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TANGLED UP IN CORDS?

3 TIPS TO MAINTAIN YOUR ELECTRONICS



Technology was created to make our lives easier, and though it simplifies our daily routines, it can be a hassle to maintain — especially if there are cords involved. Keeping the power flowing to multiple devices requires a plethora of cords that can get tangled and annoying. Also, as time goes by, cords may break or simply stop working. Organizing and preserving the quality of your electronics is the best way to extend their longevity, and with these tips, you can save a few headaches along with some money.

Tidy up your cords.

When you have tons of cords and cables attached to your desk and power strips, they can become a tangled mess. You end up pulling the wrong cord because they all look the same, and it's a pain to figure out which is which. A great way to fix this is to use binder clips!

You can clip them onto your desk to keep cords separate and in one place. Take it up a notch by using colored/patterned binder clips. Assigning specific colors to certain cords lets you find the one you need at any moment.

Protect your cords.

Smartphone and laptop chargers aren't cheap by any means. Since we use them so often, the cord that attaches to the device is susceptible to fraying and breaking. If you have some painter's tape lying around, take a small piece and wrap it around the cord close to the connectors on both sides! The tape acts as a brace and keeps your charger cord sturdy.

Organize extra cables and cords.

If you're like most people, you probably have a bag or box of tangled wires and cables somewhere. It can become an organizer's worst nightmare, but there's a better way. First, find an old shoe box and several empty toilet paper rolls. Then, place the rolls upright in a shoebox, wrap each cord up separately, and place them inside the rolls (one per roll) to keep them separate but together.

Maintaining our electronics, especially the cords, allows our technology to continue working for us without worry or breaking the bank. Try these hacks and watch how untangled your cords and life can be!



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DID ANCIENT EGYPTIANS HAVE ASTHMA? 5,000 YEARS IN AIR QUALITY HISTORY

Not long ago, when I chatted with a friend about my job, they asked me, "Travis, how long has indoor air quality been a problem?"

I think my friend expected me to point back to the Air Pollution Control Act of 1955 or maybe even the formation of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) in 1894. But those would have been bad answers. Instead, I went WAY back. "Oh," I said, "only since about 800 B.C.!"

My friend couldn't believe it, but it's true. People have been suffering from poor air for at least 5,000 years. Next time you need a fun fact for a cocktail party, this quick and wild ride through indoor air quality (IAQ) history will have you covered.

5,000 Years Ago: The Ancient Egyptians Get Lung Disease

In ancient times, people burned wood and animal dung to heat their homes and cook their meals. Often, the fire burned inside the same cave or shelter where they ate and slept. So, they constantly breathed polluted air! It's no wonder archaeologists have found blackened lungs in mummies from Ancient Egypt and preserved bodies from Peru and Great Britain. No doubt Ancient Egyptians had asthma — and worse.

1,200 Years Ago: Roman Emperor Declares 'Air for Everyone'

Did you know that the Romans had under-floor heating? Like other ancient peoples, they burned a lot of wood, which exposed them to high levels of particles and dust. Then, they started smelting copper and lead. This led to a high level of airborne metal, which infiltrated Roman lungs.



The air in Rome became so polluted that in 535 A.D. Emperor Justinian I began investigating ways to clean it up. He even proclaimed clean air a Roman birthright! However, he failed to eliminate smelting, so health problems continued for the Romans.

700 Years Ago: Castle Architects Invent the Chimney

Architects discovered the very first chimneys in Medieval castles about 700 years ago. They were tall, narrow windows placed beside big fireplaces. At the time, castle dwellers believed smoke from the fireplace would find its way to the ceiling, drift out the top of the window, and leak out of the castle. Unfortunately, this didn't work particularly well, because combustion in the fireplace also pulled smoky air into the castle through that same darn window. It took another 200 years for people around the world to adopt a more modern version of the chimney.

