



How to Clean the Ports on your Electronic Device

Use this guide to clean the ports on your...

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INTRODUCTION

Use this guide to clean the ports on your favorite electronic device.

If your device isn't registering something being plugged into a port, like a USB flash drive, that port may be dirty and require cleaning.

The cleaning procedures for each type of port follow the same progression: cleaning with air, a brush, and finally a cotton swab with isopropyl alcohol. Although similar, the procedures do vary slightly, and you should read the steps for the type of port you're cleaning.

This guide uses tools that you might have around the house, but we also sell a [Precision Cleaning Kit](#) that includes some small brushes and picks to make your cleaning life easier.



TOOLS:

- [Flashlight](#) (1)
- [Dust Blower](#) (1)
- [Anti-Static Brush](#) (1)
- [Toothpick](#) (1)
- [Cotton Ball](#) (1)
- [Isopropyl Alcohol \(90% or Greater\)](#) (1)
- [Compressed Air](#) (1)
- [Precision Cleaning Kit](#) (1)

Step 1 — Inspect your ports



- Shine a flashlight into your port and inspect it for any large blockages.
 - ① A buildup of dust, grime, and lint inside the port can prevent the connector from fitting properly in the port.
- Follow the links below to skip to the procedure for your type of port:
 - [USB-C port](#)
 - [Audio port or "headphone jack"](#)
 - [USB-A port](#)
 - [HDMI port](#)
 - [Laptop "barrel" charging port](#)

Step 2 — Blow air into the USB-C port



⚠ Don't use your mouth to blow into your USB-C port, as the moisture from your breath can damage the contacts.

- Insert the tip of a [dust blower](#), or the nozzle of compressed air, at one corner of the port.
 - ① This gives room for any debris to eject out of the port.
- Blow a few puffs of air into the port.
- Plug in your device to check if it works and if the connector is fully seated.
- If your device isn't working or seats properly, unplug it and repeat the blowing process.
- If your device still doesn't work or sits properly after multiple repetitions, move to the next step.

Step 3 — Brush your USB-C port



⚠ Don't use any metal tools to clean the USB-C port, as you risk damaging it.

- Insert the head of a brush, like a dry toothbrush, into the port, making sure the hairs surround the middle contact pad (the black tab in the middle of the port).
- Gently turn the brush in small circles to break up any clumped debris.
- Remove the brush and use a dust blower or compressed air to blow out any debris.
- If any debris is stuck, reinsert the brush and rotate it to let the hairs "scoop" out any debris.
- Plug in your device and check if it's working. If it's still not working, move on to the next step.

Step 4 — Clean the port with isopropyl alcohol



- Follow [this guide](#) to make a custom cotton swab.
 - ① You can also use [dental picks with barbed tips](#) (non-flavored).
 - ① You *can* use a normal cotton swab, but most are too thick and have loose cotton that can snag on sharp edges.
- Apply a few drops of highly-concentrated isopropyl alcohol (>90%) to the cotton.
- Insert your tool between the middle contact pad and the perimeter of the USB-C port itself.
 - ⚠ **Don't force the tool into the port, as you risk breaking the middle contact pad.**
- Slide the tool along the perimeter of the port to clean it.
- Wait a few minutes for the isopropyl alcohol to evaporate before plugging in your device and testing it.

Step 5 — Blow air into the audio port



⚠ Don't use your mouth to blow into your audio port, as the moisture from your breath can damage the contacts.

- Insert the tip of a dust blower, or the nozzle of compressed air, at one end of the port.
 - ⓘ This gives room for any debris to eject out of the port.
- Blow a few puffs of air into the port.
- Plug in your device to check if it works and if the connector is fully seated.
- If your device isn't working or seats properly, unplug it and repeat the blowing process.
- If your device still doesn't work or sits properly after multiple repetitions, move to the next step.

Step 6 — Brush your audio port



⚠ Don't use any metal tools to clean the audio port, as you risk damaging it.

