Problem Solving

Vapour - loss of vapour or no vapour

Possible causes include: clogged battery connection, clogged clearomizer connection, clearomizer low or empty of e-liquid, low battery power, inhaling too deeply or by using an inferior E-Liquid or one not recommended by your retailer. Not all liquids are the same!!

1. Clean the screw thread connection area at the top of your battery

2. Clean the screw thread connection area on your clearomizer/cartomizer

3. Ensure the battery is charged and be sure your battery is working ok

4. Check that the clearomizer/cartomizer has sufficient liquid

5. If you inhale deeply and frequently, a clearomizer/cartomizer will deplete far quicker than normal

6. Take a cocktail stick and clean the air intake holes on the atomizer.

Regular cleaning of your e-cig battery is essential for good heat, vapour and flavour

Good clean contact between your e-cig battery and clearomizer/tank is essential for the best heat, vapour and flavour, so regular cleaning is essential (every couple of weeks or so for example).

Rubbing alcohol/surgical spirit on a Q tip/cotton bud is ideal. Clean the outside of the connection/contact area (for eGo batteries) and the inside too ensuring that you hold the battery upside down so gravity can take away any excess fluid. Paper towel can be used to dry the area if necessary.

For stubborn grime a cocktail stick is ideal for the threaded grooves, taking care not to break it off inside the battery, but don’t use anything metal.

Atomizer -(coil head) gets hot but not much vapour

Atomizer is probably dry or doesn't have enough liquid. Try adding 2-3 drops of e-liquid directly inside the centre of the atomizer. Some atomizers when allowed to dry out will need a few minutes for the liquid to be absorbed again. Remember PG e-liquid will provide less vapour than VG.

Atomizer -(coil head) gets warm but not much vapour

The atomizer may have too much liquid inside it and cannot fully heat up. Place the open end of the atomizer (where the liquid goes in) on to a paper towel and blow through the battery connector end as hard as you can. This will force the excess liquid out of the atomizer.

Also make sure your battery is charged or swap it with another known good battery to eliminate causes.

Atomizer -(coil head) is cold and no vapour

Atomizer may have burnt out and you’ll need to replace it but it’s possible that the central contact points between the battery and atomizer isn’t touching.

Take something like a wooden cocktail stick or piece of card (don't use anything metal on the battery) and gently pry the centre contact up on both the atomizer/clearomizer and the battery. This is a fiddly job so take care not to force anything out of place. For 510 style atomizers/clearomizers with a protruding screw, unscrew it a little.

 Of course, if there's a problem with the battery, for example it's nearing the end of its life, it may not be able to generate sufficient heat to power your e-cig. If you think you may have this problem, please refer to our battery problems page.

E-Cig Tank -Gurgling and Leaking

Gurgles and leaks are common issues with e-cig devices but they can often be put right when you understand what might be causing the problem.

Leaking is often confused with flooding so if you decide you don't have a leaking tank please refer to our article e-cig tank flooded

These are the different parts of most clearomizer tanks:

•The base - the bottom part which screws on to the battery.

•Atomizer head - within the base resides the atomizer head (also known as a coil head, wick or heating element).

•Airflow tube - a small hollow tube which runs through the middle of the tank (sometimes this is part of the tank, sometimes part of the mouthpiece).

•Tank - surrounding the central tube is the tank which may be metal, plastic or glass, and this is where the liquid is stored. When we refer to the tank or clearomizer in this article we mean the same thing.

•Top - the top of the device may comprise more than one part, depending on the style, but one of these parts will be the mouthpiece where you draw and inhale from.

Things to be aware of to prevent leaking and gurgling:

•The central airflow tube needs to remain clear for air to flow through it. Good airflow is essential in order to vape properly. When filling, avoid getting liquid in the centre tube.

•Everything needs to be screwed together firmly to prevent leaking but DON’T OVER TIGHTEN as this can break the seals.

•Ensure the component parts are screwed together straight, not cross threaded or crooked.

•The atomizer head can loosen when unscrewing the base so always secure the atomizer before reinstalling the base.

