



# U.S. ARMY COMBAT CAPABILITIES DEVELOPMENT COMMAND – ARMY RESEARCH LABORATORY

## Enabling Greater Flight Endurance for sUASs— Alternative Batteries, What Makes ‘Em Tick... and How to Abuse Them

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Energy & Biotechnology Division-Energy Storage Group



# THE BATTLE ROYALE BETWEEN

## LI-ION & LI-PO

BATTERIES

RAVPOWER

Two superhero characters are shown. The character on the left is blue with a red cape and is holding a black battery labeled "LI-ION". The character on the right is green with a red cape and is holding a white battery labeled "LI-PO". Both batteries have "BOCC" and "XXXX" markings. The background is split into a light blue left side and a light pink right side.

### WHICH BATTERY IS BEST FOR YOU?

<https://blog.ravpower.com/2017/06/lithium-ion-vs-lithium-polymer-batteries/>



# Battery Basics

## “Li-ion” vs. “LiPo”



# Li-Ion Batteries—Battery Packs & Cells

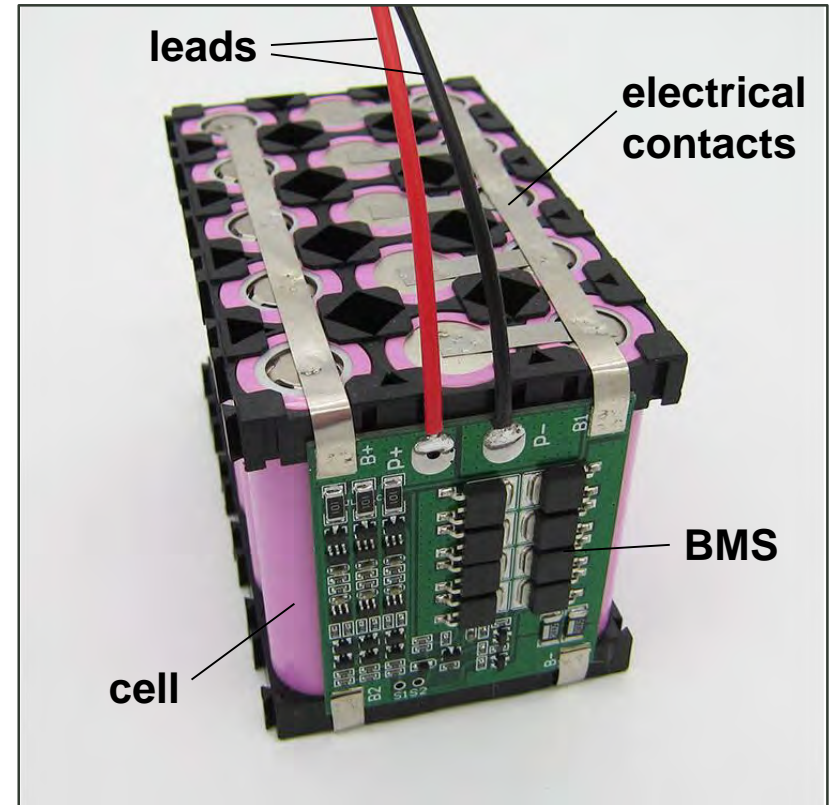


Li-ion batteries (or battery packs) are composed of individual Li-ion cells (one, several... or many)

typical battery components:

- cells
- electrical contacts/leads
- BMS (battery management system)
- thermal sensors (thermistors)

Li-ion battery (pack)

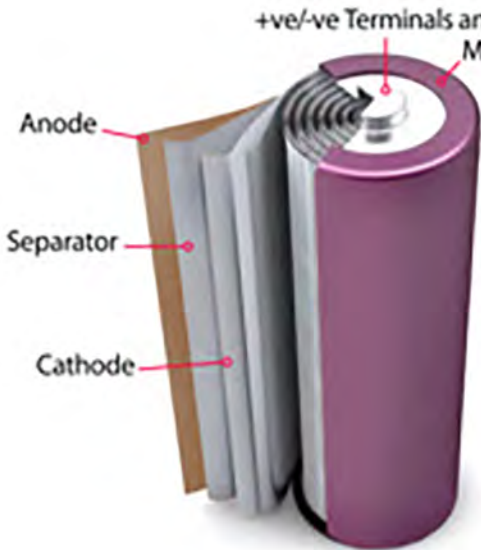




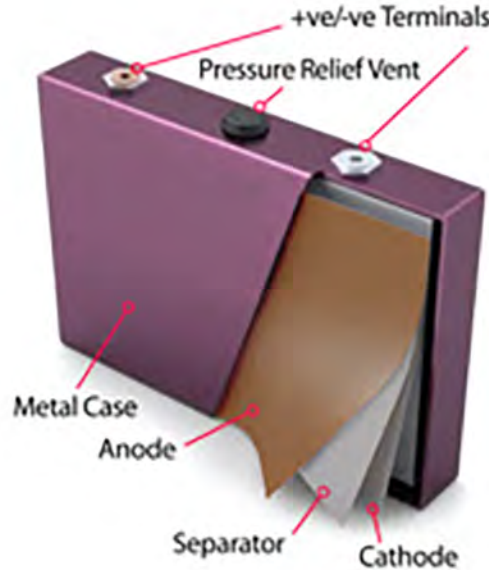
# Li-Ion Batteries—Cell Types/Formats



There are **3 primary cell formats** used for larger Li-ion battery cells:



**Cylindrical**



**Prismatic**



**Pouch**

i.e., “Li-ion” battery cells

both are prismatic (hard vs. soft packaging)

i.e., what’s inside “LiPo” batteries

**NOTE: All of these 3 formats are Li-ion cells—the chemistry inside is often nearly identical**



# Li-Ion Batteries—Pouch Cells



**Pouch cell sizes are not standardized**—there are many different shapes, thicknesses, differences in tab (electrical contacts) locations, etc.





# Li-Ion Batteries—Cylindrical Cells



Cylindrical cell sizes are standardized

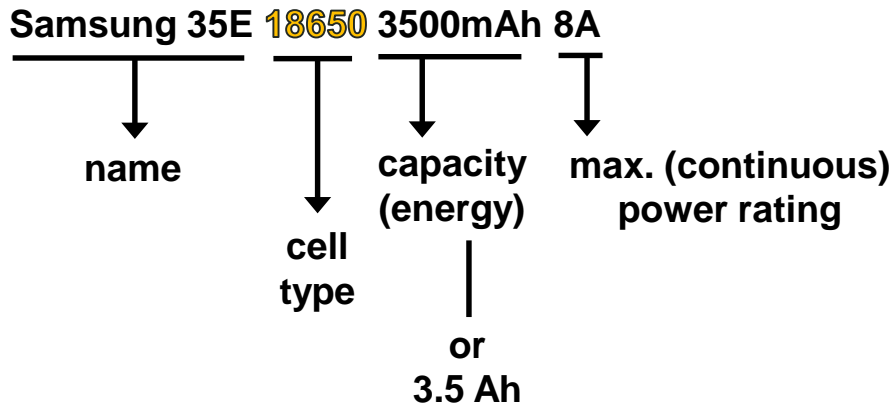


cathode material identifier:

$\text{LiCoO}_2$ (LCO)	$\text{LiMn}_2\text{O}_4$ (LMO)	$\text{LiNi}_x\text{Mn}_y\text{Co}_z\text{O}_4$ (NMC)	$\text{LiFePO}_4$ (LFP)
“ICR”	“IMR”	“INR”	“IFR”

<https://batterybro.com/blogs/18650-wholesale-battery-reviews/18880255-battery-chemistry-finally-explained>

**NOTE: Cathode materials may be mixed/blended in commercial cells**



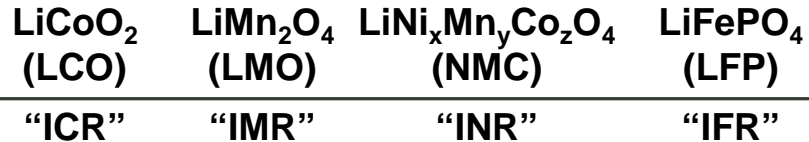


# Li-Ion Batteries—Activate Materials



**active materials:**  
materials involved in  
cell reactions  
(intentionally)

cathode material identifier:



<https://batterybro.com/blogs/18650-wholesale-battery-reviews/18880255-battery-chemistry-finally-explained>

Periodic Table of the Elements

1 H Hydrogen 1.008	2 He Helium 4.003																
3 Li Lithium 6.941	4 Be Beryllium 9.012																
5 B Boron 10.81	6 C Carbon 12.01	7 N Nitrogen 14.01	8 O Oxygen 15.999	9 F Fluorine 18.998	10 Ne Neon 20.18												
11 Na Sodium 22.99	12 Mg Magnesium 24.31																
13 Al Aluminum 26.98	14 Si Silicon 28.09	15 P Phosphorus 30.97	16 S Sulfur 32.07	17 Cl Chlorine 35.45	18 Ar Argon 39.95												
19 K Potassium 39.10	20 Ca Calcium 40.08	21 Sc Scandium 44.96	22 Ti Titanium 47.88	23 V Vanadium 50.94	24 Cr Chromium 51.996	25 Mn Manganese 54.938	26 Fe Iron 55.845	27 Co Cobalt 58.933	28 Ni Nickel 58.69	29 Cu Copper 63.55	30 Zn Zinc 65.39	31 Ga Gallium 69.72	32 Ge Germanium 72.61	33 As Arsenic 74.92	34 Se Selenium 78.96	35 Br Bromine 79.90	36 Kr Krypton 83.80
37 Rb Rubidium 85.47	38 Sr Strontium 87.62	39 Y Yttrium 88.91	40 Zr Zirconium 91.22	41 Nb Niobium 92.91	42 Mo Molybdenum 95.94	43 Tc Technetium 98	44 Ru Ruthenium 101.1	45 Rh Rhodium 102.9	46 Pd Palladium 106.4	47 Ag Silver 107.9	48 Cd Cadmium 112.4	49 In Indium 114.8	50 Sn Tin 118.7	51 Sb Antimony 121.8	52 Te Tellurium 127.6	53 I Iodine 126.9	54 Xe Xenon 131.3
55 Cs Cesium 132.9	56 Ba Barium 137.3	*	72 Hf Hafnium 178.5	73 Ta Tantalum 180.9	74 W Tungsten 183.8	75 Re Rhenium 186.2	76 Os Osmium 190.2	77 Ir Iridium 192.2	78 Pt Platinum 195.1	79 Au Gold 197.0	80 Hg Mercury 200.6	81 Tl Thallium 204.4	82 Pb Lead 207.2	83 Bi Bismuth 209.0	84 Po Polonium 209	85 At Astatine 210	86 Rn Radon 222
87 Fr Francium 223	88 Ra Radium 226	**	104 Rf Rutherfordium 261	105 Db Dubnium 262	106 Sg Seaborgium 266	107 Bh Bohrium 264	108 Hs Hassium 277	109 Mt Meitnerium 268	110 Ds Darmstadtium 281	111 Rg Roentgenium 272	112 Cn Copernicium 285						

Using lighter elements (i.e., those near the top of the Periodic Table) for battery materials maximizes the battery energy density

57 La Lanthanum 138.9	58 Ce Cerium 140.1	59 Pr Praseodymium 140.9	60 Nd Neodymium 144.2	61 Pm Promethium 145	62 Sm Samarium 150.4	63 Eu Europium 152.0	64 Gd Gadolinium 157.3	65 Tb Terbium 158.9	66 Dy Dysprosium 162.5	67 Ho Holmium 164.9	68 Er Erbium 167.3	69 Tm Thulium 168.9	70 Yb Ytterbium 173.0	71 Lu Lutetium 175.0
89 Ac Actinium 227	90 Th Thorium 232.0	91 Pa Protactinium 231.0	92 U Uranium 238.0	93 Np Neptunium 237	94 Pu Plutonium 244	95 Am Americium 243	96 Cm Curium 247	97 Bk Berkelium 247	98 Cf Californium 251	99 Es Einsteinium 252	100 Fm Fermium 257	101 Md Mendelevium 258	102 No Nobelium 259	103 Lr Lawrencium 262



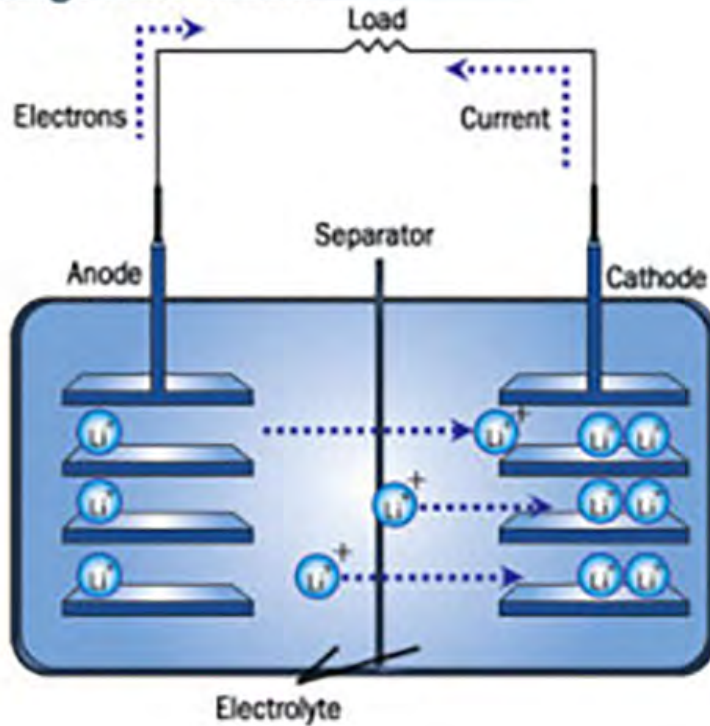


# Li-Ion Batteries—A Look Inside



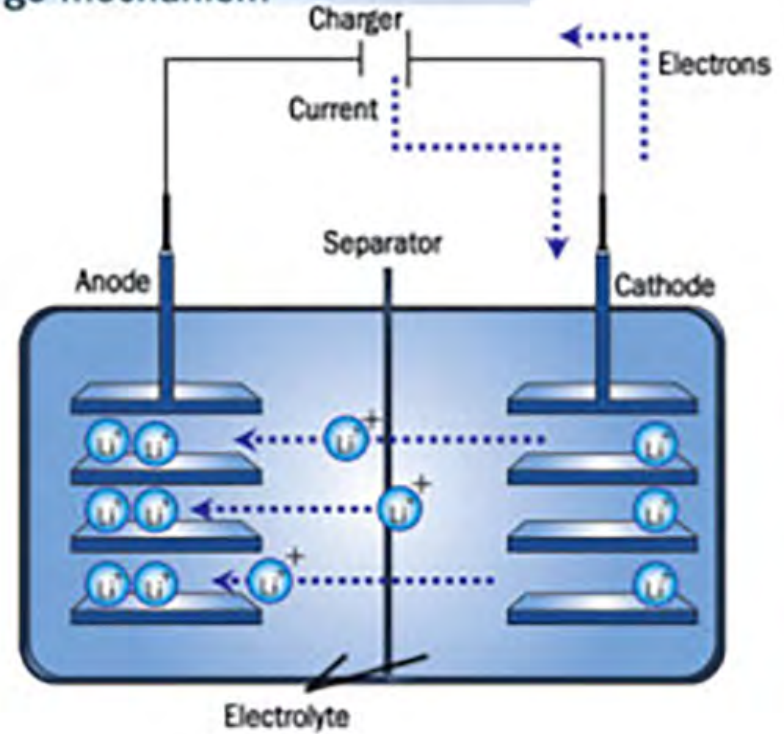
## battery/cell discharge

Lithium-ion rechargeable battery  
Discharge mechanism



## battery/cell (re)charge

Lithium-ion rechargeable battery  
Charge mechanism



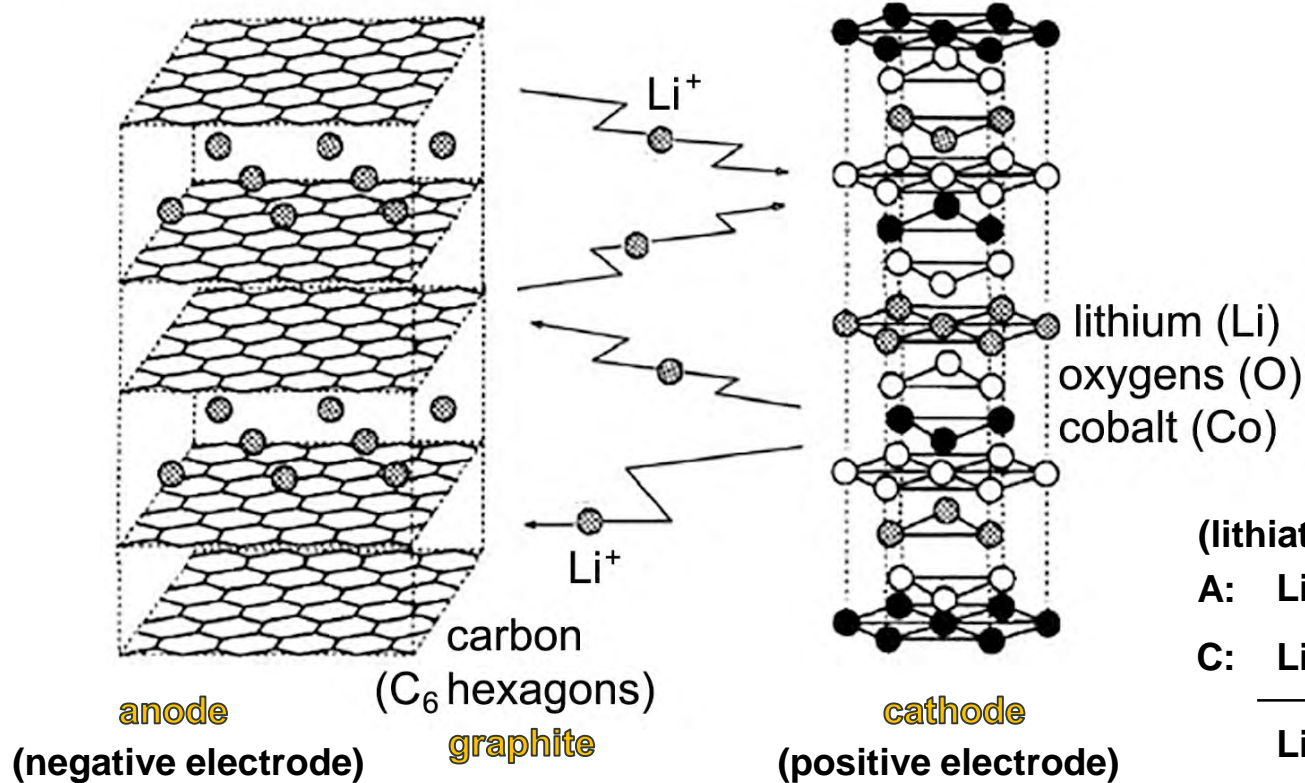
<https://electronics.howstuffworks.com/everyday-tech/lithium-ion-battery1.htm>



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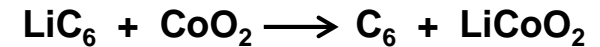
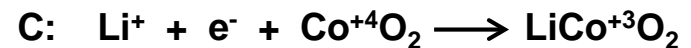


more details...



during cell discharge:

(lithiated graphite)      (graphite)



**NOTE:** The LiCoO<sub>2</sub> is never fully delithiate (to prevent degradation)—  
i.e., Li<sub>1-x</sub>CoO<sub>2</sub> (x ~ 0.5 for full discharge)



# Li-Ion Batteries—Cylindrical Cells



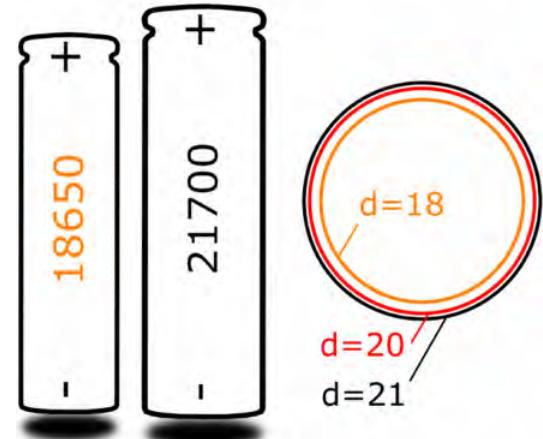
Cylindrical cell formats are standardized



