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PowerBook: Configuring for Minimum Noise (8/93)

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TOPIC -----

How can I set up a PowerBook for efficient, quiet use in meetings?

DISCUSSION -----

Configuring a PowerBook especially for meetings can prolong battery life tremendously and reduce noise. Using this configuration, one can usually get a full day's work out of a single battery charge on non-color PowerBooks.

At least 6MB of RAM is required for this setup, and more is recommended. The more RAM you have, the larger your RAM disk can be, and the more files you can fit on it.

Here's a configuration to try:

- A 3.3MB RAM disk that holds a minimal System Folder plus a few items like a word processor application (no accessory files), and some documents (usually 50K to 200K).
- Don't run anything from the hard disk, so that it stays asleep essentially all the time. Copy documents to the hard disk, which powers the hard disk briefly, only once in a while. Not running the hard disk saves power, reduces noise, and greatly speeds wakeup and system performance. (If you want to keep the hard disk from spinning at all until the next startup, drag it to the Trash, unmounting it from the desktop. You will then need to restart the PowerBook for the hard disk to appear again.)
- Use the PowerBook File Assistant Sleep Fkey function (or a similar utility) so that you can put the PowerBook to sleep instantly from the keyboard by pressing the key sequence Shift-Command-0.
- Whenever there doesn't appear to be anything worth noting for the next several seconds, use the Sleep Fkey to put the PowerBook to sleep instantly. When you need to take a note, press a key to wake the PowerBook up and start typing instantly. The instant wakeup response is possible only if AppleTalk is turned off and you don't need to access the hard disk (as is the case if you're using a RAM disk). Otherwise,

AppleTalk causes a delay of a second or two. Hard disk spinup causes a significantly longer delay. This way, your PowerBook may be asleep for most of the meeting and awake only while you're actually typing.

- Turn Off Sound Using the Sound CDEV

Note: this won't turn off the startup sound on the PowerBook 100, 140, 145, 145B and 170. The only way you can turn it off completely on those machines is by inserting a dummy plug into the PowerBook sound-out port.

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