

# Uninterruptible Power Supplies

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## What is an uninterruptible power supply?

An uninterruptible power supply device — or UPS — protects computers, modems and other sensitive equipment by “cleaning up” and regulating voltage, guarding against surges, spikes, voltage sags and power outages that can cause your equipment to fail.

In the event of a power outage or surge a UPS automatically provides temporary emergency back-up power from a battery. Think of it as an extra safety cushion against power surges. And if there’s a power outage, it allows time for the automatic network shutdown software to go to work; the software will automatically save your work, close files and shut down your equipment properly — even if you’re not there. No corrupted files or lost data!

A UPS is a relatively inexpensive way to provide backup power to computers and office equipment. UPS devices for home applications are “plug and play” and easy to install yourself.

## Selecting the right UPS device

To make sure you get the right size UPS with the options you need, look for products that meet the specifications below.

### UL 1778 listed

Conforms to Underwriter Laboratory’s standard UL 1778.

### Size

Depending on your equipment protection needs, you could use a 450 VA UPS to protect one computer and a monitor. A 650 VA UPS should be considered the minimum size needed to protect a file server. Contact PGE customer service at the numbers on back for help with sizing.

### Other available options:

- **UPS performance monitoring**  
Feature that constantly checks device is operational.
- **Automatic network shutdown software**  
Shuts down all open computer applications so no data is lost.
- **Extensions for battery run time**  
Some UPS devices offer extensions for a longer battery run time (how long the UPS can support equipment on its battery).
- **Systems interface**  
Capability to activate alarms or communication when an outage occurs.

# UPS Device FAQs

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## **Q. How does a UPS work?**

When there is an interruption of power, a UPS converts battery power to the AC power needed to operate equipment. It does this with an electronic circuit called an inverter.

## **Q. How long can a UPS provide power from its battery?**

It depends on the size of the UPS, the size of the battery and the connected equipment. Usually, they can support equipment for 10 to 20 minutes.

## **Q. How do I know when my battery power is low?**

Usually, the UPS device starts “beeping” when the battery is low. Higher-end UPS devices come with a software package that will alert you when the battery reaches such status.

## **Q. Why are there different types of UPS devices?**

All UPS types provide power interruption protection, but line-interactive can provide continuous power conditioning.

## **Q. How much should I plan on investing in a UPS?**

A basic UPS starts at about \$50, while the more performance-oriented devices can run up to \$2,000.

## **Q. Where can I purchase a UPS device?**

You’ll find UPS devices at office equipment or computer/electronics stores.

For more information, contact an electrical contractor or PGE Customer Service at 503-228-6322 (Portland) or 800-542-8818 (elsewhere).