Samsung 35E **18650** 3500mAh 8A



Samsung 50E **21700** 5000 mAh 9.8 A



<http://jes.ecsdl.org/content/165/14/A3284/F1.expansion.html>



A123 **26650** ANR26650M1A 2500 mAh 3.3 V  
LiFePO<sub>4</sub> cell



# Li-Ion Batteries—Point of Interest



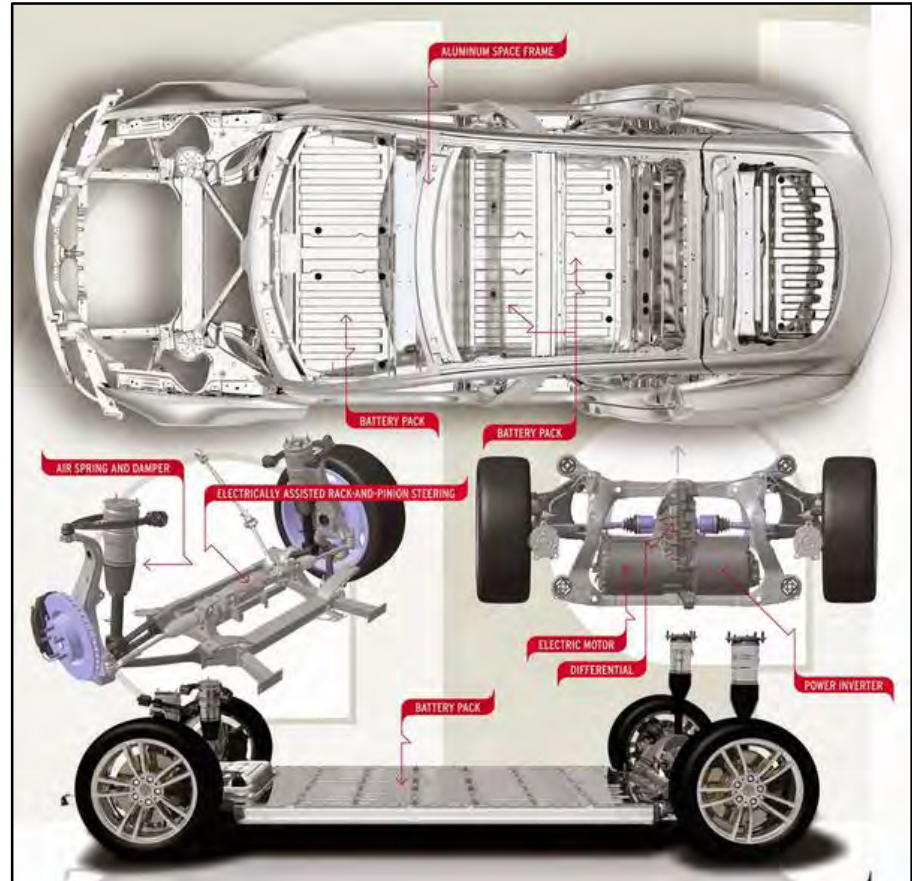
**Tesla** is the only major car manufacturer using cylindrical cells...  
all others are using prismatic cells (either hard case or pouch)



Panasonic is the cell manufacturer for Tesla

**18650 cells** made in Japan → Tesla Model S  
Tesla Model X

**2170 (i.e., 21700) cells** made in  
the Gigafactory in Nevada → Tesla Model 3



<https://evannex.com/blogs/news/how-does-an-electric-car-work>



# Li-Ion Batteries—Cell Chemistry



[https://batteryuniversity.com/learn/article/bu\\_216\\_summary\\_table\\_of\\_lithium\\_based\\_batteries](https://batteryuniversity.com/learn/article/bu_216_summary_table_of_lithium_based_batteries)

Chemistry	LiCoO <sub>2</sub> (LCO)	LiMn <sub>2</sub> O <sub>4</sub> (LMO)	LiNi <sub>x</sub> Mn <sub>y</sub> Co <sub>z</sub> O <sub>4</sub> (NMC)	LiNi <sub>x</sub> Co <sub>y</sub> Al <sub>z</sub> O <sub>4</sub> (NCA)	LiFePO <sub>4</sub> (LFP)	Li <sub>4</sub> Ti <sub>5</sub> O <sub>12</sub> (LTO)
Nominal Voltage (V)	3.6	3.7-3.8	3.6-3.7	3.6	3.2-3.3	2.4
Full Charge (V)	4.2	4.2	4.2 (or higher)	4.2	3.65	2.85
Full Discharge (V)	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.50	1.80
Min. Voltage (V)	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.00	1.50
Specific Energy (kW/kg)	150-200	100-150	150-220	200-260	90-120	70-80
Cell Packaging (typical)	18650 prismatic pouch	prismatic	18650 prismatic pouch	18650	26650 prismatic	prismatic



# Li-Ion Batteries—Cell Chemistry



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# Li-Ion Batteries—Cell Chemistry



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**3 common categories of  
“Li-ion” batteries:**

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# Li-Ion Batteries—Cell Chemistry



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# Li-Ion Batteries—Cell Chemistry



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# Li-Ion Batteries—Cell Chemistry

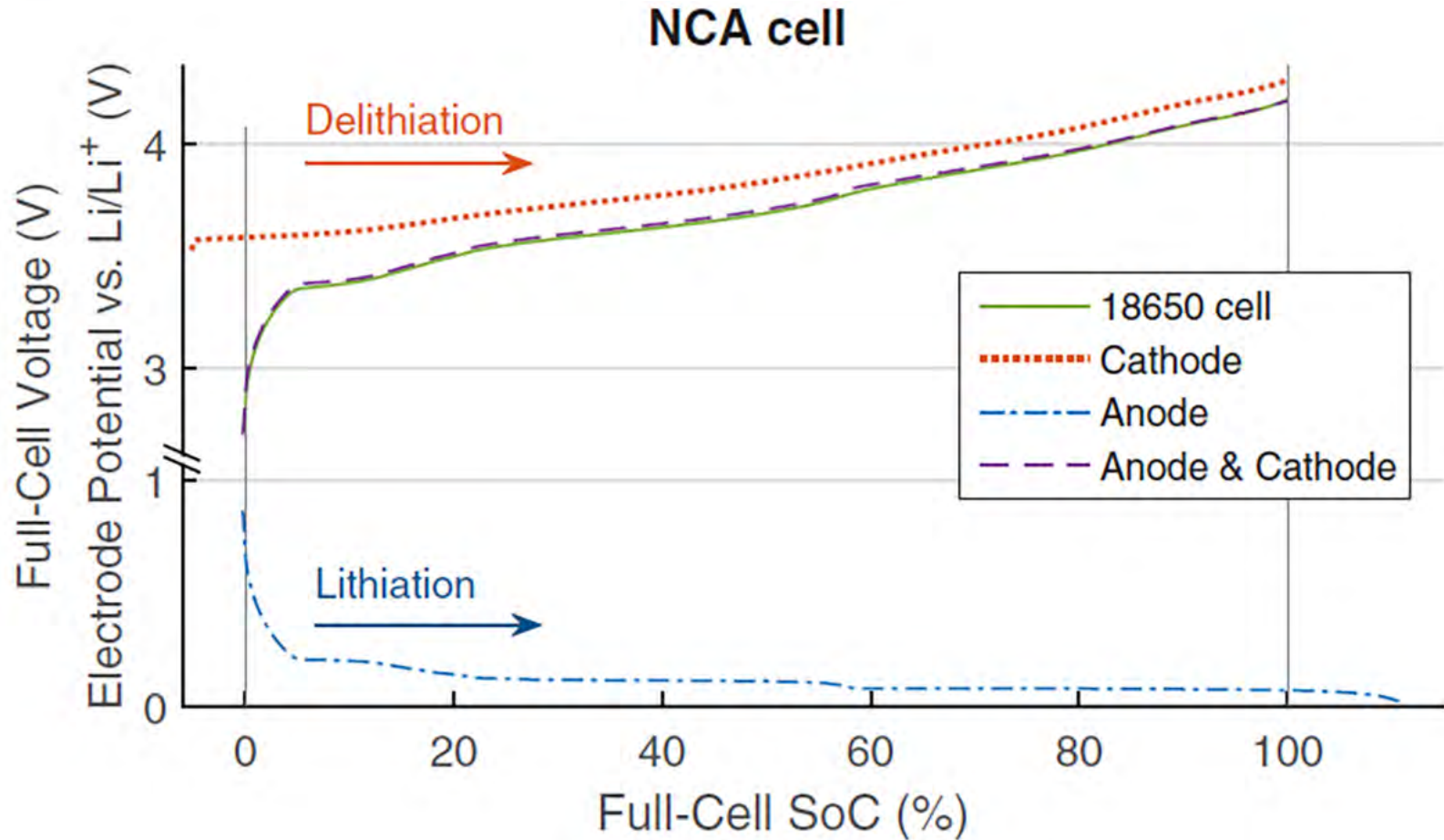


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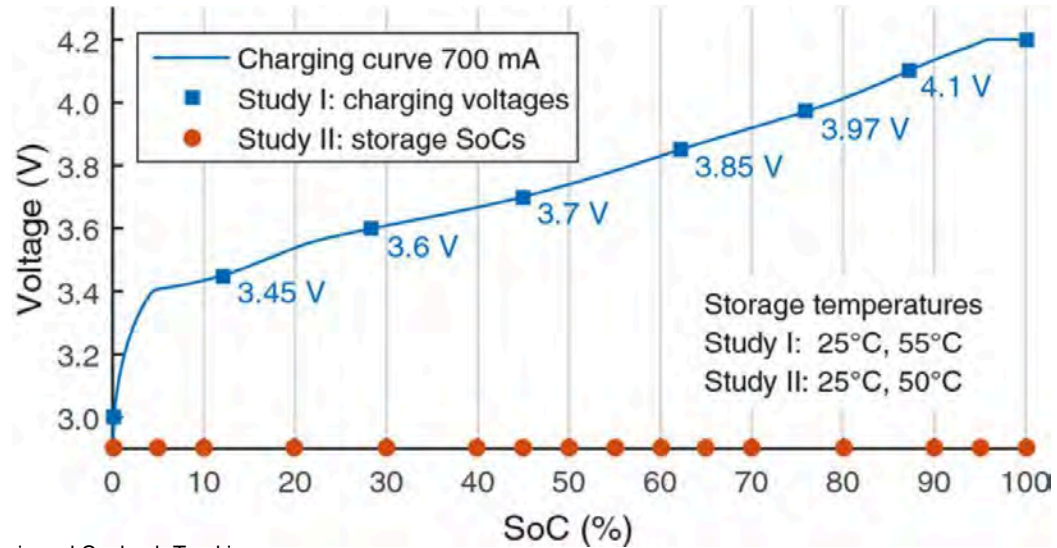
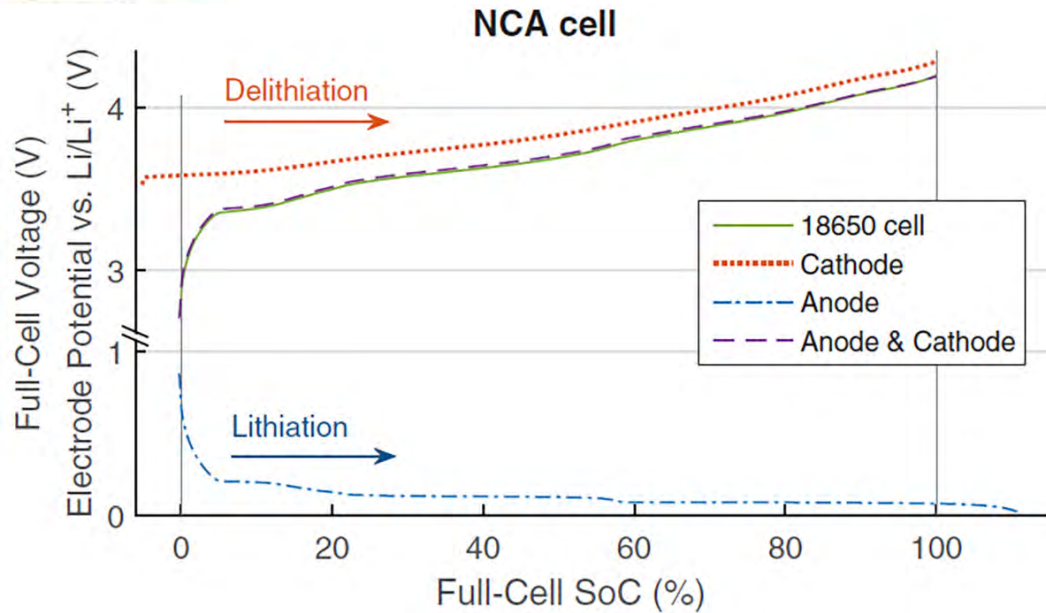


# Li-Ion Batteries—Electrode/Full Cell Voltages





# Li-Ion Batteries—Electrode/Full Cell Voltages



P. Keil and A. Jossen, *J. Electrochem. Soc.* **2017**, *164*, A6066.  
Calendar Aging of NCA Lithium-Ion Batteries Investigated by Differential Voltage Analysis and Coulomb Tracking.



# Li-Ion Batteries—Cell Chemistry



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Full Discharge (V)	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.50	1.80
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↓

$$\text{specific energy (Wh/kg)} = \text{specific capacity (mAh/g)} \times \text{voltage (V)}$$



# Li-Ion Batteries—Cell Chemistry



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↓

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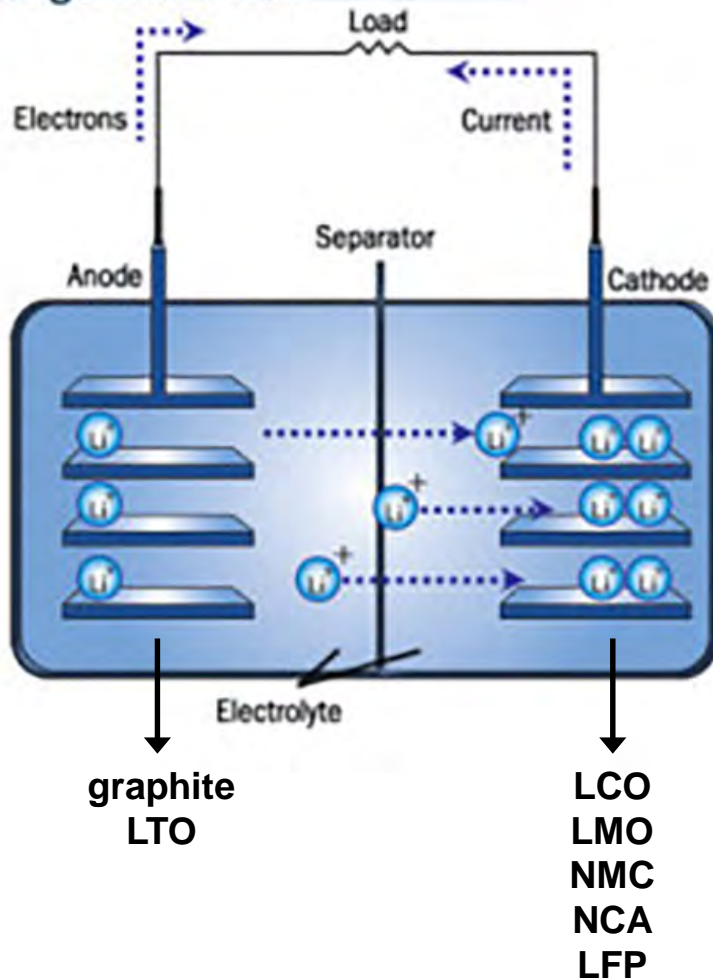


# Li-Ion Batteries—Schematic



## battery/cell discharge

### Lithium-ion rechargeable battery Discharge mechanism



LTO is an anode material – replacement for graphite. It can be paired with any of the cathode materials, but NMC is commonly used

<https://electronics.howstuffworks.com/everyday-tech/lithium-ion-battery1.htm>



# Li-Ion Batteries—Cell Chemistry



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↓  
 ↓  
 long cycle life  
 fast discharge (high power)  
 fast(er) recharge

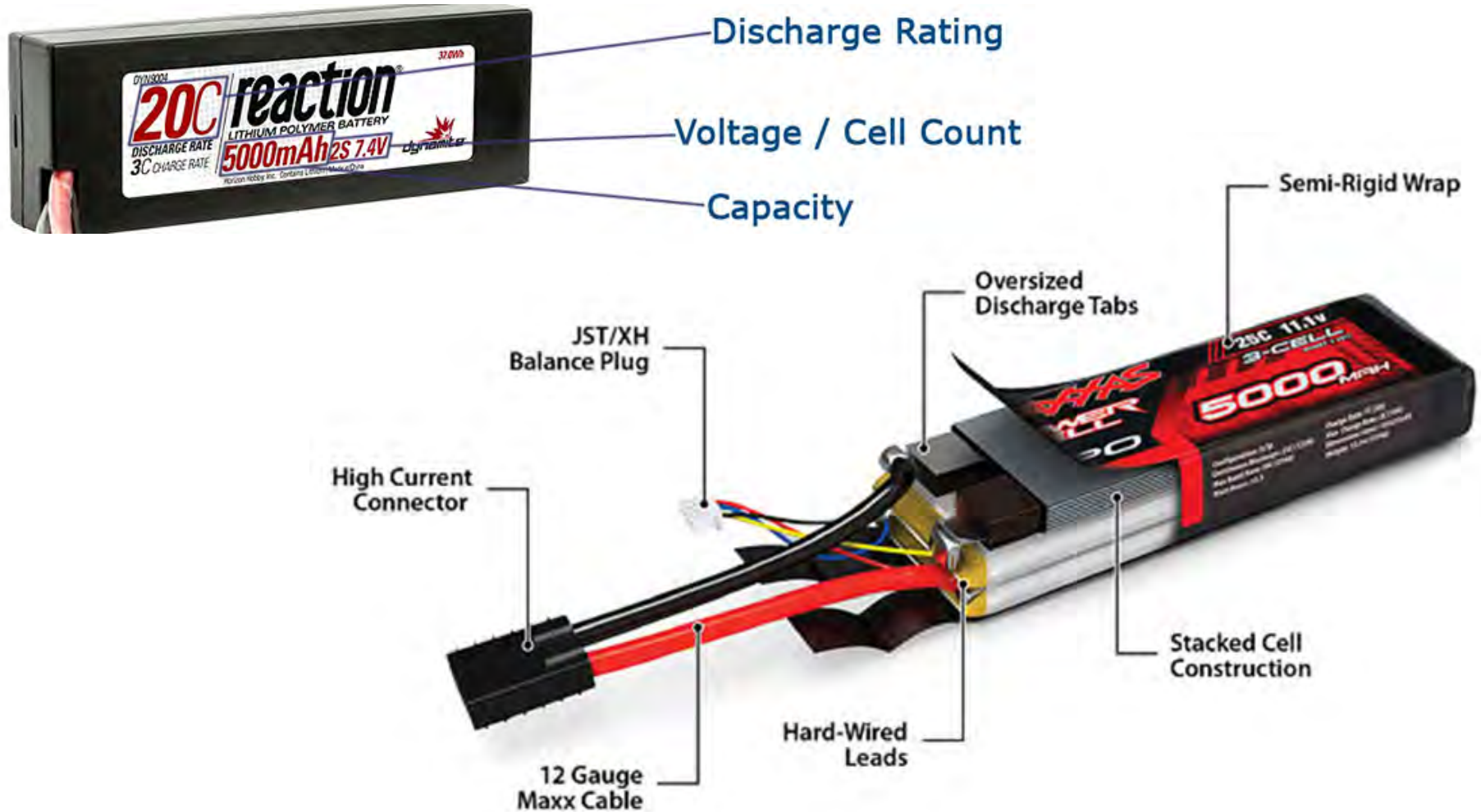




# UAS Batteries



# LiPo Batteries



<http://eduardochamorro.github.io/beansreels/workshops/beandrone.html>



# Li-Ion Batteries—C Rates



$$\text{Power (W)} = \text{Current (A)} \times \text{Voltage (V)}$$

$$\text{Discharge Current (A)} = \text{C-Rating} \times \text{Capacity (Ah)}$$

1C rate = full discharge of the battery capacity in 1 hr

Rate	(Full) Discharge Time
0.05C or C/20	20 hr
0.10C or C/10	10 hr
0.20C or C/5	5 hr
0.50C or C/2	2 hr
1C	1 hr
2C	30 min
5C	12 min
10C	6 min
20C	3 min
60C	1 min



# LiPo Batteries



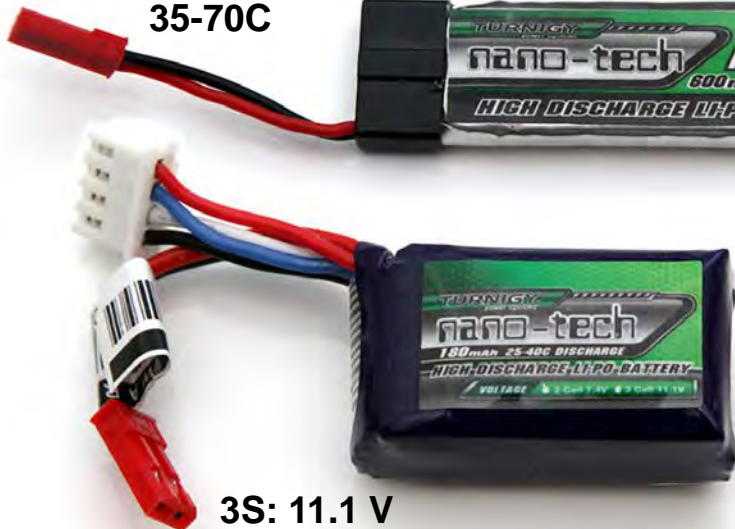
**1S: 3.7 V**  
**160 mAh**  
**25-40C**



