power each time the doors are opened. Charging will recommence only when the unit doors are closed.
- A cable storage facility is to be included in the design to prevent cable/lead damage.

Set-up

- Laptop trolleys and charging stations must be used according to the manufacturer's instructions – this includes the number and configuration of devices, leads and power sources.
- Ensure any electrical testing of circuits or the 'loaded' trolley is undertaken as noted by the manufacturer's instructions.
- Ensure the circuit you are using is not overloaded; review and limit the number of items plugged into the power point used for the trolley/cabinet and neighbouring power points.
- Seek advice from an electrician if issues are identified such as intermittent overload ("tripping") of circuit breakers or power boards.
- The power point is to have safety switch protection (residual current device – RCD). This can be either a fixed (permanent) or a portable safety switch.
- Overload protection is also recommended by some manufacturers.
- Leads of power boards are to be plugged directly into a power point and not into another power board or extension cord.

Use

- Daily or prior to each use – conduct a visual check of the condition of the storage rack, cables and plugs:
 - inspect for abrasion, splitting or other physical damage to leads and pins to ensure they are not bent, burred or dirty.
- To minimise risk of exposure to residual power on contact with the trolley:
 - switch the power OFF at the power point prior to insertion or removal of plugs
 - ensure that students do not use or interfere with the controls at the rear of the charging units.
- Ensure the power is switched OFF and lead unplugged prior to moving the trolley:
 - plan the move – clear the path of travel, identify and manage any other hazards
 - push the trolley (rather than pulling) with both hands to reduce stress on the body.

Information

- Post a warning notice adjacent to power points and elsewhere, as necessary, to remind users of the need to switch power points OFF before inserting or removing plugs.
- Advise staff of safe use of the trolley, risks and controls including ‘turn off and unplug’.
- Provide students with information on the hazards and risks associated with the trolley as well as any safety and operating features.
- Ensure a local system is in place to keep and monitor records and action any identified issues to maintain the units in a safe condition and in good working order.
- The fire risks associated with the units must be considered, particularly where the units are left charging overnight. Monitoring and management of units will assist to reduce fire risk.

Seek advice from a qualified electrical contractor (electrician) about any electrical safety concerns related to laptop trolleys or cabinets.

Further Information

Electrical safety

<https://education.qld.gov.au/initiativesstrategies/Documents/guide-managing-electrical-safety-eq-schools.pdf>

Moving laptop trolleys Safe Operating Procedure (SOP)

<https://education.qld.gov.au/initiativesstrategies/Documents/moving-laptop-trolleys.DOC>

Power point: this term is used for a socket outlet, a general purpose outlet and/or general power outlet.