•Keep the tank as full as possible (don’t overfill) and not below 1/3 full of liquid. This helps to maintain the vacuum in the tank and prevent leaks.

•The atomizers have a limited lifetime. When they wear down, leaks are more likely along with diminished flavour and vapour.

•It's normal to find a small amount of liquid (and condensation) in the battery contact area – best practice is to clean and ensure the battery is dry before charging it.

•Sometimes these problems can be caused by poor design or workmanship, however it is relatively easy to ruin the ‘O’ rings seals by over tightening or not installing the atomizer properly. Ensure the 'O' ring seals are intact and that none are missing.

•If your tank worked initially and now it's leaking, the problem is most likely to be a damaged seal or bad coil (most coils have a typical life of 1-2 weeks).

•It is possible, although less likely, leaking can be caused by the battery connection or even the liquid. Different manufacturers have different tolerances so there could be as much as 1mm difference between the battery threading and the tank. This extra space can push up the atomizer or centre pin in the tank causing just enough space to cause leaking. You can check this by screwing the tank on the battery and then unscrewing half a turn. In some cases this can stop leaking immediately.

•In more rare cases the liquid and voltage/ohms can be a factor due to excess heat and/or how the liquid responds to heat. For example when the liquid gets thinner as it’s heated it may seep out where there might not have been a leak before. To test for this stop vaping, clean the clearomizer and connection and then take one vape and leaving it for 30 seconds and repeat for a while, if it has stopped leaking, it is your voltage/ohms and or liquid combination.

•Above the coil and wick there is often a liquid sheath (like a plastic cover) this sheath protects the inside of the cylinder from getting liquid in it. It’s designed so that the coil will wick the liquid up to the coil and it will not get beyond where it's supposed to go. This generally works well but this is something to be aware of.

SOLUTION: What to do when gurgling happens:

•Gurgling noises are an indication that liquid has found its way into the centre tube and most often occurs after a refill. The gurgling is caused by the liquid mixing with air, a bit like when you suck through a straw when the glass is near empty.

•To try and explain gurgles further, once a stream of water has been created, more will follow more easily, it already has a wet path to seep into. e-Liquid works in much the same way, and as it’s thicker/more viscous it will eventually flow more easily because it doesn't dry up. As e-liquid doesn't evaporate and it’s sticky it will remain near the lip and on the sides of the air flow tube until it's removed.

1. Remove the clearomizer tank from the battery - taking care to turn the clearomizer sufficiently upside down to stop the liquid running out as you remove the battery

2.Wrap a paper towel around the battery end of the clearomizer while its upside down and blow through the mouthpiece - again without turning it upright and spilling liquid

3. The excess liquid in the central air flow tube will come out onto the paper towel as you blow. You may need to blow a few times to ensure the tube is clear..

4. Gurgling sounds can also occur when liquid reaches the battery connection. If you think you have this problem it sounds like flooding so please use the link at the top of this page for e-cig tank flooded.

SOLUTION: What to do when leaking happens:

•Ensure the base and the atomizer are on nice and tight (but not too tight), and straight. Sometimes atomizers get put on slightly crooked which will cause leaking. Simply remove the atomizer head and screw/twist it back on.

•Generally it requires very little effort to install the atomizer into the base, so be sure not to over tighten it and risk damaging or breaking a seal.

•Check to make sure the 'O' ring seals are not broken.

•Ensure the base is on properly and there’s no gap between where the base and the clearomizer tank join together.

There are many different atomizer heads and clearomizer tanks but these images will give you an indication of what to look for and check in order to resolve any problems: (sorry pictures are missing due to a fault)

Cracked e-Cig tanks

If liquid is leaking from the outside of the tank (usually from the base) then look for small cracks, if there are cracks, this is a leaking tank and you will need a new one.

Cracks in tanks can occur for difference reasons, the heat itself can cause plastic tanks to crack (they can melt in some cases) but some juices are much more prone to cause cracking than others, here are a few examples:

Menthol, spearmint, absinthe, cinnamon, citrus fruit flavours and cola

SOLUTION: Glass tanks are ideal and perfect for all e-liquids if you think you’re liquid is causing the problem.