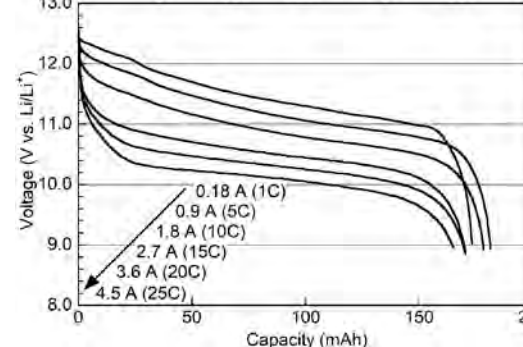
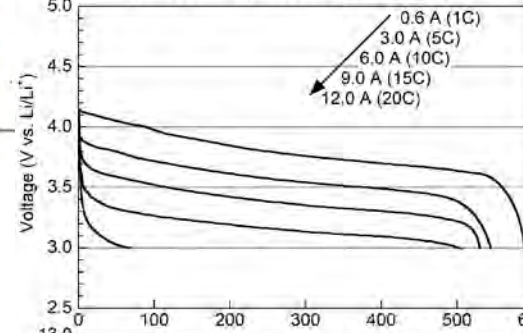
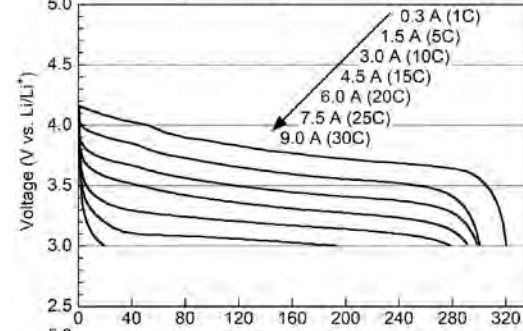
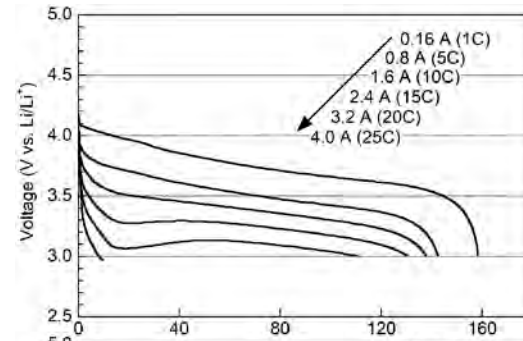
**1S: 3.7 V**  
**300 mAh**  
**45-90C**



**1S: 3.7 V**  
**600 mAh**  
**35-70C**

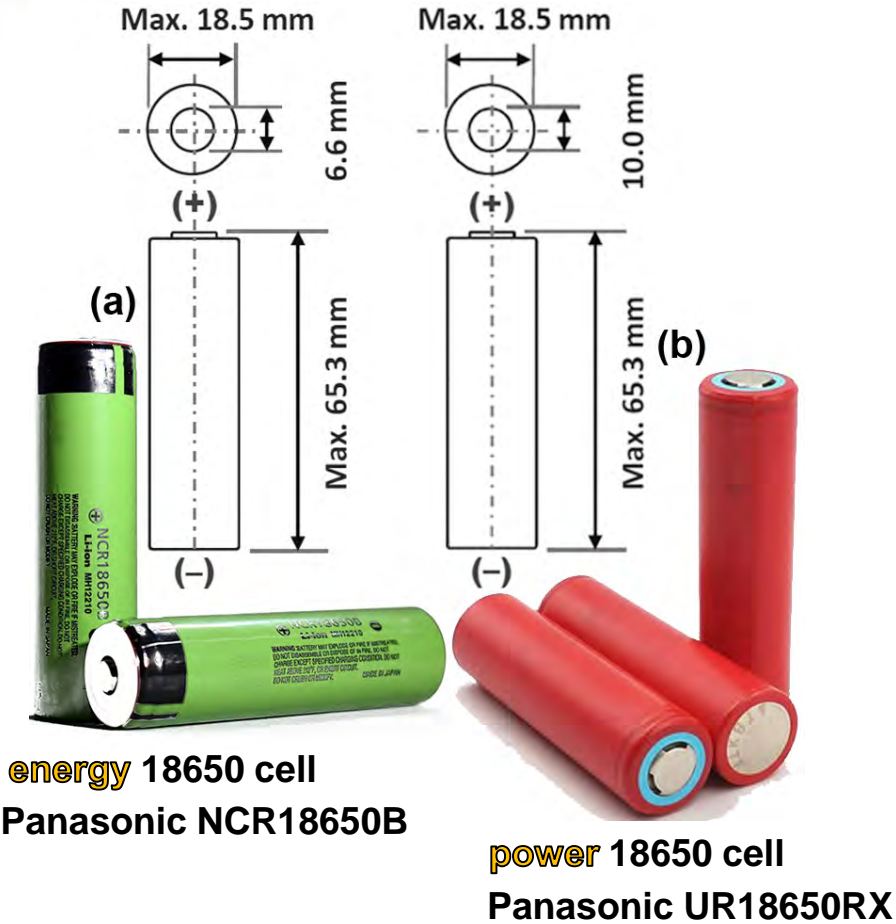


**3S: 11.1 V**  
**180 mAh**  
**25-40C**

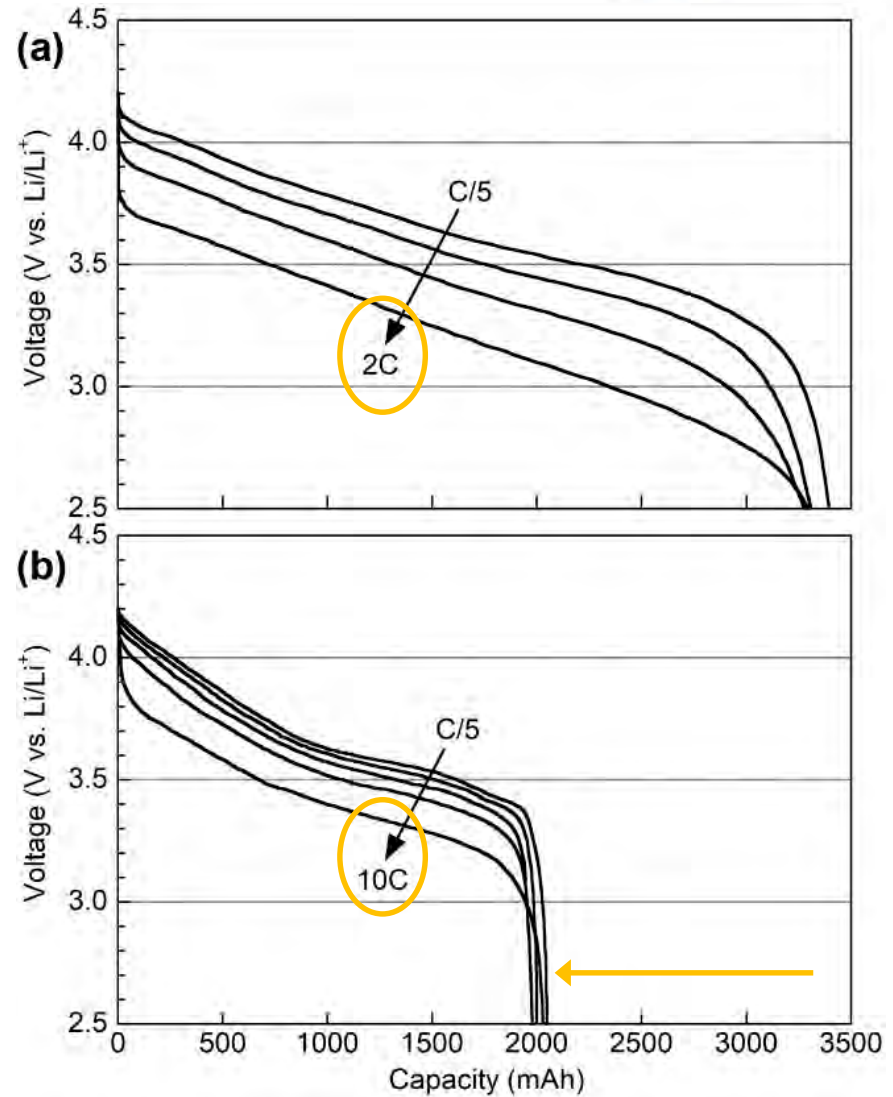




# “Li-Ion” (i.e., Cylindrical) Batteries



Cells can generally be optimized for either energy or power, but not both simultaneously





# Cell Discharge Rate Limitations



Power cells are optimized by having **thinner electrodes**, **more current collector**, **more conductive carbon** (added with active materials)—to aid in getting the electrons where they need to go throughout the cell

cells are typically specified by their **maximum continuous power rating (A or C-rate)**

the discharge rate which the cells are capable of without a significant loss of capacity (due to poor utilization of active materials) and/or exceeding an internal temperature cutoff

**high internal temperature** results in more rapid cell degradation (due to side reactions) and can **initiate thermal runaway**

we'll get to that—wait for it

sometimes a **burst or pulse rating (A or C-rate)** is also given

this is what the cells can handle for **short periods of time** (e.g., 4-10 sec)

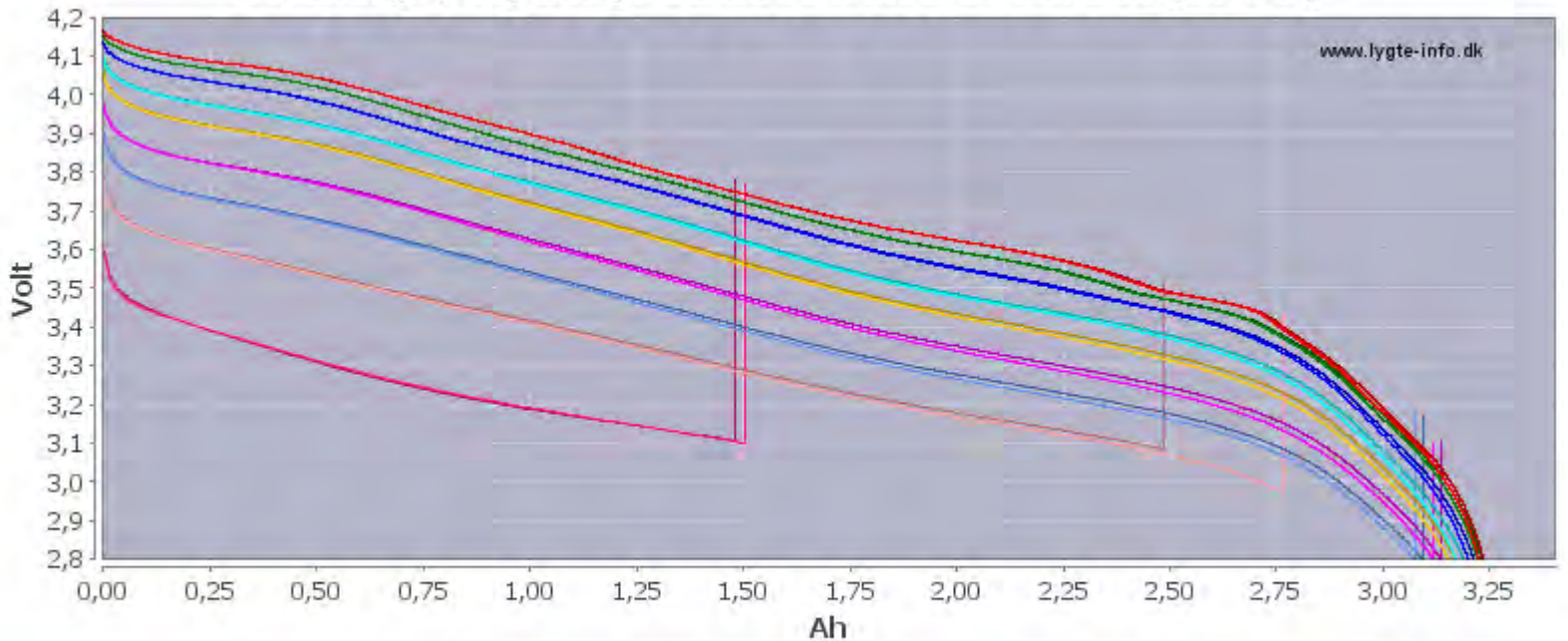


# Cell Discharge Rate Limitations



LG Chem 18650 cells (MJ1)

Discharge, capacity: LG 18650 MJ1 3500mAh (Green)



- A:0.2A - B:0.2A - A:0.5A - B:0.5A - A:1.0A - B:1.0A - A:2.0A - B:2.0A - A:3.0A - B:3.0A - A:5.0A - B:5.0A
- A:7.0A - B:7.0A - A:10.0A - B:10.0A - A:15.0A - B:15.0A

[https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2018650%20MJ1%203500mAh%20\(Green\)%20UK.html](https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2018650%20MJ1%203500mAh%20(Green)%20UK.html)

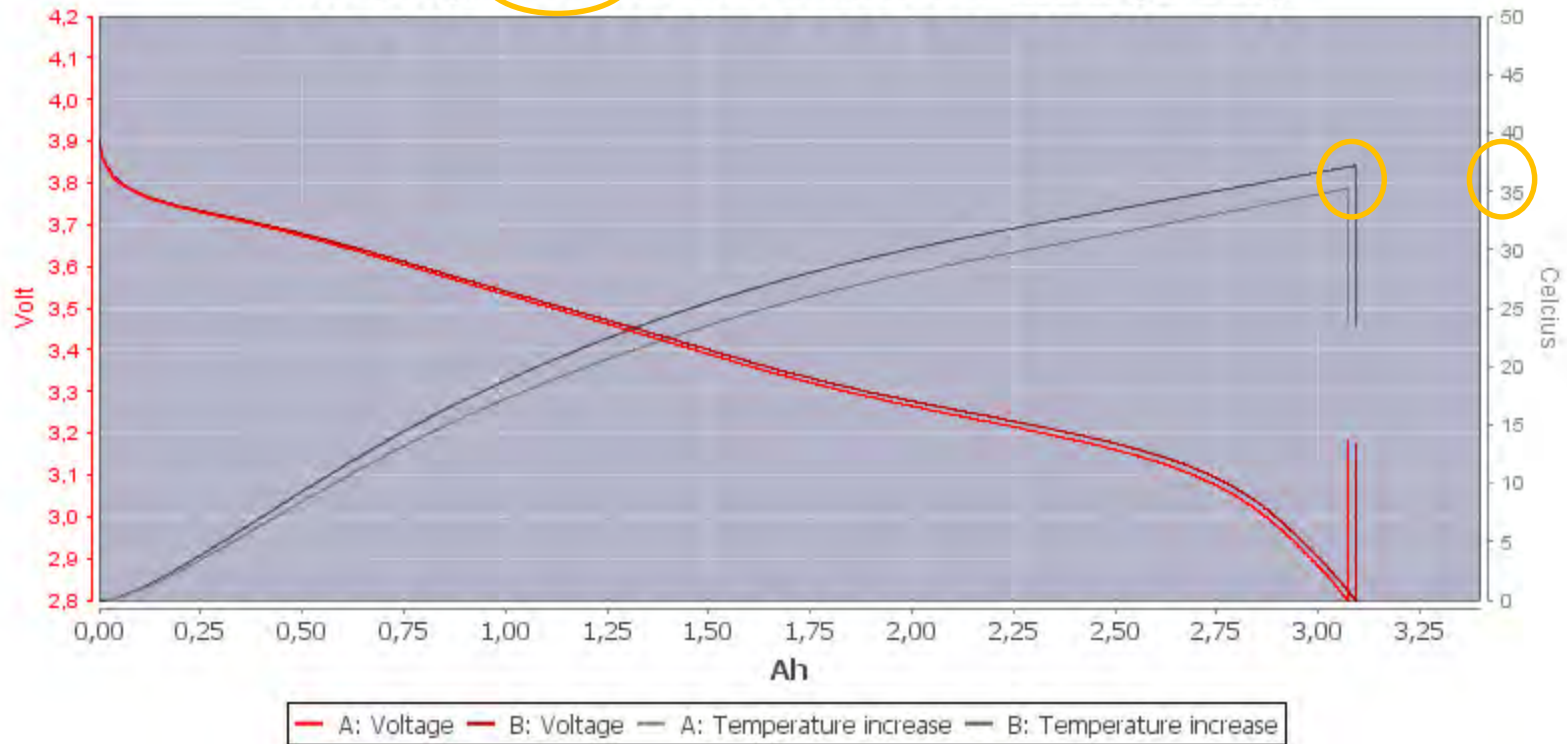


# Cell Discharge Rate Limitations



2 different 18650 cells evaluated

## Discharge 7.0A: LG 18650 MJ1 3500mAh (Green)



[https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2018650%20MJ1%203500mAh%20\(Green\)%20UK.html](https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2018650%20MJ1%203500mAh%20(Green)%20UK.html)



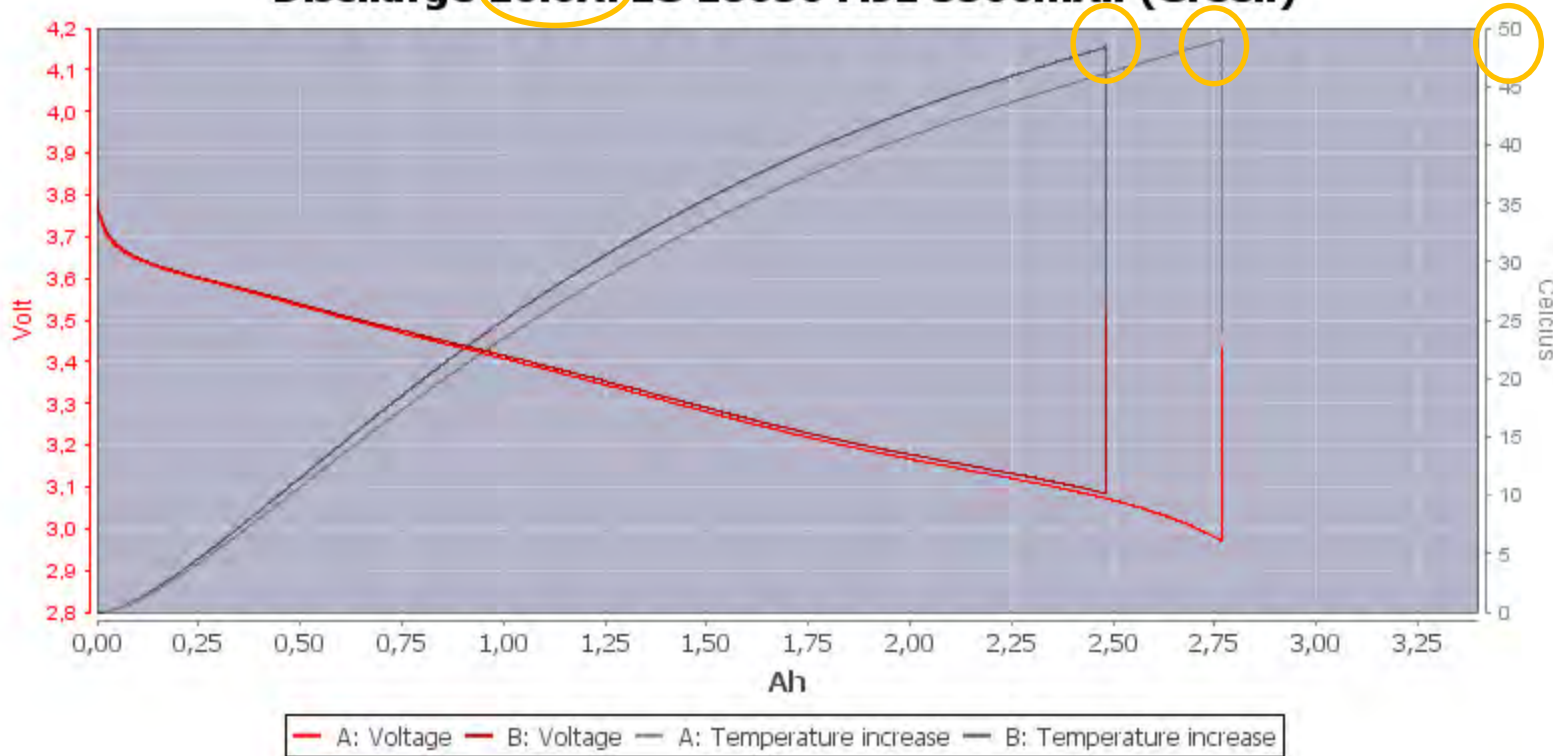


# Cell Discharge Rate Limitations



2 different 18650 cells evaluated

Discharge **10.0A**: LG 18650 MJ1 3500mAh (Green)



