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TECH TIP: Battery Myths

by Liam from www.Camera-Battery.com.au

We've busted three common rechargeable battery myths that could save you a lot of headache...

- Myth #1 - Batteries must be completely flat before you can charge them.

While this is true of older battery technologies, lithium-ion/polymer batteries which are used in most cameras and laptops today can be charged at any time without any negative effects. There is no need to wait until the battery is flat to charge it.

- Myth #2 - The cheap batteries on eBay have twice the power of the batteries in the shop.

Not many consumers are aware that it is common practice in China for manufacturers to mislabel their batteries with higher capacities. The reason they say, is because that's what the market "wants". It doesn't matter to them that the batteries have only half the capacity mentioned on the label.

How do we know this? Because it even happened to us. Our own manufacturer started sending us batteries that were mislabelled. Thankfully we picked up on it pretty quickly and fixed the situation.

To fit more power into a battery the battery must be larger in size to fit the additional battery cells. Don't be fooled by a battery claiming to have twice the power that has no extra size for the additional cells needed.

- Myth #3 - Batteries deteriorate the more you use them.

While technically true, more importantly for most people all batteries deteriorate with age REGARDLESS of how often you use them. This means that from the minute a battery is made it begins to deteriorate slightly each and every day. You will only notice the deterioration after 3-5 years when the battery will hardly hold any charge at all and need replacing.

If you are a heavy user (we're talking professional photographer type user here) then the heavy use will also shorten the batteries life. However for most people time will impact the batteries deterioration more than their use.

Remember, stay charged, power up!

This was spotted in 'Electronic Eye' - the magazine of the Sydney Video Makers Club (www.sydneyvideomakers.org.au). It was submitted there by a club member, Jim Whitehead. We use it here by kind permission of Margaret Tulloh the magazine editor ... and of the author, Liam. His firm is in Australia but if you are on holiday there it might be a chance to deal with a guy who really knows his batteries.
