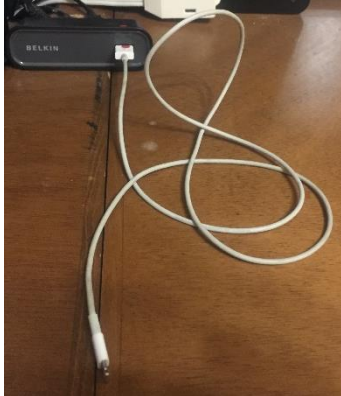


Making USB Cables Behave, Version 1.2

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I don't think I'm an *excessive* Neat Freak, but do find it annoying how my USB cables won't just sit nicely on my desk. I can try to coil them up, but they just ignore me.

But then I got thinking. Something caused these cables to take this set, and maybe I can get them to take a new set. Searching online, I found many references to using heat to tightly coil USB cables into a spring form. Interesting idea, but I don't want to fight the coil. Besides, I don't think bending the cable this tight is a good idea.



Yet, using heat to reset the cable's preferred shape sounded like a good start.

To my surprise, it works rather well. I can pull the cable out, and it almost lays flat. But when stored, it now *wants* to form a nice neat coil.

Oh, and those red dots? They prevent me from constantly trying to plug in the cable upside down.

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The first step is to wrap the cable around a round object with a diameter about half of the desired diameter. Weight the ends of the cable and make snug.



Here is the tricky part. You want to apply enough heat to give the cable a set but not so much that it damages the cable. Many people recommended using a blow dryer.

I happen to have a heat gun. This gun can easily turn my USB cable into a glistening ball of hot goo. To

avoid this outcome, I moved the hot blast of air quickly and went around the can about 5 times. Then I lifted up one of the weights. At first the cable started to spring to its old shape. But with enough heat, the cable did not move. Then I left the cable to cool.

That's all there is to it.

John Maclean, from Australia, suggested another method. He preheats a 100 mm diameter drinking glass with hot water and then fills it with boiling water. Then John wraps the cable around the glass. When the water cools, he gets a neat coil.

Acknowledgment

Thanks to Emil Kavic for finding a typo missed by all.

I welcome your comments and questions.

If you wish to be contacted each time I publish an article, email me with just “Article Alias” in the subject line.

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