[https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2018650%20MJ1%203500mAh%20\(Green\)%20UK.html](https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2018650%20MJ1%203500mAh%20(Green)%20UK.html)

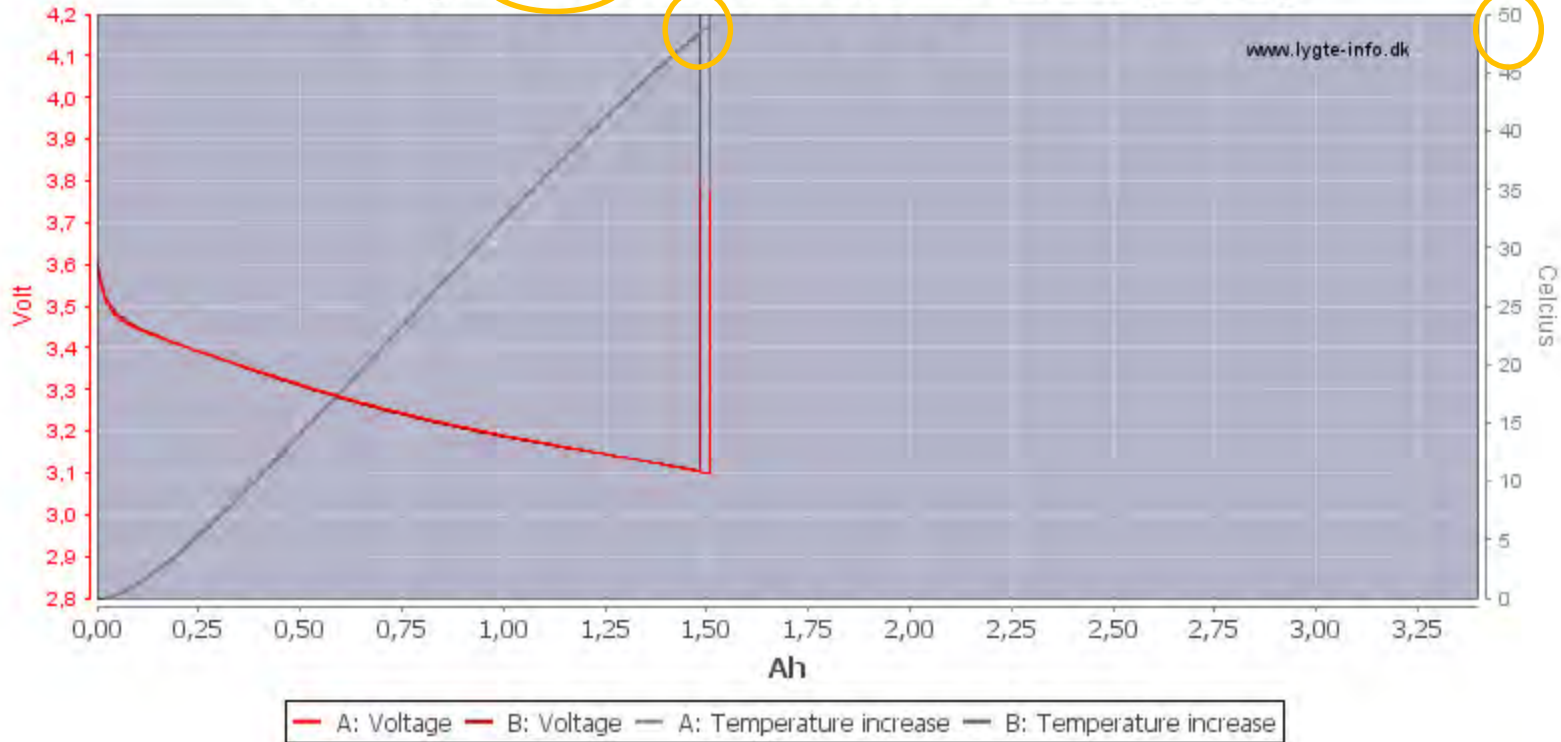


# Cell Discharge Rate Limitations



2 different 18650 cells evaluated

## Discharge **15.0A**: LG 18650 MJ1 3500mAh (Green)



[https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2018650%20MJ1%203500mAh%20\(Green\)%20UK.html](https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2018650%20MJ1%203500mAh%20(Green)%20UK.html)



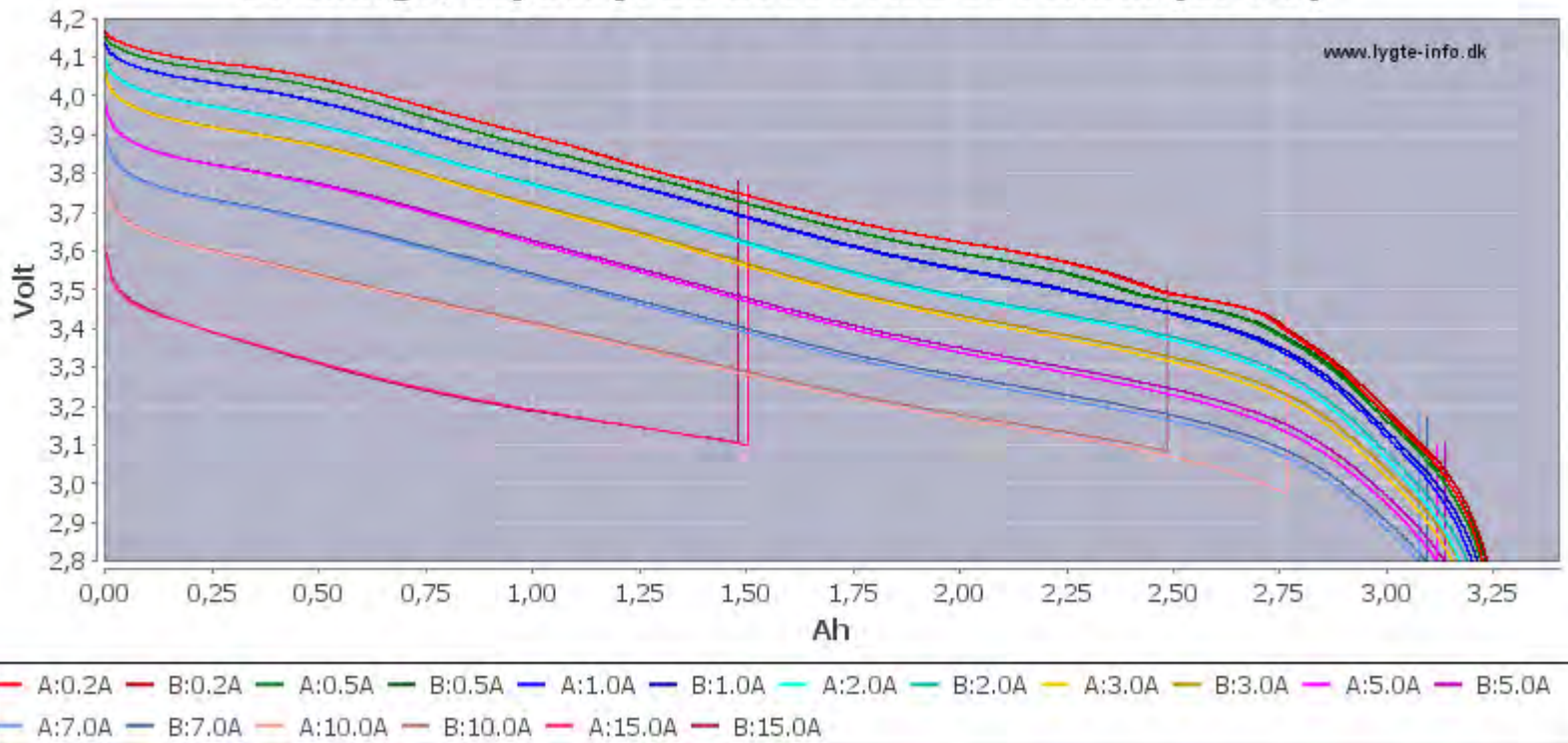
# Cell Voltage Variations



The cell voltage at any given time is a function of many factors.  
The 3 main ones are:

- **Depth of Discharge (DoD) or SoC**—how much energy is left in the cell
- **discharge rate/current**—higher rates results in lower voltage
- **temperature**—low temperatures (below room temperature) result in lower voltage

## Discharge, capacity: LG 18650 MJ1 3500mAh (Green)



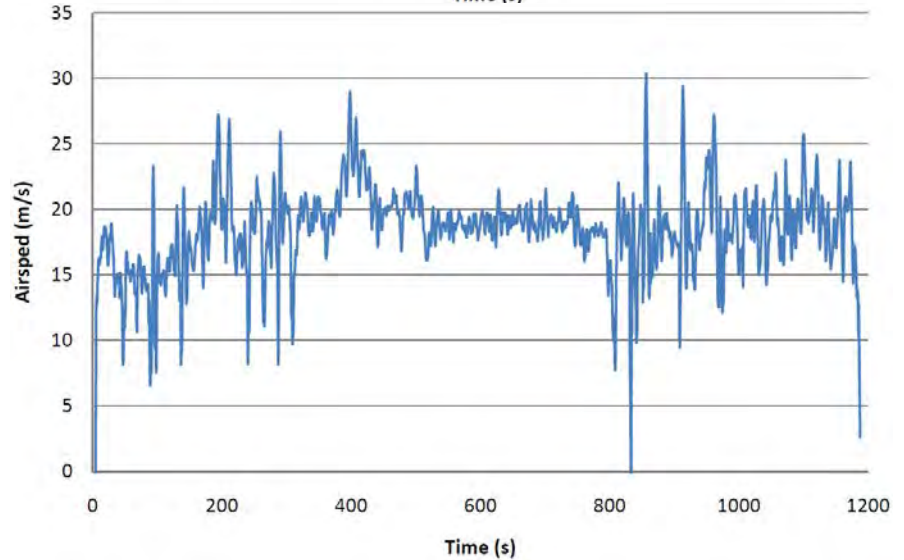
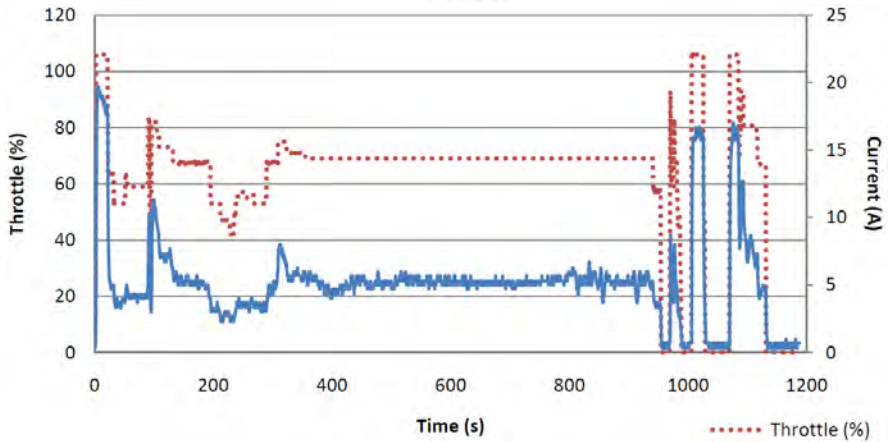
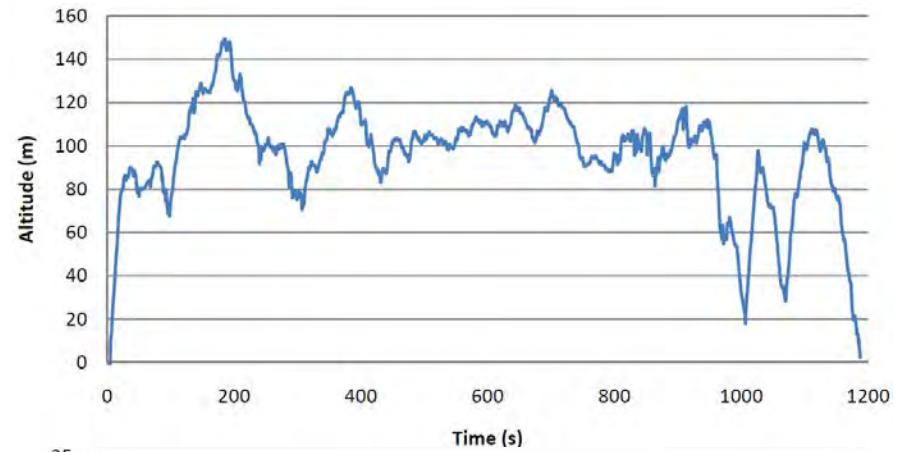
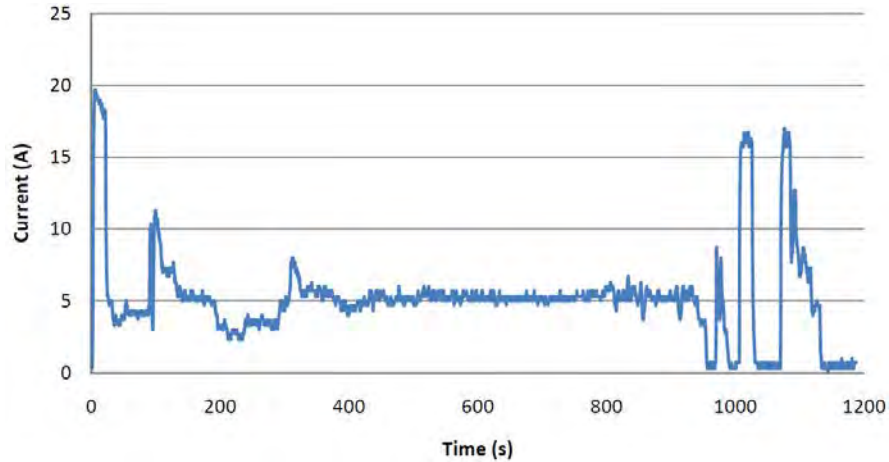
[https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2018650%20MJ1%203500mAh%20\(Green\)%20UK.html](https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2018650%20MJ1%203500mAh%20(Green)%20UK.html)



# UAS Flight Data



Example: UAS flight characteristics → ...for a battery pack (not an individual cell)





# Li-Ion Battery Packs



**SERIES** connections  
(increases voltage)

1S: 3.6 V (1 x 3.6 V)

2S: 7.2 V (2 x 3.6 V)

3S: 10.8 V (3 x 3.6 V)

**PARALLEL** connections  
(increases capacity/power)

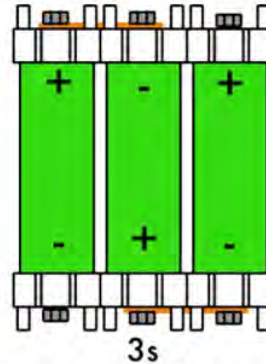
1P: 3000 mAh / 10 A

2P: 6000 mAh / 20 A

3P: 9000 mAh / 30 A

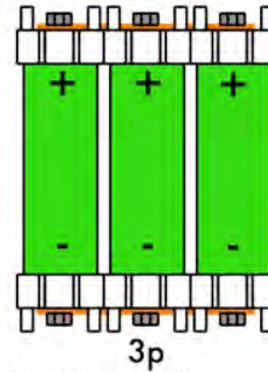
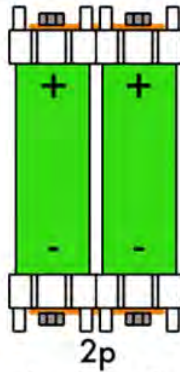
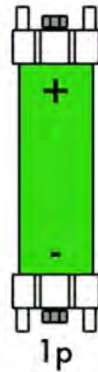


## Series connection example



Spot welding with nickel strips to make series and parallel connections

## Parallel connection examples



(— = bus bar performing electrical connection)

**NOTE:** If the cells used have:  
nominal voltage of 3.6 V  
capacity of 3000 mAh (or 3 Ah) and  
max. cont discharge current (rate capability) of 10 A

<https://vruzend.com/tech-center/what-are-parallel-and-series-connections/>  
<https://www.electricbike.com/introduction-lithium-18650-batteries/>



# Li-Ion Battery Packs

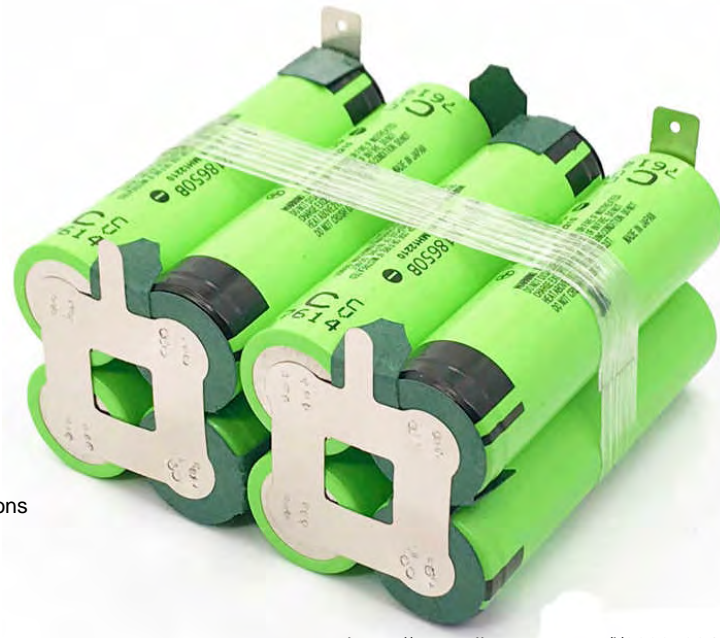


**LiPo battery packs** → usually only connected in series (S) (e.g., 3S)  
 pack capacity is increased by using larger pouch cells

**cylindrical cell battery packs** → usually connected both in series (S) and in parallel (P) (e.g., 3S2P)  
 pack capacity is increased via parallel connections and using more cells

connecting multiple cells in parallel effectively makes one larger cell

...but the individual cells need to be nearly identical in properties



[https://batteryuniversity.com/learn/article/serial\\_and\\_parallel\\_battery\\_configurations](https://batteryuniversity.com/learn/article/serial_and_parallel_battery_configurations)

<https://www.aliexpress.com/i/32967304983.html>



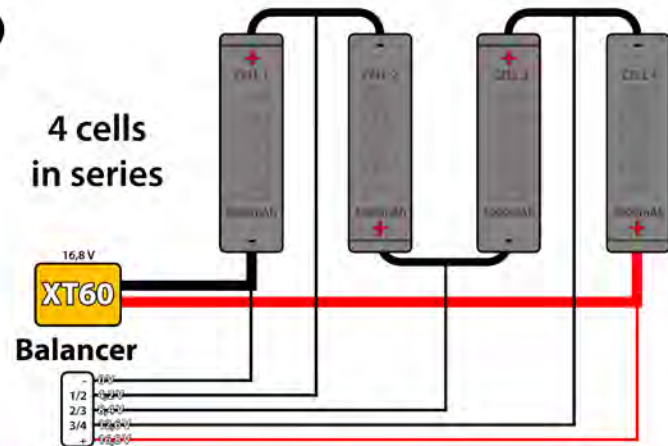
# Li-Ion Battery Packs



<https://blog.seidel-philipp.de/diy-build-a-longrange-lithium-ion-battery/>

## 4S

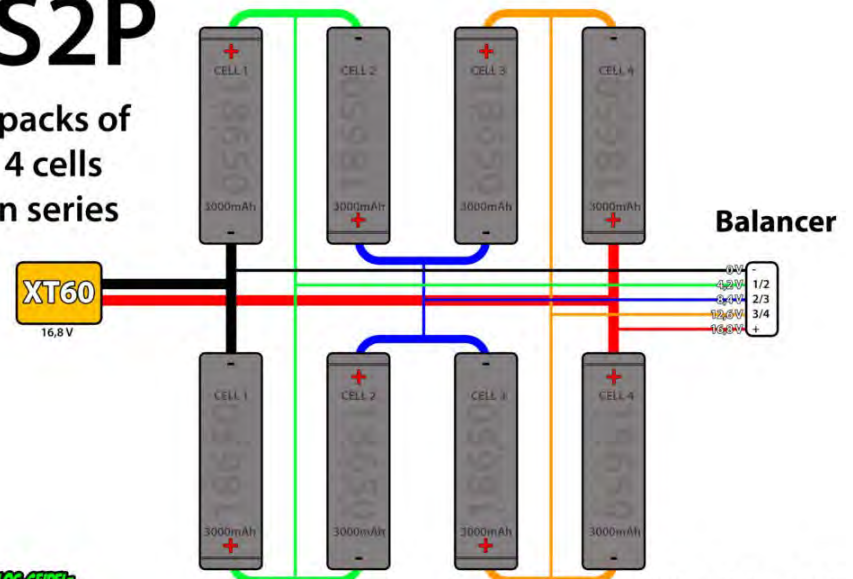
4 cells  
in series



3000mAh 30 A

## 4S2P

2 packs of  
4 cells  
in series



6000mAh 60 A



# Word(s) of Caution



**max. burst rate**

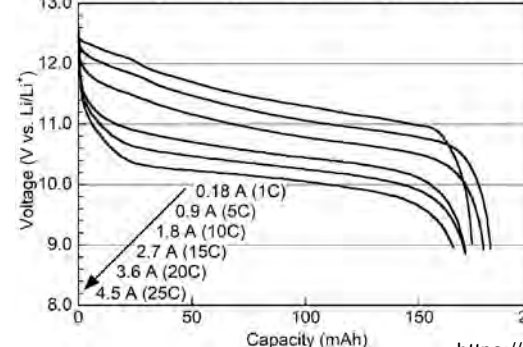
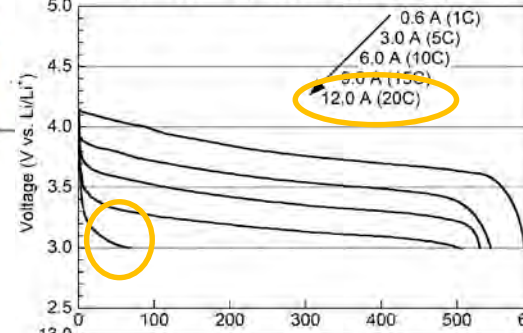
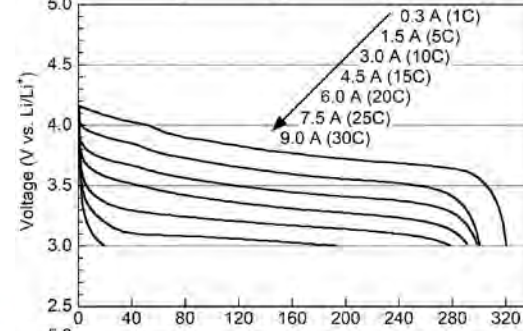
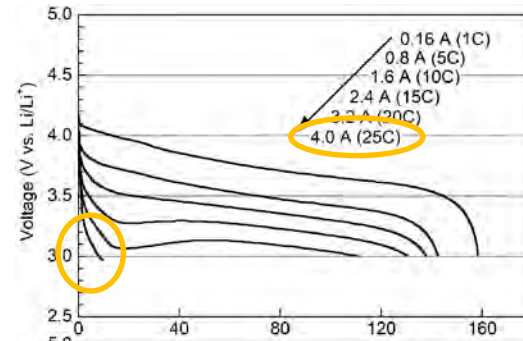
**max. cont. rate**