400 Years Ago: London Misses the Memo

You'd think the world would have learned from past air quality mistakes — but no. In the 1600s, smoke from London's coal-powered industrial plants and homes became so thick that it actually damaged the city's architecture and seeped into homes. (This was partly due to poor urban planning. The city should have been designed with industrial buildings on one end and living spaces on the other.) Imagine the effect breathing a substance that can alter stone would have on your health.

132 Years Ago: IAQ Is Officially Born

As near as I can tell, IAQ as we know it today wasn't important to industrial hygiene until the 1890s. At that point, large cities began to take notice. Architects and engineers voiced their concerns about comfort, odors, and CO2 accumulation. In 1894, ASHRAE formed and quickly recommended an indoor ventilation rate of 15 liters of air per second. Physicians supported the measure because it mitigated the spread of airborne disease like smallpox and the flu.

Today, we've come a long way since the 1890s, but IAQ is still focused on protecting people's health, eliminating odors, and making buildings more comfortable. Of course, not everyone is lucky enough to have reached 21st century standards. Open this newsletter to read a bit more about folks still stuck with IAQ from 5,000 years ago.

SOMETHING'S PHISHY 4 Common Financial Scams to Avoid

From dating swindles to Bitcoin and cryptocurrency hoaxes, it's hard to tell the difference between honest offers and scams. Even worse, scams are becoming more creative every day. Here's a list of some of the most common financial scams to be aware of.

Cryptocurrency Scams

Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies have taken the world by storm. Because many people don't understand how cryptocurrency works, it's easy for cybercriminals to pull a fast one — or attempt to, anyway. To trick unsuspecting victims, scammers set up fake websites that mimic legitimate cryptocurrency platforms. These sites then either urge you to make investments or they will steal your information outright.

Fraudulent Retailers

On social media websites, you may have noticed suspicious online stores featuring deals that are too good to be true. At checkout, instead of being directed to a trusted third-party payment process, these merchants may ask for wire transfers or gift cards. Some of these online stores might not even provide contact information!

Fake Debt Collectors

Criminals will claim to be government representatives and urge you to settle a debt putting you at risk of being arrested, losing your home, or forfeiting your Social Security benefits. These scammers will ask you to pay the fake balance upfront to avoid any serious repercussions. Remember, government entities do not cold call, so you know to hang up or hit "delete."

Work-From-Home Scams

As working from home has recently become the norm for many, this hoax has become even easier for criminals to pull off. Cybercriminals will contact you, stating you can make hundreds of dollars a week doing nothing more than shopping online as a mystery shopper or another enticing task. They will then tell you that to get started, you'll need to pay upfront for training materials — but once you do, you'll never hear from them again.

As a general rule of thumb, stay clear of any offers that seem too good to be true. Likewise, avoid transactions that don't use a trusted third-party merchant, and always do your research! If something seems off, trust your instincts! In today's world, you never know what hoaxes exist!

YOUR FIREPLACE COULD BE HURTING YOUR HEALTH

JUST LIKE A CAVE-DWELLER'S COOKING FIRE!

Even though Roman Emperor Justinian I declared that clean air was a birthright way back in 535 A.D., for many people it remains a privilege. As I said on Pg. 1, not every society in the world has progressed to the point we've reached in the U.S., where we have indoor air quality standards, experts, and solutions. Some people are still stuck in the past — dealing with the indoor air quality issues we had 5,000 years ago.

In Africa, many native tribes still use animal waste for fuel and cook their food in tents or huts. These huts have small openings at the very top for smoke to dissipate, but even with these basic chimneys, the tribespeople are exposed to high levels of fine particulate matter.

Those folks generate and breathe in scary amounts of pollution, and it causes long-term health problems. The effects can be as simple as a runny nose or as terrifying as respiratory cancer.

In China, locals face similar problems. I'll never forget when I first learned about them. Roughly 20 years ago, one of my peers sent me a photo of a cave city in Southwest China. As difficult as it is to believe, more than 30 million people still live in caves in that area.