Change of temperature can affect e-cigs

Just be aware that temperature can contribute to problems. When you’re outside and your e-cig gets cold, the air, liquid and components within it contract and more air can enter the system. When you’re indoors or somewhere warm, as your e-cig, liquid and component parts warm up again, the air expands and the liquid comes under more pressure.

Use a bowl to wash your tank

Don’t wash your tanks in the sink because you are likely to lose your seals down the plug hole!

Irregular use can cause some tanks to leak

Some tanks are much more prone to leaks if they’re not in regular use. If you’re not going to use one for a while, best to empty it and refill it when you need it. When in regular use, the liquid tends to be vaped away before it has a chance to run out and an old atomizer will increase the chances of leaks occurring.

More tips

You may find letting your e-cig rest for 30 mins or so after you've finished with it stops the odd drips that can occur when you unscrew them immediately after vaping and put them straight away.

E-Cig Tank Flooded or Leaking

Is your e-cig tank leaking or it is flooded – these are two different issues.

It's easy to confuse a flooded tank with a leaking tank so if you don't have a flooded tank please refer to our article e-cig tank leaking and gurgling

These are signs of a flooded e-cig tank, along with solutions...

If liquid is leaking onto the battery connection, you may well have a flooded tank. This can happen when you draw (suck) on the mouthpiece too hard which causes too much liquid to be drawn to the atomiser too quickly and it can’t heat and vaporize the liquid fast enough.

Solution: Most e-cigs require a slow draw with long, slow inhalations. Very quick inhalations (the way traditional cigarettes are often smoked) may not give the atomizer time to heat sufficiently and vaporize the liquid, so take it slowly and see how you get on. Secondly, as soon as you notice leaking, stop using your e-cig, unscrew it (remember to hold it so that the liquid doesn't spill out, which is most commonly upside down) and give it a good clean to remove the excess liquid.

When the liquid in the atomizer chamber isn’t vaporized, it either floods the atomizer chamber or it back flows up through the air hole in the centre of the tank. This excess unheated liquid can end up in your mouth which is very unpleasant and should not be swallowed.

If you're new to e-cigs, the atomizer is usually a replaceable item and it’s the small part inside the tank which heats up and it's known by several different names: coil, coil head, atomizer, atomizer head, wick, heating element.

Solution: Ensure your atomizer is secure, not over tightened but not loose and allowing liquid to seep through to the battery. Also, if you've been using the same atomizer for 2 or 3 weeks it may have reached the end of its life. If that's the case, try and new one and see if that solves the problem. It's still worth trying to rid the old atomizer of excess liquid and giving it one more try.

When the liquid can’t turn to vapour fast enough, it has to go somewhere. Most commonly it finds its way via the atomizer onto the battery connection at the point where it joins the tank. When this happens it is likely you’ll hear a gurgling noise when you draw.

The main ingredients in e-liquid (propylene glycol and vegetable glycerine) do not conduct electricity very well so you may experience a poor connection and reduced heating of the atomizer, which in turn will just make you problem worse as you draw and even more liquid isn’t being vaporized.

Solution: dab the battery connection clean of excess e-liquid with a paper towel or similar to ensure maximum connectivity. It's normal for some condensation to occur above the battery but do not allow a build-up of e-liquid

Problems with electronic cigarette batteries

Battery is dead and doesn’t light up

The average electronic cigarette battery has a typical lifetime of 300 charges and this lifespan is significantly reduced if batteries are frequently recharged and in constant use.

These lithium e-cig batteries are also very sensitive to environmental conditions due to the micro technology inside them. Possible causes of a dead battery include contact problems, faulty battery, overuse, misuse, damage, environmental conditions and lifespan exceeded.

1. Place the battery in a room at a constant temperature for 24 hours (do not freeze or overheat).

2. Try to charge the battery (ensure your charger works on other compatible batteries otherwise your charger could be the problem).