**1S: 3.7 V  
160 mAh  
25-40C**

**1S: 3.7 V  
300 mAh  
45-90C**

**1S: 3.7 V  
600 mAh  
35-70C**

**3S: 11.1 V  
180 mAh  
25-40C**



LiPo battery packs rates are often grossly inaccurate

(too high)—this increases sales (most customers cannot measure this capability)

LiPo battery packs often use a 3.7 V (nominal) value for the cells

instead of the 3.6 V typically used for cylindrical cells... this also seems to be a selling point since the chemistry is similar





# “Li-ion” vs. “LiPo” (for sUASs)



# LiPo vs. Cylindrical Cell Batteries



**Cylindrical cells have the highest energy density of any Li-ion cell format. Thus, replacing LiPo batteries from those assembled with cylindrical cells can result in a battery pack with a much higher capacity.**

**NOTE: Cylindrical cells may have a lower power rating than the LiPo pouch cells—ensure that the battery pack has the necessary power capability for high throttle (for take-off, climbing, maneuvering, etc.)**

**RECALL: Many commercial LiPo battery pack power ratings are inaccurate**



# LiPo vs. Cylindrical Cell Batteries



**Turnigy  
6S1P (6 cells)  
3300 mAh capacity  
30C or 99 A (cont) power  
505 g  
136 x 45 x 43 mm**

[https://hobbyking.com/en\\_us/turnigy-3300mah-6s-30c-lipo-pack-xt-60.html?queryID=8bc236f2a2d4d59709657057eaf73cf8&objectID=69387&indexName=hbk\\_live\\_magento\\_en\\_us\\_products](https://hobbyking.com/en_us/turnigy-3300mah-6s-30c-lipo-pack-xt-60.html?queryID=8bc236f2a2d4d59709657057eaf73cf8&objectID=69387&indexName=hbk_live_magento_en_us_products)



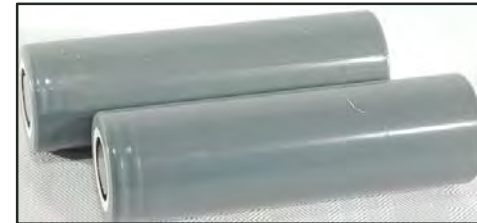
**Turnigy  
6S1P (6 cells)  
5000 mAh capacity  
40C or 200 A (cont) power  
805 g  
144 x 51 x 56 mm**

[https://hobbyking.com/en\\_us/turnigy-5000mah-6s-40c-lipo-pack-xt90.html](https://hobbyking.com/en_us/turnigy-5000mah-6s-40c-lipo-pack-xt90.html)

## LG Chem 18650 M36 (cylindrical) cells

**6S2P (12 cells)  
6500 mAh capacity  
20 A (cont) power  
582 g (+ BMS & connectors)**

[https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2018650%20M36%203600mAh%20\(Cyan\)%20UK.html](https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2018650%20M36%203600mAh%20(Cyan)%20UK.html)



## LG Chem 21700 M50 (cylindrical) cells

**6S1P (6 cells)  
5000 mAh capacity  
10 A (cont) power  
415 g (+ BMS & connectors)**

[https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2021700%20M50%205000mAh%20\(Grey\)%20UK.html](https://lygte-info.dk/review/batteries2012/LG%2021700%20M50%205000mAh%20(Grey)%20UK.html)

## LG Chem 21700 M50 (cylindrical) cells

**6S2P (12 cells)  
10,000 mAh capacity  
20 A (cont) power  
830 g (+ BMS & connectors)**

**NOTE: These cylindrical cells can handle higher “burst” power rates for extended periods of time (before getting too hot internally)**



...other considerations...



# How to Abuse Your Puppy



Your Puppy...



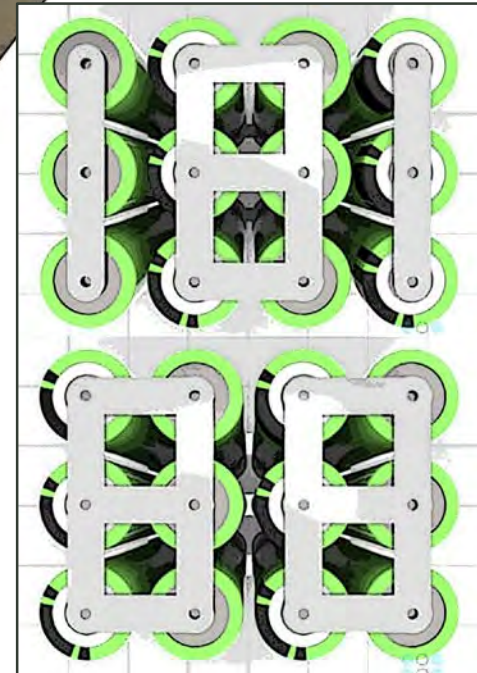


# Your Puppy... Is a Li-Ion Battery



**BB-2590/U**

...contains twenty four (24)  
18650 cells  
two (2) 4S3P packs that  
can be connected in series  
(to get a "24 V" battery) or  
in parallel (to get two (2)  
"12V" batteries, but with  
twice the capacity)





# A Husky Puppy



But he's not just any puppy...  
...he's a **Husky puppy**







# How to Abuse Your Puppy



He sleeps best when it's room temperature or lower...  
lower is better

## TRANSLATION

Li-ion batteries degrade when stored at RT and above... especially at elevated temperature ("calendar aging")



He gets sick when he sits/sleeps with a full stomach... and he may throw up violently

Li-ion batteries degrade much faster when stored at a higher SoC ("calendar aging")... and thermal runaway (venting, fires, explosion) occurs more readily

If you do fill his stomach, have him pull the sled soon afterwards

If fully charging a Li-ion battery (100% SoC), it should be used relatively soon afterwards



Although he likes to sleep in the cold, don't feed him when it's cold... he'll get sick

Charging Li-ion batteries at temperatures  $< 0^{\circ}\text{C}$  causes "Li plating" which degrades the battery capacity... and can result in a short-circuit (and perhaps venting, fires or an explosion)





# Li-Ion Batteries—State-of-Charge (SoC)



## **Military Batteries: Storage & Shipping**

The MIL-PRF for rechargeable batteries has always **required them to be delivered to the U.S. Government fully charged (i.e., 100% SoC)** In the latest spec, MIL-PRF-32383, paragraph 3.4.8. states:

**"3.4.8 Battery condition for shipping. Each battery shall be furnished fully charged as indicated by five state of charge segments where applicable...."**

---

**Q: If a specific state-of-charge (SoC) limitation is in place, who ensures that is followed?**

**DLA: If you mean a state-of-charge (SoC) limitation for transportation to a DLA depot and then into storage, the contractor. **Once in a DLA Depot, the batteries are not maintained or recharged.** They are not disturbed until they are ordered. At that point, no one opens the box or recharges the battery. The box is loaded onto a truck and taken to its destination. Additionally, the contractor would ensure the state-of-charge (SoC) limitation for a battery that is not stocked and delivered directly to the customer.**



# Li-Ion Batteries—State-of-Charge (SoC)



## Military Batteries: Storage & Shipping



**NOTE: Storing batteries at very low SoC (< 20%) can have other undesirable results (side reactions w/ degradation and safety issues)**

current DoD policy → GREAT! Right?



**No. Actually – this sucks (for storage/shipping)**



**About 40-50% SoC is ideal (for extended storage)  
...lower (30% SoC) if they will be used soon (or shipped)**

**The storage/shipping of Li-ion batteries at different SoC values has consequences...**



# Li-Ion Batteries—Safety



## Deep Dive: Li-Ion Batteries— Transportation Challenges



<https://www.asibrake.com/blog/lithium-ion-batteries-fire-hazard/>

### Deep Dive Li-Ion Batteries— Transportation Challenges

**Wesley Henderson**  
International Program Manager—  
Energy Transport & Storage Program  
(Tokyo, Japan)  
U.S. Army Research Office (ARO)  
[wesley.a.henderson4.civ@mail.mil](mailto:wesley.a.henderson4.civ@mail.mil)

#### LI-ION BATTERIES—INHERENTLY UNSAFE FOR TRANSPORTATION & STORAGE

"One of the largest trends in the growth of in-flight fires is due to the transportation of lithium batteries. From March 1991 to August 2018, the FAA Office of Security and Hazardous Materials Safety recorded 225 cases of aviation incidents involving smoke, fire, extreme heat or explosion involving batteries and battery powered devices (FAA, 2018). Lithium batteries were the majority of battery types in the incidents. Of particular concern is the increasing number of lithium battery fires onboard aeroplanes. In 2018 between January and August there were 34 events, in 2017 there were 46 events, in 2016 there were 31, and in 2015 there were 16 (FAA 2018)."

<https://www.skybrary.aero/bookshelf/books/2830.pdf>  
[https://www.faa.gov/hazmat/resource/lithium\\_batteries/media/Battery\\_incident\\_chart.pdf](https://www.faa.gov/hazmat/resource/lithium_batteries/media/Battery_incident_chart.pdf)

#### • UPS Flight 006

<https://www.aircargonews.net/region/fire-risk-lurking-in-containers/>  
<https://www.airspacemag.com/visions/category/new-label/were-lithium-batteries-the-cause-of-this-pta/>  
<https://flightsafety.org/files/BAESFF.pdf>

#### • Boeing 747 on Fire Explodes Mid-Air | Asiana Airlines Flight 991

<https://youtu.be/OCMRTRSDiYc>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asiana\\_Airlines\\_Flight\\_991](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asiana_Airlines_Flight_991)

#### • UPS Flight 1307

<https://www.nsbk.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Reports/AAR0707.pdf>  
<http://www.aviation-accidents.net/ups-mcdonnell-douglas-dc8-71f-a-748up-flight-ups1307/>  
[https://www.skybrary.aero/index.php/DC87\\_Philadelphia\\_USA\\_2006](https://www.skybrary.aero/index.php/DC87_Philadelphia_USA_2006)

#### • Flight MH370 and the Lithium Battery Theory

<https://aircargoworld.com/allposts/flight-mh370-and-the-lithium-battery-theory-9754/>  
<https://sputniknews.com/asias/201811121069744479-mh370-batteries-crash/>  
<https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/612389/mh370-lithium-mobile-phone-batteries-missing-Boeing-777-crash>

#### • Union Pacific train

<http://tru.trainline.com/news/news-wire/2017/04/28-lithium-ion-batteries-cause-fire-and-explosion-on-board-up-train>

#### • Fire Deals New Setback to Navy's Heralded Mini-Sub

<http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2008/Dec/14/hwai1812140366.html>

#### • Russia Submersible Fire was in Battery Compartment

<https://www.kbs.com/news/world-europe-48865392>  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/23/russia-submersible-fire-faulty-battery-may-be-cause-reports>

Li-ion batteries are widely utilized by the U.S. Army and DoD, but—when confined on a plane, ship, train or other vehicle during transportation—they are inherently unsafe (i.e., DG - Dangerous Goods)<sup>1-2</sup>:

- **Hazardous Materials: Enhanced Safety Provisions for Lithium Batteries Transported by Aircraft (FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018)**  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/03/06/2019-03812/hazardous-materials-enhanced-safety-provisions-for-lithium-batteries-transported-by-aircraft-faa>
- **IATA: Lithium Batteries**  
<https://www.iata.org/whatwedo/oxigo/dgt/Pages/lithium-batteries.aspx>
- [https://batteryuniversity.com/learn/article/bu\\_704a\\_shipping\\_lithium\\_based\\_batteries\\_by\\_air](https://batteryuniversity.com/learn/article/bu_704a_shipping_lithium_based_batteries_by_air)
- [https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/services/safety/docs/EHS-DOC-147\\_LithiumBatteries.pdf](https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/services/safety/docs/EHS-DOC-147_LithiumBatteries.pdf)

Challenges include the (a) potential to "energetically disassemble" or result in very hot fires (e.g., > 650°C or 1200°F), (b) the inability of Halon and other fire suppression methods to adequately stop Li-ion battery fires (see insets) and (c) venting of flammable (H<sub>2</sub>) and poisonous gases (CO, HF and other)<sup>3-6</sup> which are particularly hazardous in an enclosed environment such as a plane. In Feb 2019, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) prohibited the transportation of Li-ion batteries as cargo on passenger aircraft, required that the batteries for carry-on not exceed 100 Wh... and also required that all batteries must be shipped at ≤ 30% state-of-charge (SoC) (Fig. 1):



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OCMRTRSDiYc>



# Battery SoC — Safety

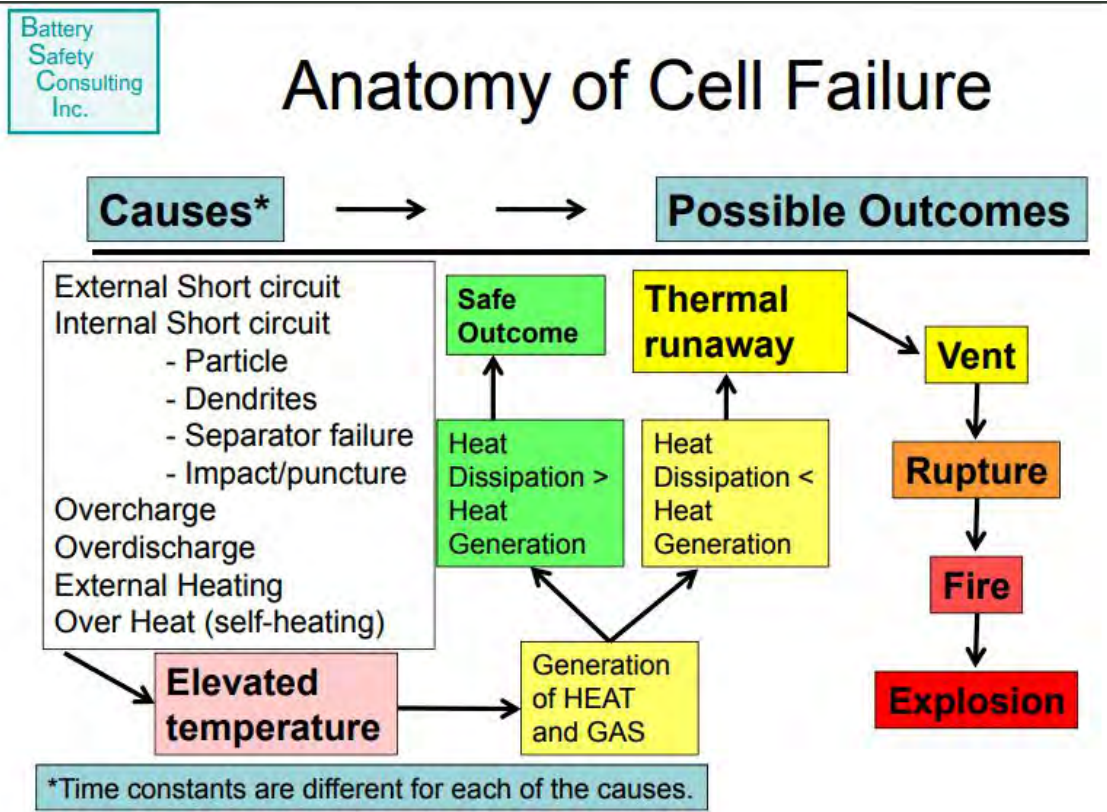
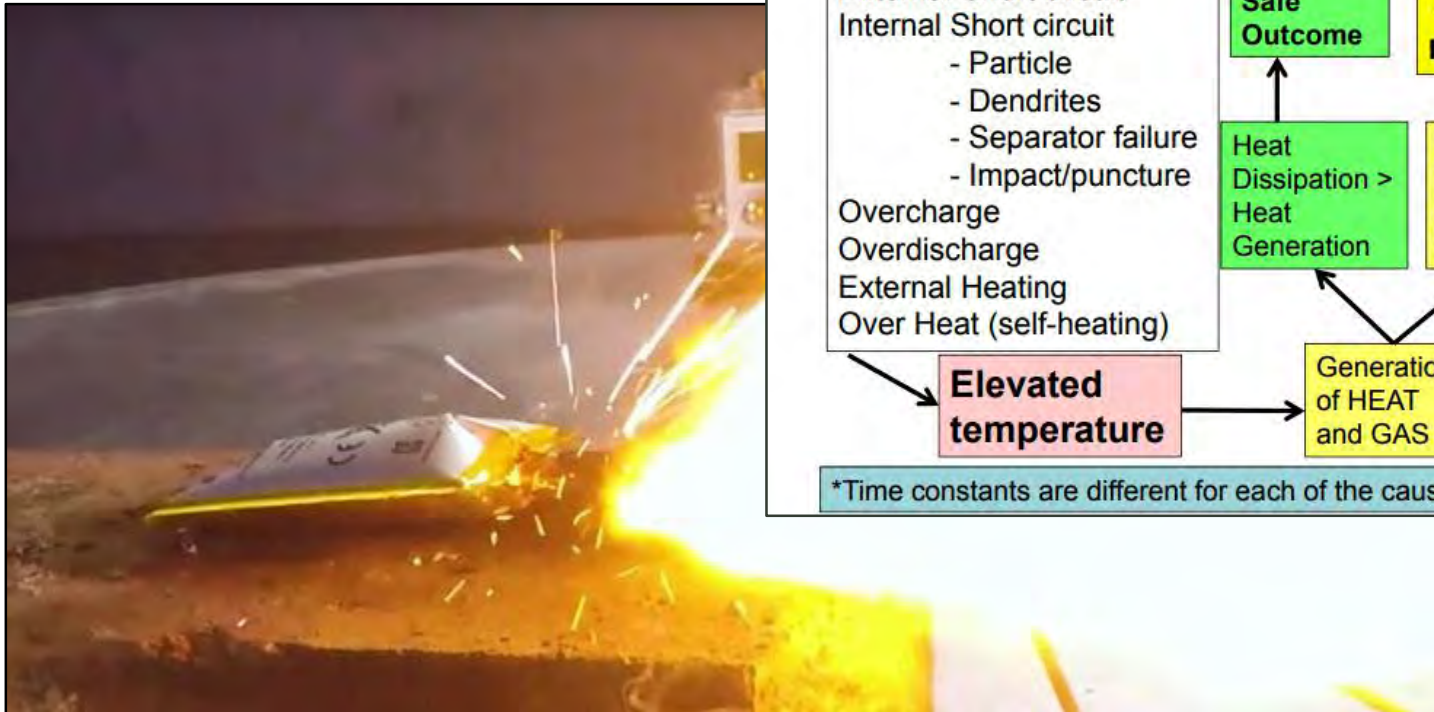


# Li-Ion Batteries—Safety



Li-ion batteries can—and do—catch fire/explode...