These caves are stacked side by side and one on top of the other, like a condominium built directly into the rock. The photo my colleague sent showed a family of four standing proudly in the mouth of their cave. It had a curved opening decorated with a door. Near the door was an exhaust vent for the stove located right inside the entryway.

At first glance, this might seem like a pretty good setup for indoor air quality. When the family uses the stove to cook or heat their home, the smoke travels out of the vent and is exhausted outside. Unfortunately, this design only works well for the families living on the bottom level of these cave condominiums. Their smoke travels upward and fresh air is pulled inside. But the families above them aren't pulling in fresh air — they're bringing in smoke from their downstairs neighbors.

This means the air quality in the caves becomes worse the higher you go in the condo. Folks at the top get the highest level of exposure to

the smoke of the other tenants, and they have to breathe in particulate matter from their own fires. It's a disastrous situation for their health, and it's happening to 30 million people every day.

These problems may sound far away, but even you could be plagued by similar health issues if you have a fireplace in your home. Just like the cooking stoves of those families in China, wood-burning fireplaces give off particles that can be dangerous to your health.

My wife, Kaye, and I have a fireplace in our house, and about 20 years ago we had a problem with smoke odors and contaminants wafting out into our living area. We ultimately decided to replace the wood with a gas log. If you're attached to your wood fireplace, be sure to keep the firebox clean, hire a chimney sweep to clean your flue, and consider putting glass doors on the fireplace to manage back drafting. All three of those steps will protect your health — and keep you safe from a house fire.

We've come a long way on indoor air quality over the last 5,000 years, but there's still work to be done, especially for low-income families across the world.



Train West

SO MANY SOCIAL MEDIA OUTLETS

Which One Should You Use?

A social media presence is essential to connecting with your company's customers and prospects. But do you need every media platform to engage with others? Each outlet meets different needs and interests, so it's crucial that you analyze which one will net the most engagement for your business. In fact, the demographic of your targeted audience will help you decide. Let's look at the three main outlets customers use to discuss their needs and wants.

Facebook is primarily used for family-friendly content. Recently, there is an added focus on business ads for networking purposes, which can help you attract more leads. The demographic on Facebook mainly focuses on individuals who are 45 years old and older. This platform is great for businesses targeting seniors, like those in the home improvement and estate planning industries

Instagram was popularized by teenagers, but now over half of its users are between the ages of 25–34. Small businesses use this outlet to share upcoming events, sales, and products because of the new business feature on the app. Relationship-building is the sole focus for companies on Instagram because you can engage with customers through stories, live videos, and interactive polls.

Twitter is the best place to have personal conversations, brainstorm, and share news. Over 59% of Twitter users are between the ages of 25–49, and 56% have completed some college courses or have a degree. Some businesses use Twitter to see what others are saying about their services



and resolve any issues that occur. This is a great way to build trust with your customers and ensure that they know you care about their experience with you and your company.

If you want to learn more about the different demographics for each outlet, go to Blog.Hootsuite.com/Social-Media-Demographics for more in-depth analysis and statistics.

TAKE A BREAK

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NO-FUSS CHICKEN AND RICE SOUP

Inspired by RecipeTinEats.com



INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 3 carrots, sliced
- 3 celery ribs, sliced
- 2 chicken bouillon cubes
- 1/2 tsp dried parsley
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 4 cups water
- 1 1/4 lbs bone-in, skinless chicken thighs
- 1 cup uncooked white rice
- Salt, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large pot over medium-high heat, warm the olive oil. Add the onion and garlic and sauté for 5 minutes. Add the carrots and celery, then sauté for 1 more minute.
2. Add the bouillon, parsley, pepper, chicken broth, and water. Stir, then add the chicken thighs.
3. Cover and simmer on medium-low for 30 minutes, then add the rice. Stir, cover, and simmer for 15 more minutes.
4. Remove the pot from the heat and transfer the chicken to a large bowl. Shred the meat and add it back to the soup. Discard the bones.
5. Stir, salt, and serve!