3. If the battery charges, try attaching a different clearomizer/tank. If you still have the same problem, it's likely that the battery is the cause of your trouble but you won't know exactly what the problem with the battery is at this stage.

4. When a battery is nearing the end of its life, you will still be able to charge it but it won't necessarily be able to heat anything sufficiently.

5 .If the battery is faulty, has been overused, misused, damaged or its lifetime exceed it should not be used again, however, if you have no reason to suspect any of these issues the problem could be a poor connection between the battery contact and the clearomizer/tank contact points, as products can vary slightly and also sometimes the points can get pushed in too far when screwing things together.

6. Take something like a wooden cocktail stick or piece of credit card (don't use anything metal on the battery) and gently pry the centre contact up on both the atomizer/clearomizer and the battery as best you can. This is a fiddly job so take care not to force anything out of place. For 510 style atomizers/clearomizers with a protruding screw, unscrew it a little.

e-Liquid in the battery

If you get liquid in the battery it can become stuck in the on or off position rendering it unusable. The LED button often still pushes but liquid can still put it out of working order. You may find though that it starts to work again days later when it's been allowed to dry out. Try tapping the battery gently onto a paper towel if you have excess liquid around the button. Don't directly tap the button and especially not on a hard surface or you may damage it.

Good clean contact between your e-cig battery and clearomizer/tank is essential for the best heat, vapour and flavour, so regular cleaning is essential (every couple of weeks or so for example). Rubbing alcohol/surgical spirit on a Q tip/cotton bud is ideal.

Clean the outside of the connection/contact area and the inside too ensuring that you hold the battery upside down so gravity can take away any excess fluid. Paper towel can be used to dry the area if necessary.

For stubborn grime a cocktail stick is ideal for the threaded grooves, taking care not to break it off inside the battery, but don’t use anything metal.

Battery stays on (the LED is constantly glowing)

There are several possible causes including a damaged battery and battery pressure switches sticking which can cause the microchip to jam on. If you can't get it un-stuck, you will need a new battery.

1. Tap the LED end of the battery on a solid, flat surface a few times (not too hard, just hard enough to give it a jolt) and see if the LED has turned off. If unsuccessful go to 2.

2. Remove the clearomizer/tank from the battery. Blow directly into and inhale from the battery but breath this air out; don’t swallow this air. Repeat this at 3-4 times or more. If unsuccessful, go to 3.

3. Blow and inhale on the LED glowing tip. Repeat this at least 3-4 times if necessary. If unsuccessful, go to 4.

4. This is the last resort. Allow the battery to completely drain of all its charge which may take several hours. When the LED has stopped glowing recharge it as normal. The loss of power may prompt the battery to un-jam itself. This step is the last resort as lithium-ion batteries should not be allowed to fully discharge. If this final step is also unsuccessful, you probably need a new battery.

5. Note: Avoid leaving batteries on charge overnight. Remove the battery from the charger when fully charged and switch off the power supply to the charger.

6. Also make sure you are not storing your batteries in pockets or other places with a lot of dust. The type of dust usually found in pockets will get inside the battery and can cause the switch to malfunction.

Battery won’t hold charge

Batteries have a limited life so they won’t last forever. Their lifetimes vary, on average about 300 charge/discharge cycles. However, if the battery is relatively new and it won’t hold its charge it is likely to be faulty or damaged.

Battery charges ok and the LED does glow when pressed but no vapour

Most likely to be related to the contact points between the battery and the atomizer or it could be the atomizer head/coil head. See our page about lack or loss of vapour troubleshooting.

Battery LED lights up but flashes when drawing

The cut-off point of an e-cig battery can be anything from 5 to 10 seconds depending on the item. This is a standard safety feature in that batteries are designed to cut out in order to prevent overheating.

Battery flashes rapidly but no vapour

The battery is low and needs to be recharged. Most standard e-cig batteries flash, generally rapidly, in an effort to let you know they're running out of power.

Battery is activating on its own

This is common with automatic batteries. One solution is to take the ash end and literally give it a good hard couple of taps on a hard surface.