The reasons why this occurs are fairly well understood:

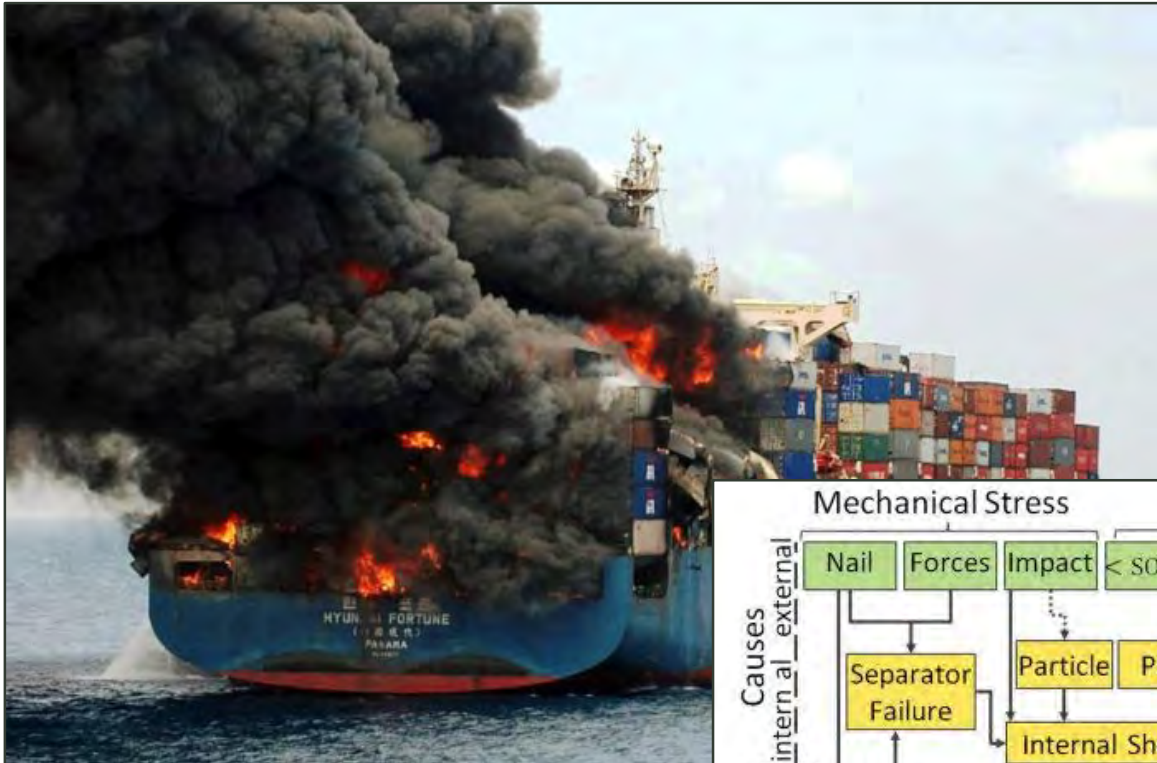


<https://www.electricgaadi.com/learn-about-ev/safety-standards-of-ev>

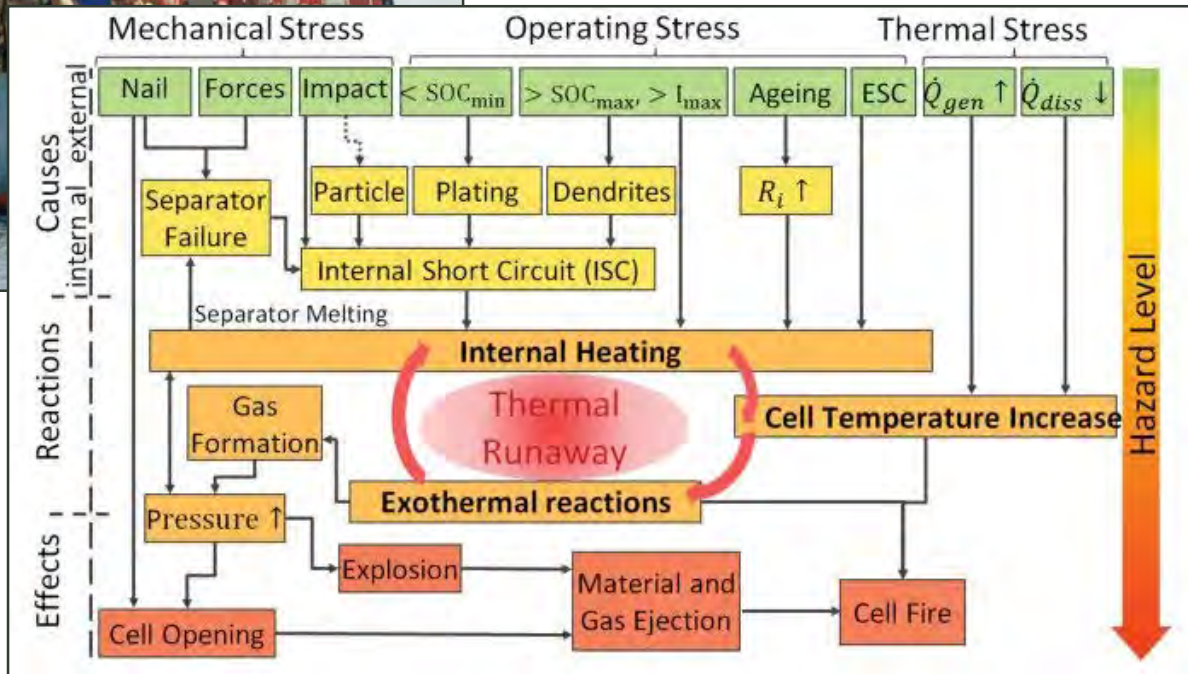
<https://electronics360.globalspec.com/article/7868/video-learn-why-lithium-ion-batteries-explode>



# Li-Ion Batteries—Safety



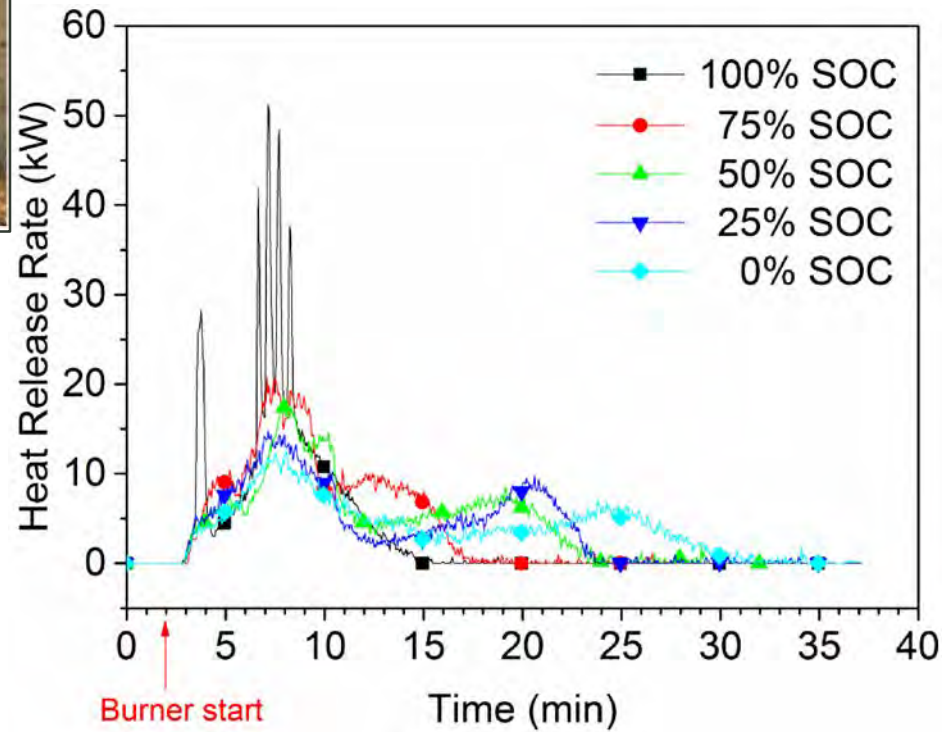
<https://www.upsbatterycenter.com/blog/marine-battery-fire-suppression/>



<https://www.scitecheuropa.eu/calorimeters-battery-safety/95275/>



# Li-Ion Batteries—Safety

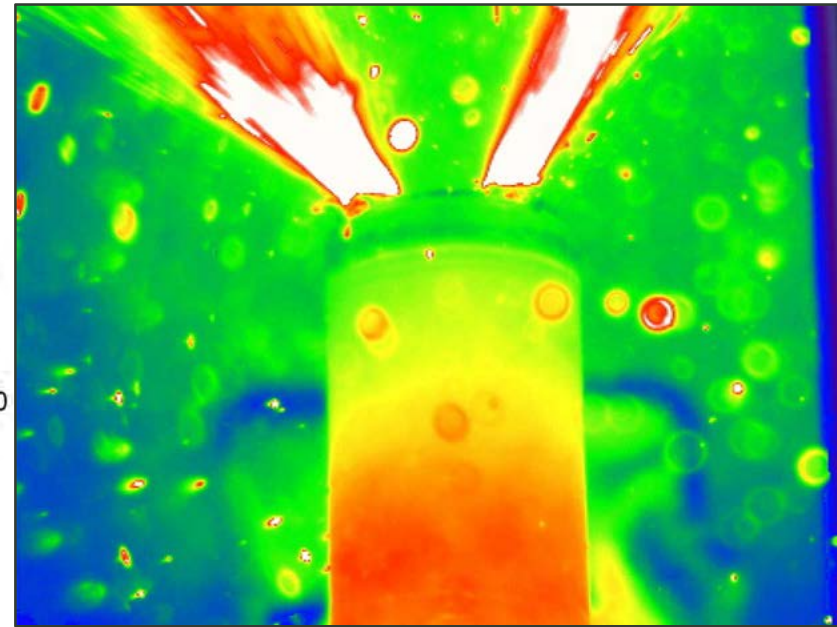
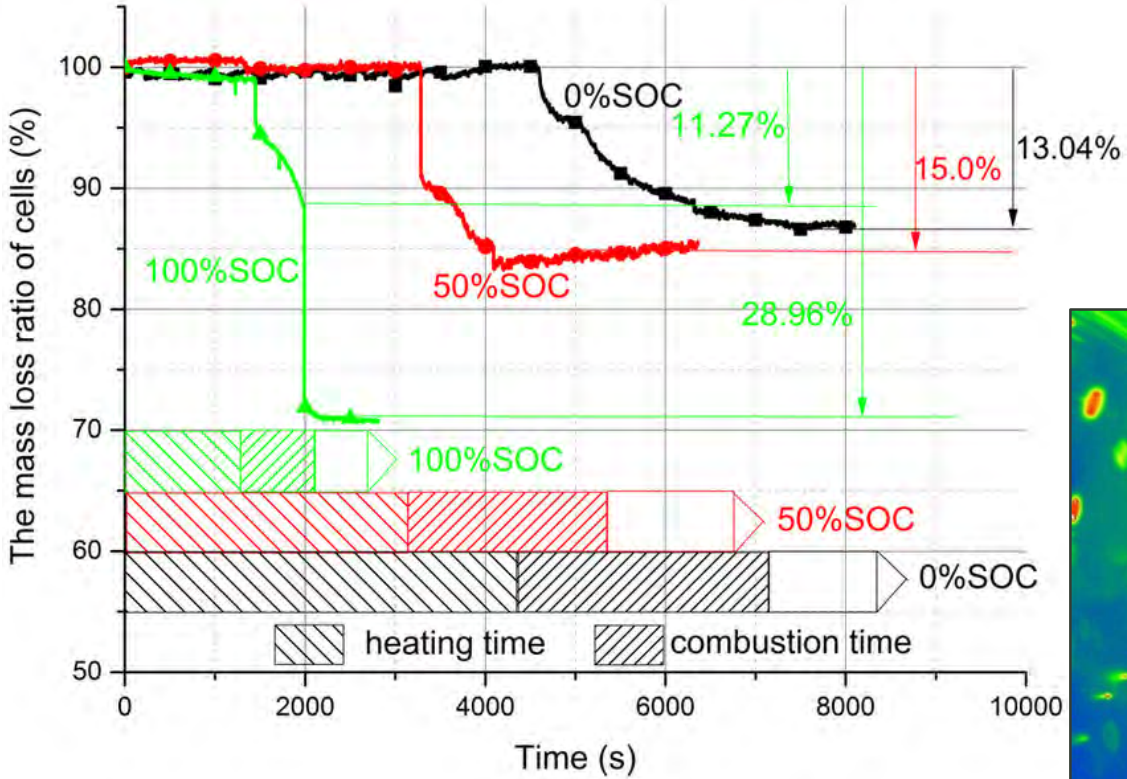


F. Larsson, P. Andersson and B.-E. Mellander, *Batteries* **2016**, 2, 9.  
Lithium-Ion Battery Aspects on Fires in Electrified Vehicles on the Basis of Experimental Abuse Tests.





# Li-Ion Batteries—Safety



## Exploding 18650 in SLO-MO 120 FPS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZ9vly2dYDU>

<https://spectrum.ieee.org/energywise/consumer-electronics/portable-devices/first-xray-views-into-overheating-lithium-ion-batteries>

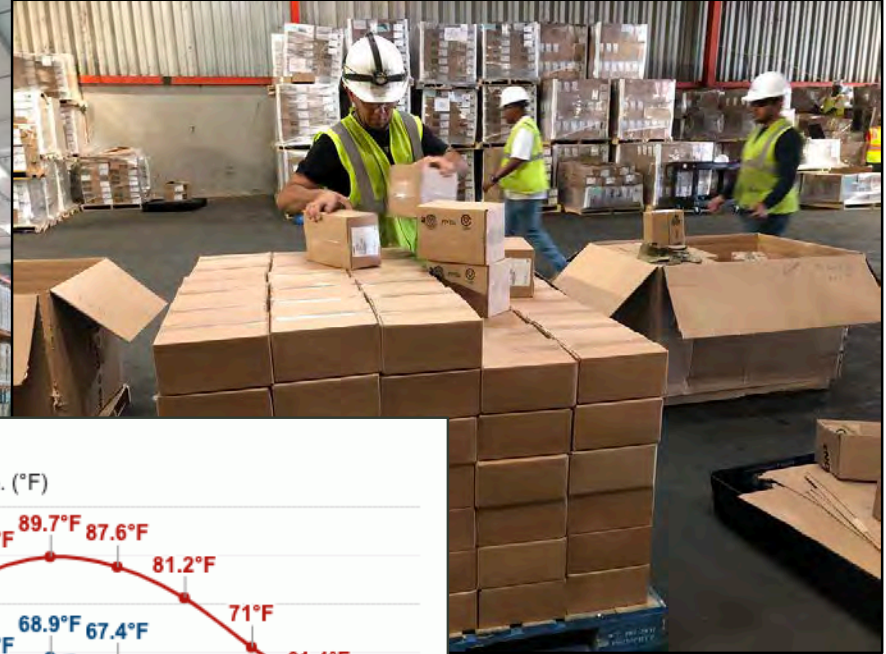
P. Huang, Q. Wang, K. Li, P. Ping and J. Sun, *Sci. Rep.* **2015**, 5, 7788.  
The Combustion Behavior of Large Scale Lithium Titanate Battery.



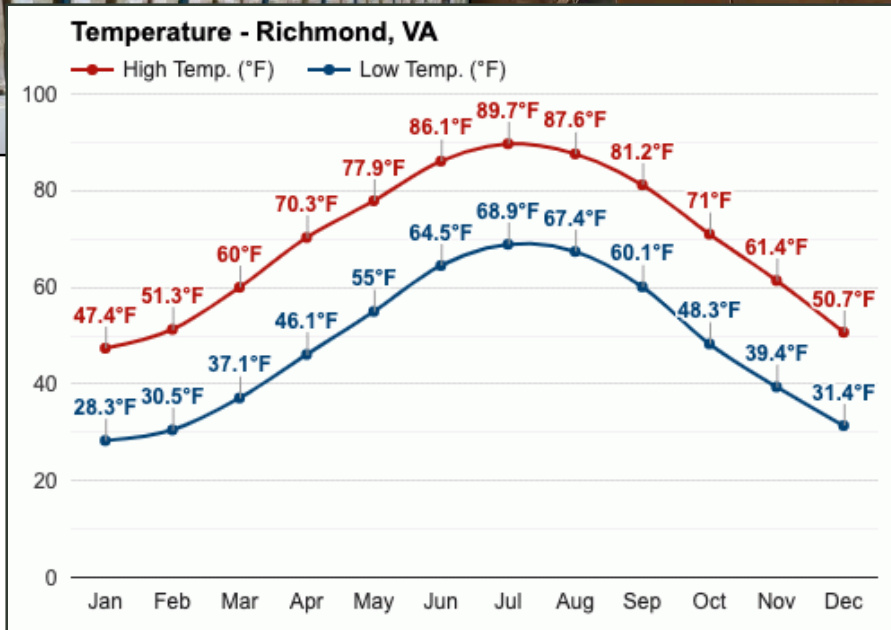
# Battery Shipping/Storage



# Li-Ion Batteries—DLA Storage/Shipping



<https://www.aecom.com/projects/defense-logistics-agency-dla-physical-distribution-warehouse-services/>

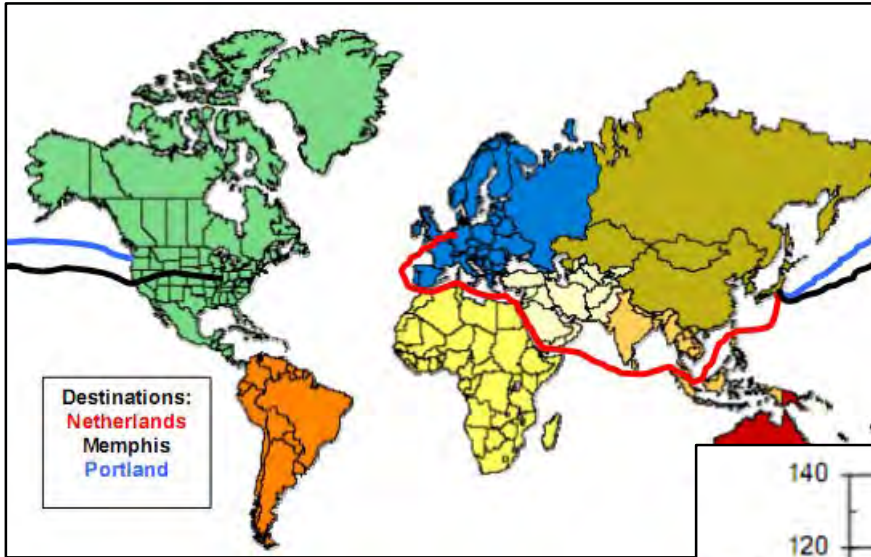


<https://www.flickr.com/photos/dlamil/40154818352/>

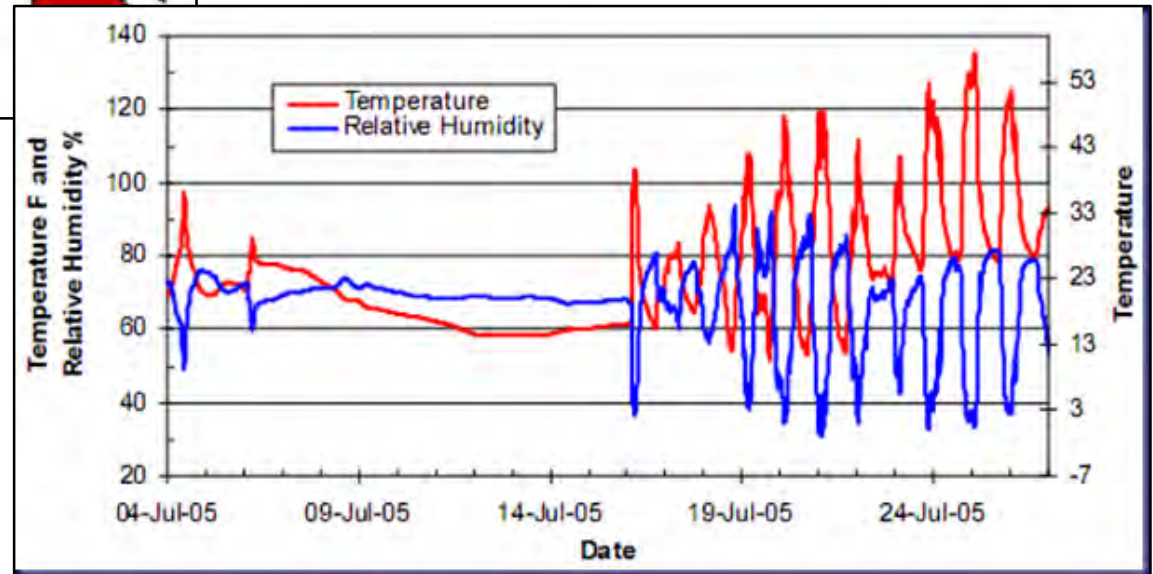
<https://www.weather-us.com/en/virginia-usa/richmond-climate>