- Insert the head of a brush, like a dry toothbrush, into the audio port.
- Gently turn the brush in small circles to break up any clumped debris.
- Remove the brush and use a dust blower or compressed air to blow out any debris.
- If any debris is stuck, reinsert the brush and rotate it to let the hairs "scoop" out any debris.
- Plug in your device and check if it's working. If it's still not working, move on to the next step.

Step 7 — Clean the audio port with isopropyl alcohol



- Follow [this guide](#) to make a custom cotton swab.
 - ① You can also use [dental picks with barbed tips](#) (non-flavored).
 - ① You *can* use a normal cotton swab, but most are too thick and have loose cotton that can snag on sharp edges.
- Apply a few drops of highly-concentrated isopropyl alcohol (>90%) to the cotton.
- Insert your tool in the audio port.
 - ⚠ **Don't force the tool into the port, as you risk damaging the contacts.**
- Twist the tool back and forth within the port to clean it.
- Wait a few minutes for the isopropyl alcohol to evaporate before plugging in your device and testing it.

Step 8 — Blow air into the USB-A port



⚠ Don't use your mouth to blow into your USB-A port, as the moisture from your breath can damage the contacts.

- Insert the tip of a dust blower, or the nozzle of compressed air, at one end of the port.
 - ① This gives room for any debris to eject out of the port.
- Blow a few puffs of air into the port.
- Plug in your device to check if it works and if the connector is fully seated.
- If your device isn't working or seats properly, unplug it and repeat the blowing process.
- If your device still doesn't work or sits properly after multiple repetitions, move to the next step.

Step 9 — Brush your USB-A port



⚠ Don't use any metal tools to clean the USB-A port, as you risk damaging it.

- Insert the head of a brush, like a dry toothbrush, into the port.
- Gently slide the brush back and forth to break up any clumped debris.
- Remove the brush and use a dust blower or compressed air to blow out any debris.
- If any debris is stuck, reinsert the brush and rotate it to let the hairs "scoop" out any debris.
- Plug in your device and check if it's working. If it's still not working, move on to the next step.

Step 10 — Clean the USB-A port with isopropyl alcohol



- Follow [this guide](#) to make a custom cotton swab.
 - ① You can also use [dental picks with barbed tips](#) (non-flavored).
 - ① You *can* use a normal cotton swab, but most are too thick and have loose cotton that can snag on sharp edges.
- Apply a few drops of highly-concentrated isopropyl alcohol (>90%) to the cotton.
- Insert your tool in the USB-A port.
 - ⚠ **Don't force the tool into the port, as you risk damaging the contacts and getting the tool stuck.**
- Slide the tool back and forth along the port to clean it.
- Wait a few minutes for the isopropyl alcohol to evaporate before plugging in your device and testing it.

Step 11 — Blow air into the HDMI port



⚠ Don't use your mouth to blow into your HDMI port, as the moisture from your breath can damage the contacts.

- Insert the tip of a dust blower, or the nozzle of compressed air, at one end of the port.
 - ① This gives room for any debris to eject out of the port.
- Blow a few puffs of air into the port.
- Plug in your device to check if it works and if the connector is fully seated.
- If your device isn't working or seats properly, unplug it and repeat the blowing process.
- If your device still doesn't work or sits properly after multiple repetitions, move to the next step.

Step 12 — Brush your HDMI port



⚠ Don't use any metal tools to clean the HDMI port, as you risk damaging it.

- Insert the head of a brush, like a dry toothbrush, into the port, making sure the hairs surround the middle contact pad (the black tab in the middle of the HDMI port).
- Gently turn the brush in small circles to break up any clumped debris.
- Remove the brush and use a dust blower or compressed air to blow out any debris.
- If any debris is stuck, reinsert the brush and rotate it to let the hairs "scoop" out any debris.
- Plug in your device and check if it's working. If it's still not working, move on to the next step.