This can help force the switch mechanism back into its proper position but doesn't always work.

Don't put paperclips or other items inside the battery and don’t use compressed air. This can permanently damage the switch. Also make sure you are not storing your batteries in pockets or other places with a lot of dust.

The type of dust in pockets will get inside the battery and can cause the switch to malfunction. The battery can also occasionally get a small amount of liquid inside it which causes it to malfunction.

Batteries often work fine if you give them time to dry out so put the battery somewhere safe and just allow it to sit for a day or two.

Battery gets extremely hot when using or charging

This is a sign the battery has a serious problem. DON'T THROW IT IN THE BIN! Put the battery somewhere to cool down where it doesn't pose a fire risk (a granite work top for example) and do not attempt to use this battery again.

Battery has green light when charging

Green is for charged so you don’t need to charge it any more. All batteries come part charged and you should be able to use them straight away without the need for immediate charging.

Battery LED light is flashing green and red

The battery is near fully charged. It’s just letting you know it’s nearly charged.

Charger - USB charger LED light is flashing blue and red

The battery is near fully charged. It’s just letting you know it’s nearly charged (the LED on some USB chargers turns blue when charging is complete).

Important notes about charging batteries

•Always use the correct charger for the battery you are charging

* Always disconnect the charger from the PC/Mains before attaching or disconnecting the battery

•Never leave batteries unattended while charging, unplug before you go to bed or go out

•Don't charge batteries on combustible surfaces such as carpets or surfaces that could be damaged by heat

•When the battery is fully charged unplug it ideally let the battery rest for about 30 mins after charging

•Don't let the battery drain of power completely, it's recommended to recharge the battery when it is low on power, not totally empty

•Don't leave the battery without any power at all when it's not in use - this can result in a less usable battery

•Don't heat or incinerate batteries

•Don't charge damaged batteries If a battery becomes hot when you're charging it, stop charging immediately and let it cool down before you handle it further

How to store and look after your batteries

•Storing batteries properly extends the life of the battery and keeps them from becoming a safety hazard.

•Store batteries away from metal objects including items such as keys and coins (so avoid leaving them in your pocket).

•Store batteries in a dry, cool place which is not subjected to extremes of temperature or humidity.

•If you live in a hot location batteries can be stored in a refrigerator (but don’t freeze them). If you do this, you must seal them in an airtight plastic bag to maintain the right moisture level.

•When storing lithium batteries for a period of time, ideally leave them about 40% charged. This minimises degradation and allows the battery to slowly discharge itself, which is crucial for its operational health.

•Always store batteries with the positive and negative terminals away from each other so they can’t begin conducting electricity idly.

•Avoid storing new and old batteries together because there is a risk that the newer ones will conduct electricity into the older ones.

•Dispose of batteries safely and in accordance with regulations (some local shops have recycling facilities now).

E-Cig Charging Problems and Important Safety Information

Here’s what should normally happen when charging your e-cig battery

The light on the charger should be red while charging a battery that’s depleted of power and go green when the battery has been fully charged.

What to do if your battery isn’t being charged

Check if the charger charges up another battery that needs charging. If you’re sure you have two good batteries and they won’t charge, but they are depleted enough to take more charge, the charger must be the problem or other equipment connected to the charger, i.e. the mains wall plug or an adapter.

If you only have one battery you won’t be able to make the above check, so then try cleaning the connections/threads on the charger and the battery. Isopropyl/rubbing alcohol is ideal on something like a Q tip – ENSURE YOU UNPLUG THE BATTERY FIRST. Even though it may not look dirty you’re trying to eliminate anything that could reduce its connectivity.

Try also disconnecting the charger from the USB, the USB mains adapter from the wall, and a 3 pin/2 pin adapter depending on where you are in the world, and put it all back together (like you would with your PC to reset it) including connecting the battery to the charger again with the battery turned on.

Batteries do not have to be on or off to charge but there are some variations as to what a battery does while it’s charging. Some turn off while others stay on.