# Li-Ion Batteries—Storage/Shipping



## Ocean Container Temperature and Humidity Study



Hottest shipment 135°F (57°C) – Japan to Memphis (USA)



# Li-Ion Batteries—Storage/Shipping



## Sea Containers WA Container Temperature Case Study

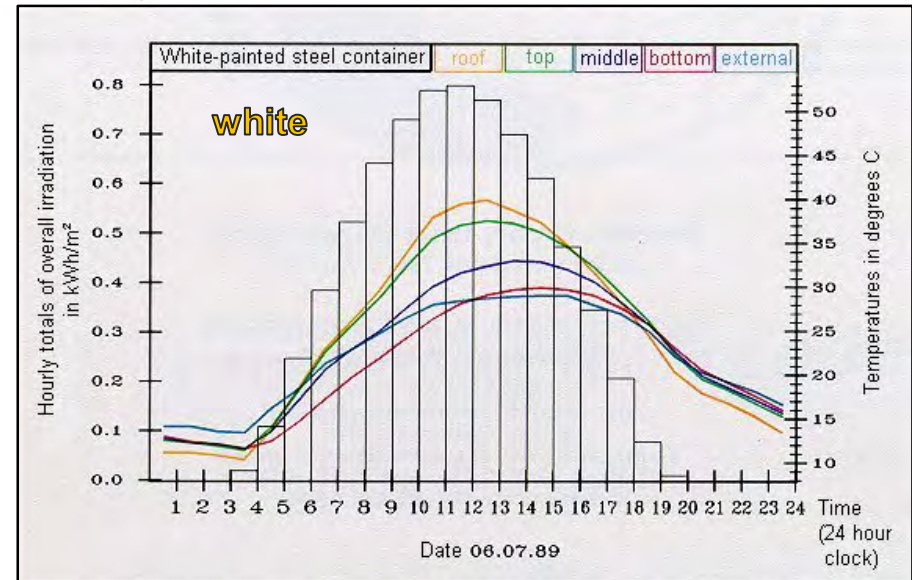
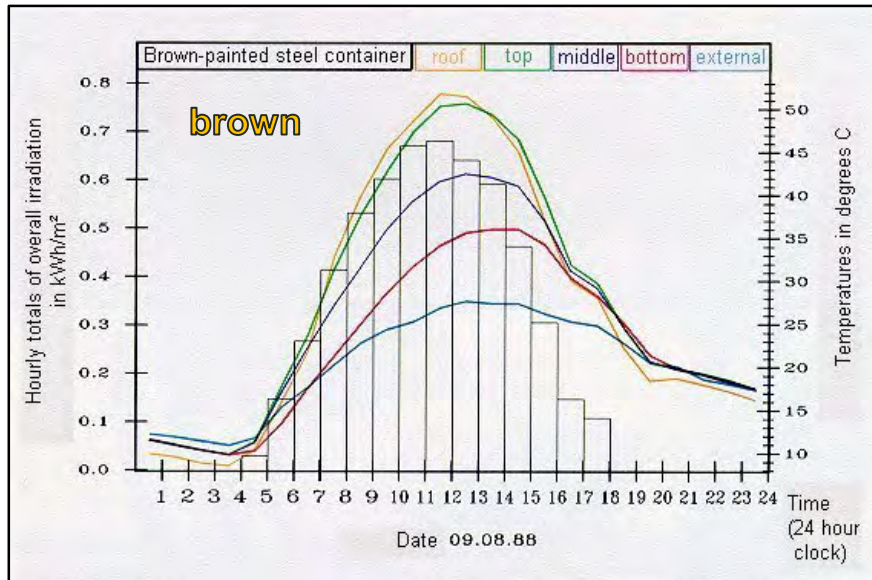
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5fUGo3OQZY>

## Reflective Roof Paint on Shipping Container - Part 2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3vULXwurYI>



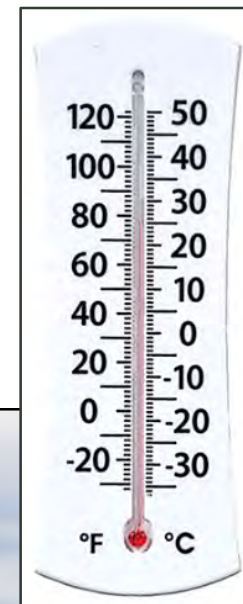
<http://integratedequipmentsales.com/40-foot-high-cube-containers/>



[https://www.tis-gdv.de/tis\\_e/containe/klima/klima.htm/](https://www.tis-gdv.de/tis_e/containe/klima/klima.htm/)



# Li-Ion Batteries—Storage/Shipping



<https://www.stripes.com/news/army-counts-containers-in-kuwait-1.25659>

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/photo-essay-remnants-trillion-dollar-war-afghanistan>



# Battery SoC — Calendar Aging



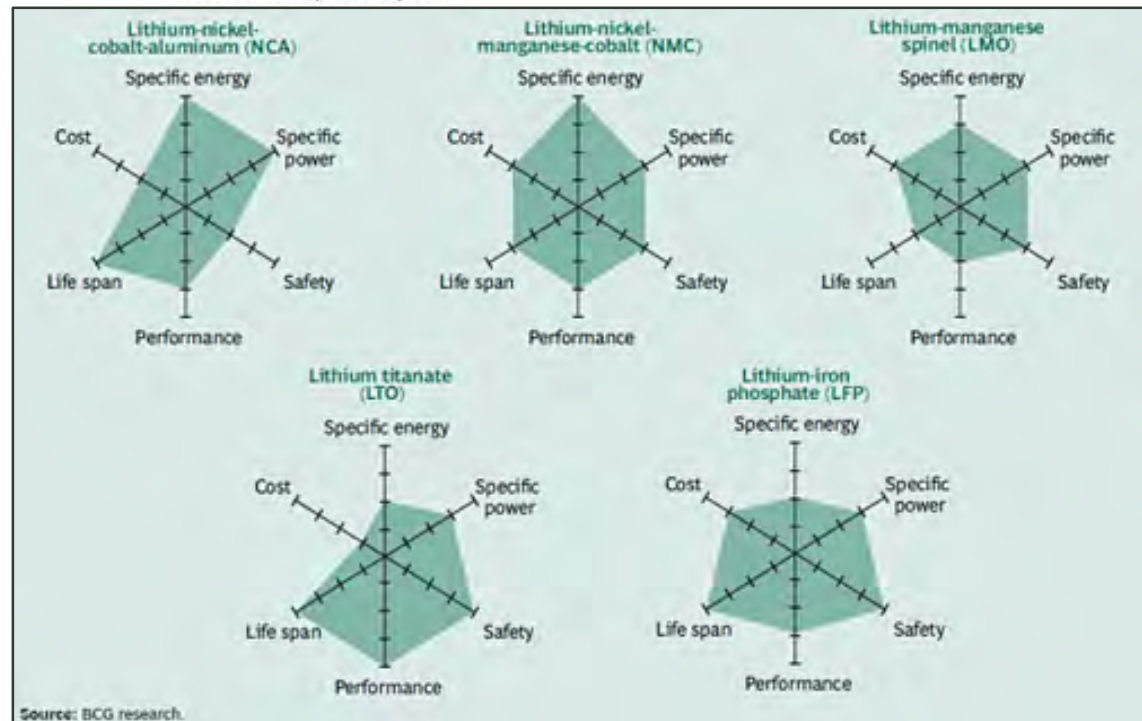
# Li-Ion Batteries—Calendar Aging



## Lithium Battery Technologies

Chemical Name	Material	Abbreviation	Applications
Lithium cobalt oxide	$\text{LiCoO}_2$	LCO	Cell phones, laptops, cameras
Lithium manganese oxide	$\text{LiMn}_2\text{O}_4$	LMO	Power tools, EVs, medical, hobbyist
Lithium iron phosphate	$\text{LiFePO}_4$	LFP	Power tools, EVs, medical, hobbyist
Lithium nickel manganese cobalt oxide	$\text{LiNiMnCoO}_2$	NMC	Power tools, EVs, medical, hobbyist
Lithium nickel cobalt aluminum oxide	$\text{LiNiCoAlO}_2$	NCA	EVs, grid storage
Lithium titanate	$\text{Li}_4\text{Ti}_5\text{O}_{12}$	LTO	EVs, grid storage

Source: batteryuniversity.com



[https://batteryuniversity.com/learn/archive/is\\_li\\_ion\\_the\\_solution\\_for\\_the\\_electric\\_vehicle](https://batteryuniversity.com/learn/archive/is_li_ion_the_solution_for_the_electric_vehicle)

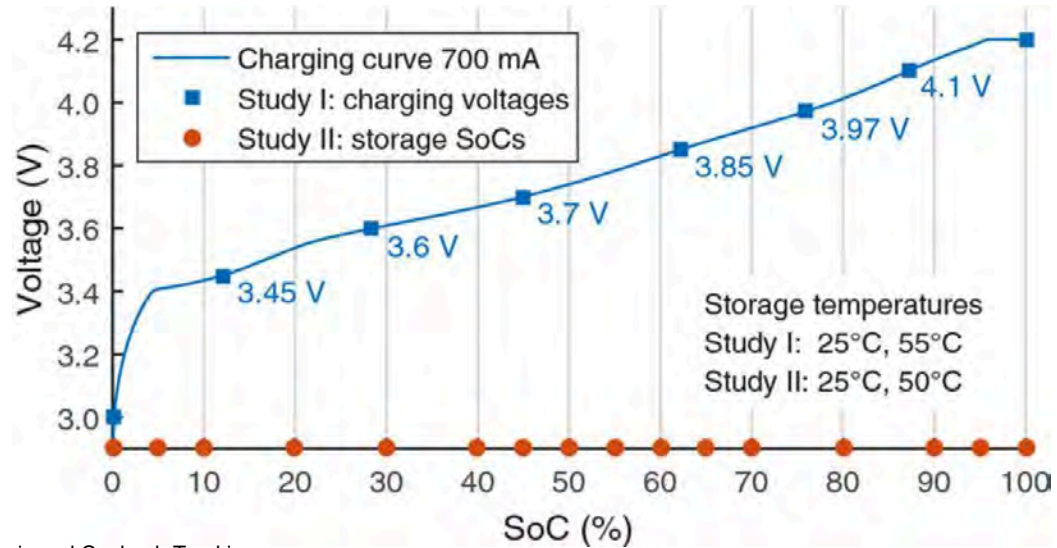
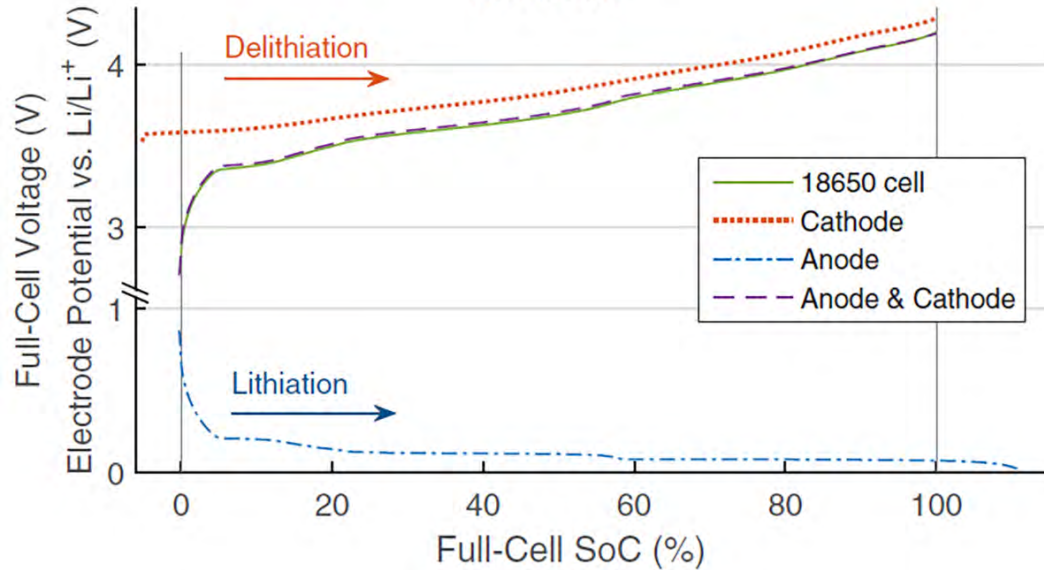




# Li-Ion Batteries—Calendar Aging



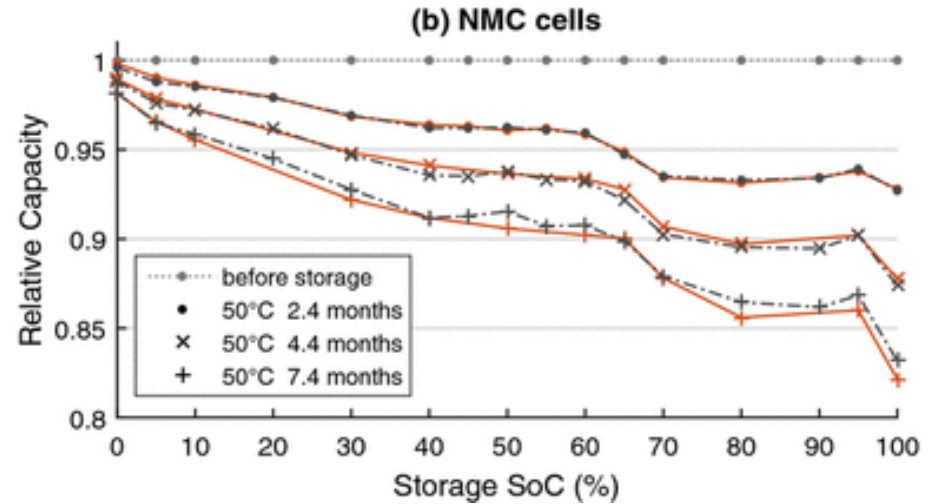
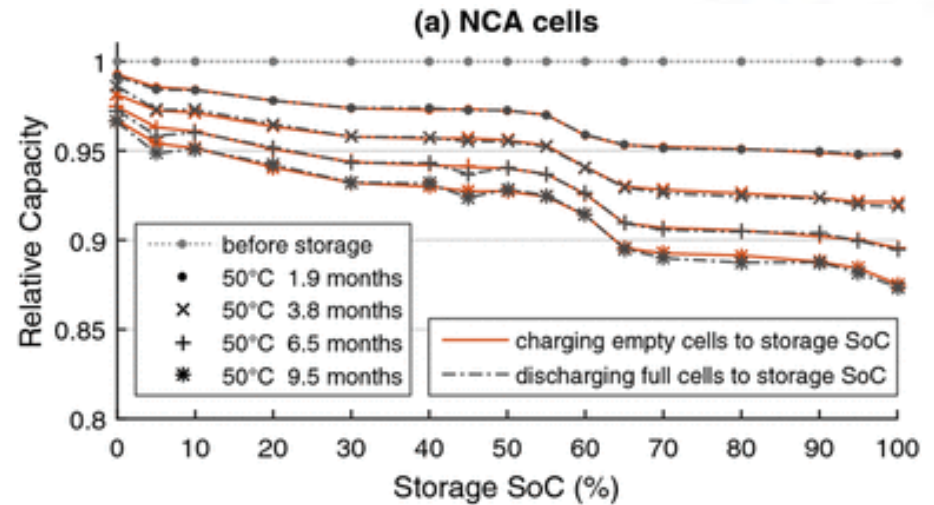
NCA cell



P. Keil and A. Jossen, *J. Electrochem. Soc.* **2017**, *164*, A6066.  
Calendar Aging of NCA Lithium-Ion Batteries Investigated by Differential Voltage Analysis and Coulomb Tracking.



# Li-Ion Batteries—Calendar Aging

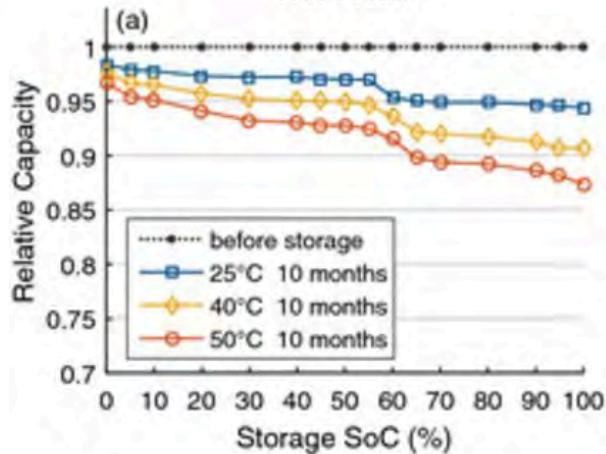




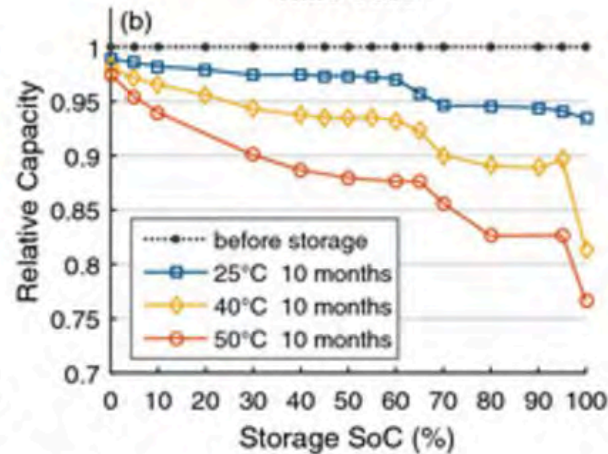
# Li-Ion Batteries—Calendar Aging



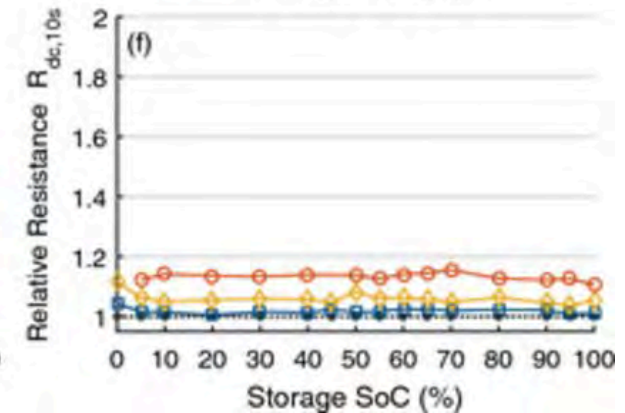
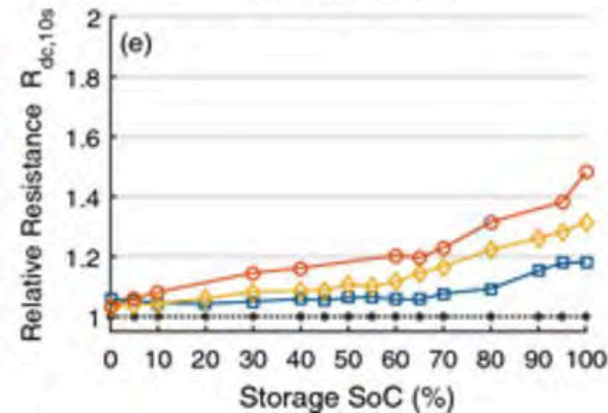
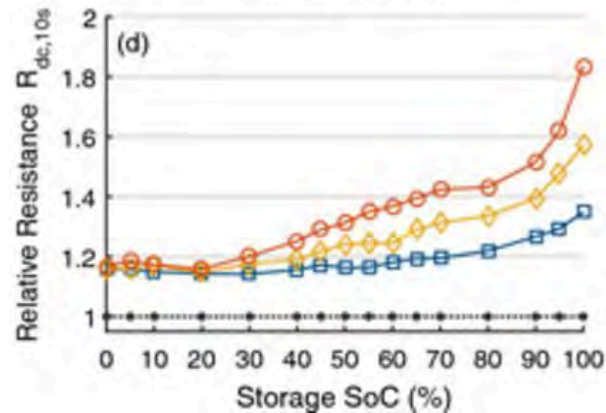
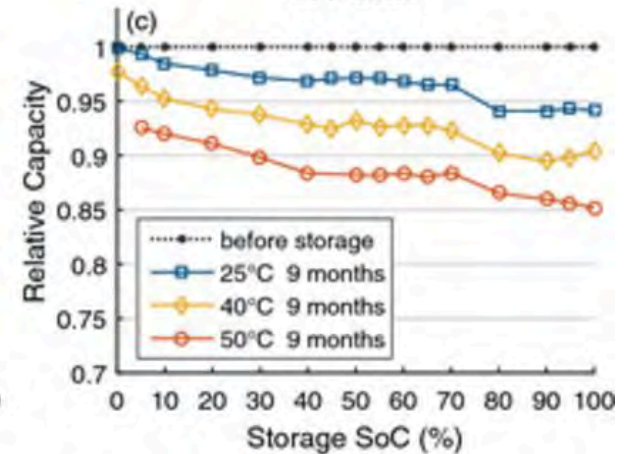
### NCA cells