Step 13 — Clean the HDMI port with isopropyl alcohol



- Follow [this guide](#) to make a custom cotton swab.
 - ① You can also use [dental picks with barbed tips](#) (non-flavored).
 - ① You *can* use a normal cotton swab, but most are too thick and have loose cotton that can snag on sharp edges.
- Apply a few drops of highly-concentrated isopropyl alcohol (>90%) to the cotton.
- Insert your tool between the middle contact pad and the perimeter of the HDMI port itself.
 - ⚠ **Don't force the tool into the port, as you risk breaking the middle contact pad.**
- Slide the tool along the perimeter of the port to clean it.
- Wait a few minutes for the isopropyl alcohol to evaporate before plugging in your device and testing it.

Step 14 — Blow air into the charging port



⚠ Don't use your mouth to blow into your charging port, as the moisture from your breath can damage the contacts.

- Insert the tip of a dust blower, or the nozzle of compressed air, at one end of the port.
 - ① This gives room for any debris to eject out of the port.
- Blow a few puffs of air into the port.
- Plug in your device to check if it works and if the connector is fully seated.
- If your device isn't working or seats properly, unplug it and repeat the blowing process.
- If your device still doesn't work or sits properly after multiple repetitions, move to the next step.

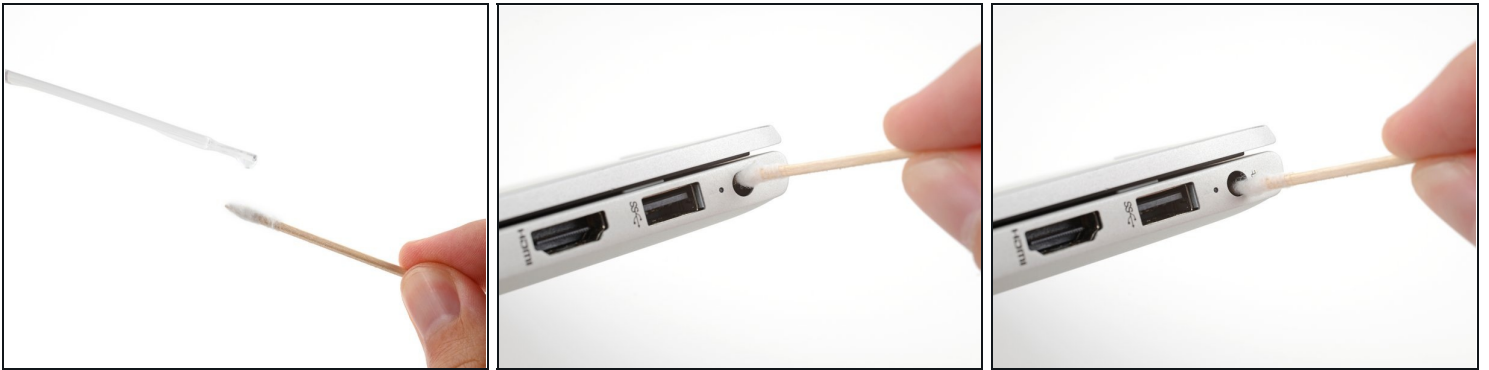
Step 15 — Brush your charging port



⚠ Don't use any metal tools to clean the charging port, as you risk damaging it.

- Insert the head of a brush, like a dry toothbrush, into the charging port.
- Gently turn the brush in small circles to break up any clumped debris.
- Remove the brush and use a dust blower or compressed air to blow out any debris.
- If any debris is stuck, reinsert the brush and rotate it to let the hairs "scoop" out any debris.
- Plug in your device and check if it's working. If it's still not working, move on to the next step.

Step 16 — Clean the charging port with isopropyl alcohol



- Follow [this guide](#) to make a custom cotton swab.
 - ① You can also use [dental picks with barbed tips](#) (non-flavored).
 - ① You *can* use a normal cotton swab, but most are too thick and have loose cotton that can snag on sharp edges.
- Apply a few drops of high-concentrated isopropyl alcohol (>90%) to the cotton.
- Insert your tool in the charging port.
 - ⚠ **Don't force the tool in and out of the port, as you risk damaging the contacts or getting cotton wedged in the port.**
- Rotate the tool around the perimeter of the port to clean it.
- Wait a few minutes for the isopropyl alcohol to evaporate before plugging in your device and testing it.

For other general electronics skills guides, click [here](#).