Most problems associated with charging e-cig batteries come from poor quality chargers and batteries. Poor quality products may have inferior materials that can’t conduct well, in addition to other quality and safety issues that may not be immediately obvious.

We only recommend the chargers and related hardware that we stock.

Generally you get what you pay for. You will see other chargers that look the same as ours and they will have the same input/output specification, however, please proceed with caution and choose a trusted vendor. It’s best to avoid cheap imitations even though they won’t all be bad.

Important - inferior charging products and USBs with viruses

Improper charging and inferior e-cig charging products are a serious safety hazard (the same applies to mobile phones) – they can cause your kit to be ruined, much worse still they can explode and cause fire!

In November 2014 it has been reported in the media that there are USB chargers for e-cigs in circulation containing a computer virus. Someone in the USA bought one of these and it infected his computer when he tried to charge his e-cigarette. Please be careful!

E-Cig batteries do need careful cleaning every so often

Good clean contact between your e-cig battery and clearomizer/tank is essential for the best heat, vapour and flavour, so regular cleaning is essential (every couple of weeks or so for example).

Rubbing alcohol/surgical spirit on a Q tip/cotton bud is ideal. Clean the outside of the connection/contact area and the inside too ensuring that you hold the battery upside down so gravity can take away any excess fluid.

Paper towel can be used to dry the area if necessary. For stubborn grime a cocktail stick is ideal for the threaded grooves, taking care not to break it off inside the battery, but don’t use anything metal.

Important notes about charging batteries

•Always use the correct charger for the battery you are charging

•Never leave batteries unattended while charging, unplug before you go to bed or go out

•Don't charge batteries on combustible surfaces such as carpets or surfaces that could be damaged by heat

•Always disconnect the USB charger from power source before connecting or disconnecting the battery

•Ideally let the battery rest for a few hours after charging

•Don't let the battery drain of power completely, it's recommended to recharge the battery when it is low on power, not totally empty

•Don't leave the battery without any power at all when it's not in use - this can result in a less usable battery

•Don't heat or incinerate batteries

•Don't charge damaged batteries

•If a battery becomes hot when you're charging it, stop charging immediately and let it cool down before you handle it further

How to store and look after your batteries

Storing batteries properly extends the life of the battery and keeps them from becoming a safety hazard.

1. Store batteries away from metal objects including items such as keys and coins (so avoid leaving them in your pocket).

2. Store batteries in a dry, cool place which is not subjected to extremes of temperature or humidity.

3. If you live in a hot location batteries can be stored in a refrigerator (but don’t freeze them). If you do this, you must seal them in an airtight plastic bag to maintain the right moisture level.

4. When storing lithium batteries for a period of time, ideally leave them about 40% charged. This minimises degradation and allows the battery to slowly discharge itself, which is crucial for its operational health.

5. Always store batteries with the positive and negative terminals away from each other so they can’t begin conducting electricity idly.

6. Avoid storing new and old batteries together because there is a risk that the newer ones will conduct electricity into the older ones.

7. Dispose of batteries safely and in accordance with regulations (some local shops have recycling facilities now)

E-Liquid in Mouth - not nice!

This is a common problem and usually caused by a flooded atomizer and/or a low-powered battery or a battery that is running low on power.

Bear in mind too that most e-cigs generally require a lighter draw than a traditional cigarette.

See also our article about flooded e-cig atomizers which will give you a lot more detail about how the liquid ends up in your mouth if it can't turn into vapour fast enough.

In the meantime you will need to clear your atomizer/tank of excess e-liquid:

To clear the excess liquid without emptying the tank (if it has liquid in it)

1. Remove the clearomizer tank from the battery - taking care to turn the clearomizer sufficiently upside down to stop the liquid running out as you remove the battery

2. Wrap a paper towel around the battery end of the clearomizer while its upside down and blow through the mouthpiece - again without turning it upright and spilling liquid

3. The excess liquid in the central air flow tube will come out onto the paper towel as you blow. You may need to blow a few times to ensure the tube is clear.