### NMC cells

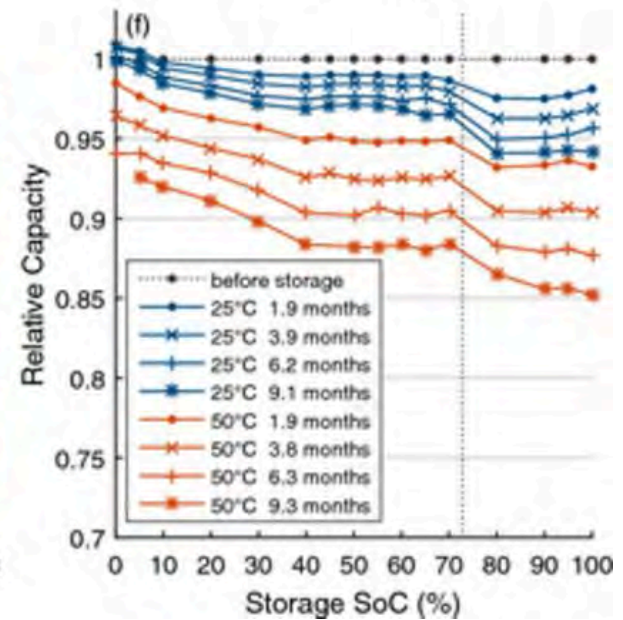
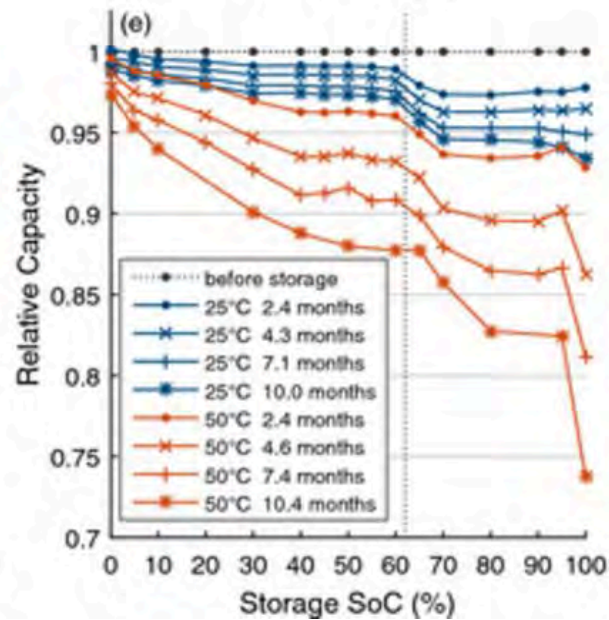
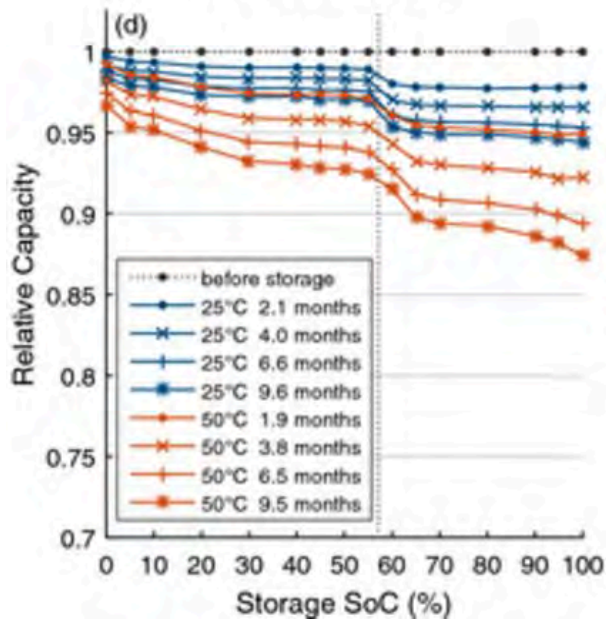
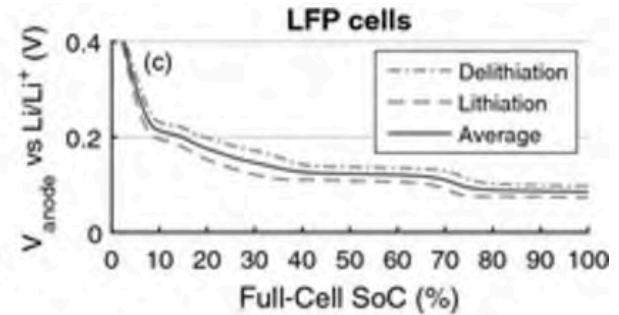
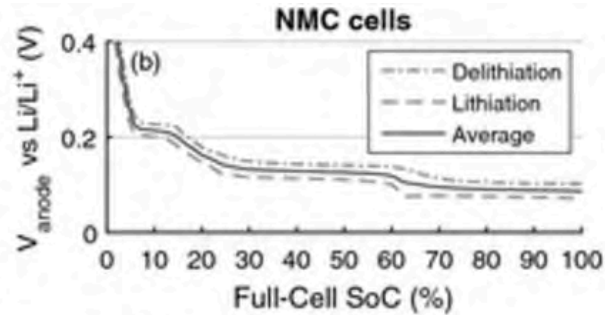
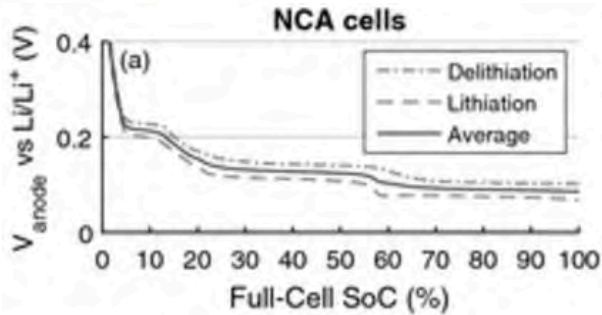


### LFP cells



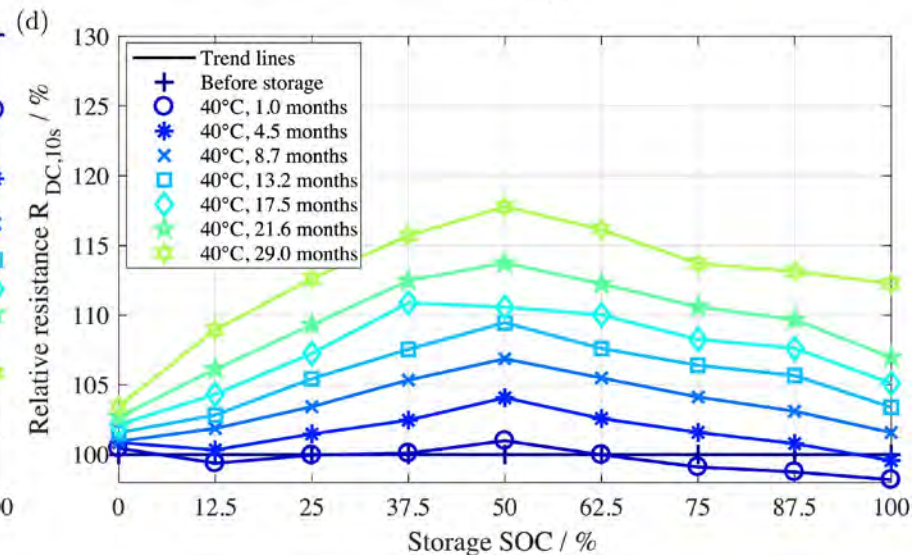
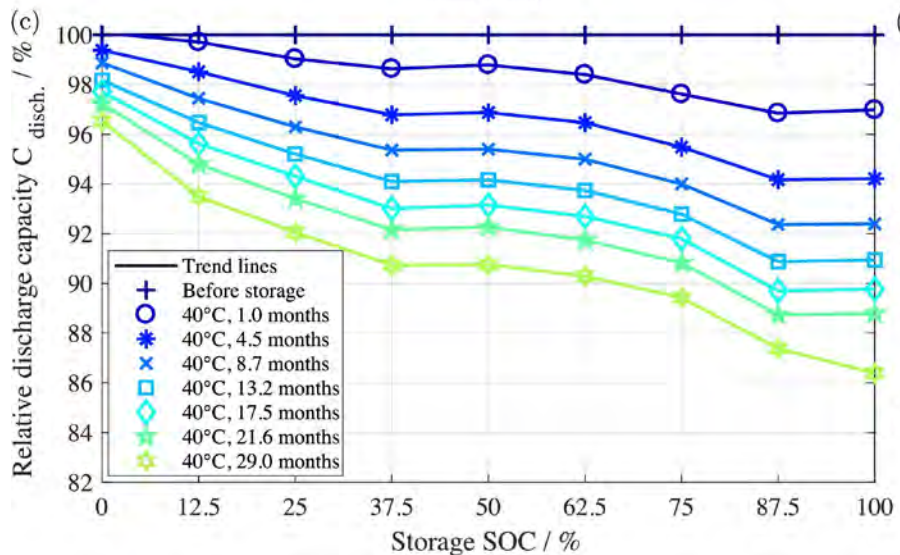
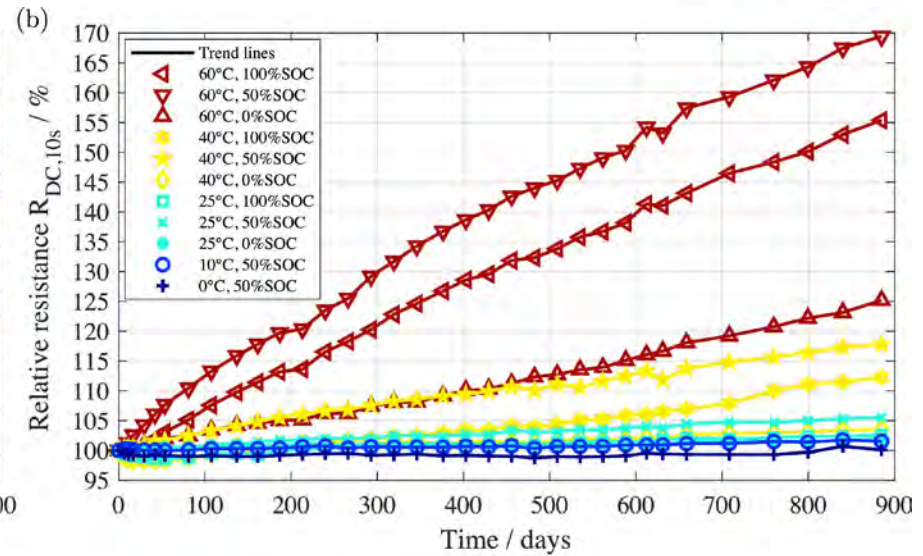
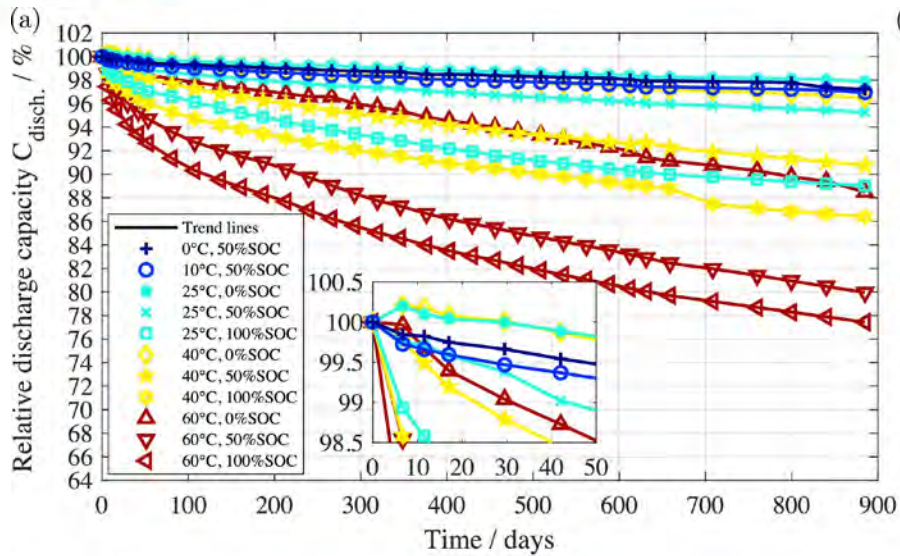


# Li-Ion Batteries—Calendar Aging





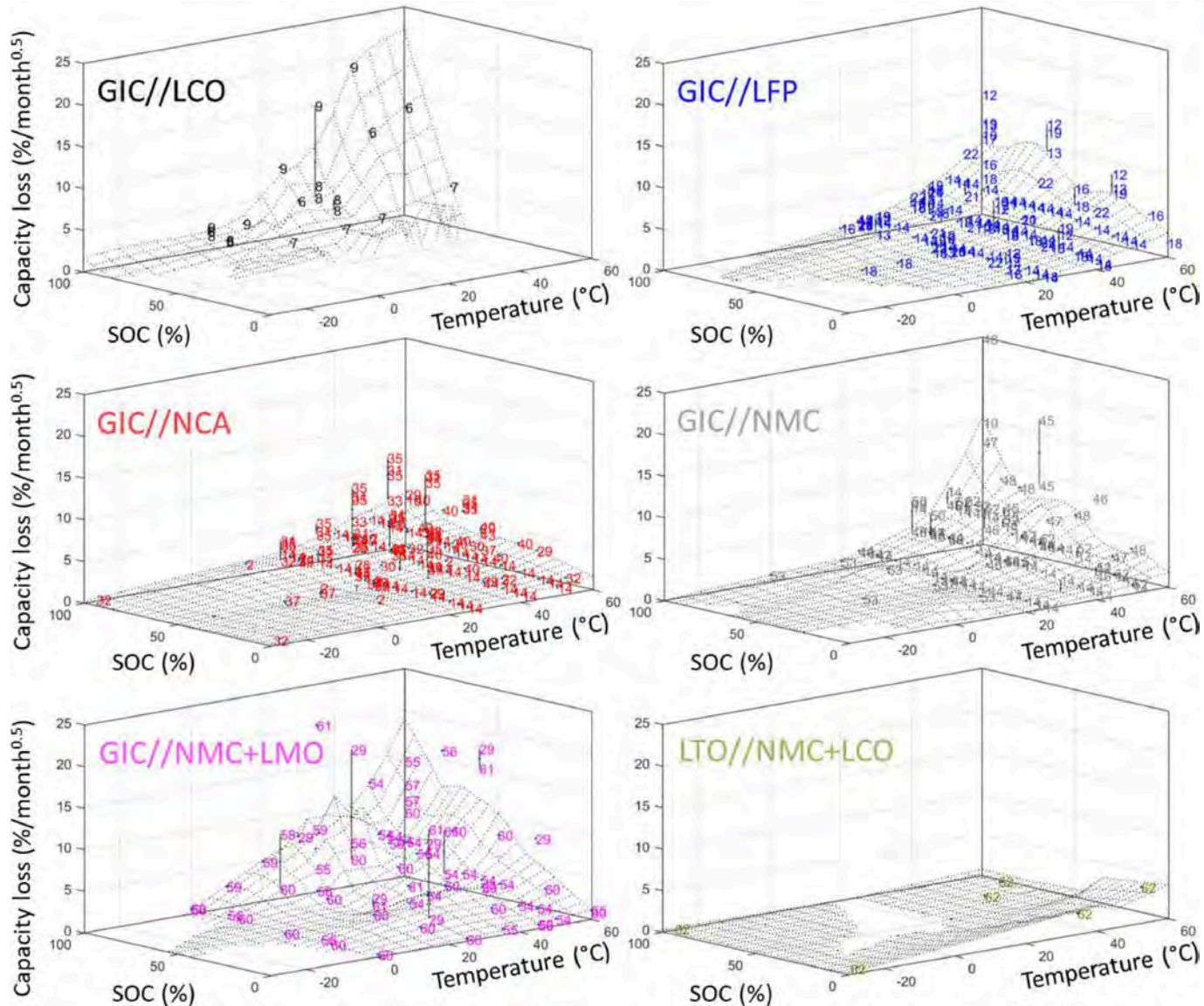
# Li-Ion Batteries—Calendar Aging



M. Naumann, M. Schimpe, P. Keil, H. C. Hesse and A. Jossen, *J. Energy Storage* **2018**, 17, 153. Analysis and Modeling of Calendar Aging of a Commercial LiFePO<sub>4</sub>/Graphite Cell.



# Li-Ion Batteries—Calendar Aging



M. Dubarry, Q. Nan and P. Brooker, *Curr. Op. Electrochem.* **2018**, 9, 106.  
 Calendar Aging of Commercial Li-Ion Cells of Different Chemistries – A Review.



# Li-Ion Batteries—Calendar Aging



	GIC//LCO	GIC//LFP	GIC//(LMO+NMC)	GIC//NCA	GIC//NMC	LTO//(LCO+NCA)
Low-temperature Low SOC	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Low-temperature Medium SOC	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Low-temperature High SOC	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Medium temperature Low SOC	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Medium temperature Medium SOC	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green
Medium temperature High SOC	Red	Green	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green
High-temperature Low SOC	White	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
High-temperature Medium SOC	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Green
High-temperature High SOC	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green

M. Dubarry, Q. Nan and P. Brooker, *Curr. Op. Electrochem.* **2018**, 9, 106.  
Calendar Aging of Commercial Li-Ion Cells of Different Chemistries – A Review.



# Li-Ion Batteries—Safety & Calendar Aging



The storage/shipping of Li-ion batteries at different SoC values has consequences...



<https://www.dla.mil/News/Images/igphoto/2001690917/>



<https://www.stripes.com/news/logistics-personnel-prepare-to-move-all-materiel-out-of-iraq-1.153024>





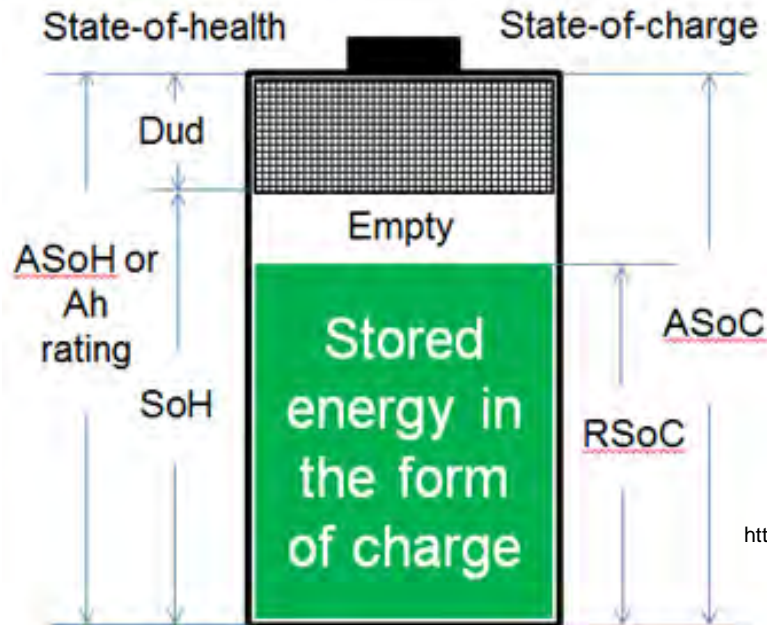
# Li-Ion Batteries—Calendar Aging



The bottom line:

**Storage of a new Li-ion battery at a high SoC, especially if done at higher temperatures, can result in significant degradation over time**

Thus, a new 10 Ah BB-2590/U battery (right out of the box) may actually only be a 9 Ah battery (i.e., 10% capacity degradation) when fully charged (100% SoC)



Note that most Li-ion batteries are discarded when they reach an 80% State-of-Health (SoH) (i.e., 20% degradation)—perhaps sooner for military applications

[https://batteryuniversity.com/learn/article/battery\\_definitions](https://batteryuniversity.com/learn/article/battery_definitions)



# Summary



**LiPo** batteries (with **pouch cells** inside) and cylindrical (“Li-ion”) cells have the same... or **nearly identical internal chemistry**—it’s the cell format which differs

**Cylindrical cells** have the **highest energy density** of any Li-ion cell format. Thus, **replacing LiPo batteries** with those assembled instead with **cylindrical cells** can result in a battery pack with a **much higher capacity**.

How batteries are stored (**SoC, temperature**) matters—it determines **how safe the battery is** and **how much degradation occurs** (even if not used)