

BU-216: Summary Table of Lithium-based Batteries

The term lithium-ion points to a family of batteries that shares similarities, but the chemistries can vary greatly. Li-cobalt, Li-manganese, NMC and Li-aluminum are similar in that they deliver high capacity and are used in portable applications. Li-phosphate and Li-titanate have lower voltages and have less capacity, but are very durable. These batteries are mainly found in wheeled and stationary uses. Table 1 summarizes the characteristics of major Li-ion batteries.

Chemistry	Lithium Cobalt Oxide	Lithium Manganese Oxide	Lithium Nickel Manganese Oxide	Lithium Iron Phosphate	Lithium Nickel Cobalt Aluminum Oxide	Lithium Titanate Oxide
Short form	Li-cobalt	Li-manganese	NMC	Li-phosphate	Li-aluminum	Li-titanate
Abbreviation	LiCoO ₂ (LCO)	LiMn ₂ O ₄ (LMO)	LiNiMnCoO ₂ (NMC)	LiFePO ₄ (LFP)	LiNiCoAlO ₂ (NCA)	Li ₂ TiO ₃ (common) (LTO)
Nominal voltage	3.60V	3.70V (3.80V)	3.60V (3.70V)	3.20, 3.30V	3.60V	2.40V
Full charge	4.20V	4.20V	4.20V (or higher)	3.65V	4.20	2.85V
Full discharge	3.00V	3.00V	3.00V	2.50V	3.00V	1.80V
Minimal voltage	2.50V	2.50V	2.50V	2.00V	2.50V	1.50V (est.)
Specific Energy	150–200 Wh/kg	100–150 Wh/kg	150–220 Wh/kg	90–120 Wh/kg	200–260 Wh/kg	70–80 Wh/kg
Charge rate	0.7–1C (3h)	0.7–1C (3h)	0.7–1C (3h)	1C (3h)	1C	1C (5C max)
Discharge rate	1C (1h)	1C, 10C possible	1–2C	1C (25C pulse)	1C	10C possible
Cycle life (ideal)	500–1000	300–700	1000–2000	1000–2000	500	3,000–7,000
Thermal runaway	150°C (higher when empty)	250°C (higher when empty)	210°C (higher when empty)	270°C (safe at full charge)	150°C (higher when empty)	One of safest Li-ion batteries
Maintenance	Keep cool; store partially charged; prevent full charge cycles, use moderate charge and discharge currents					
Packaging (typical)	18650, prismatic and pouch cell	prismatic	18650, prismatic and pouch cell	26650, prismatic	18650	prismatic

Chemistry	Lithium Cobalt Oxide	Lithium Manganese Oxide	Lithium Nickel Manganese Oxide	Lithium Iron Phosphate	Lithium Nickel Cobalt Aluminum Oxide	Lithium Titanate Oxide
History	1991 (Sony)	1996	2008	1996	1999	2008
Applications	Mobile phones, tablets, laptops, cameras	Power tools, medical devices, powertrains	E-bikes, medical devices, EVs, industrial	Stationary with high currents and endurance	Medical, industrial, EV (Tesla)	UPS, EV, solar street lighting
Comments	High energy, limited power. Market share has stabilized.	High power, less capacity; safer than Li-cobalt; often mixed with NMC to improve performance.	High capacity and high power. Market share is increasing. Also NCM, CMN, MNC, MCN	Flat discharge voltage, high power low capacity, very safe; elevated self-discharge.	Highest capacity with moderate power. Similar to Li-cobalt.	Long life, fast charge, wide temperature range and safe. Low capacity, expensive.

Table 1: Summary of most common lithium-ion based batteries.

Experimental and less common lithium-based batteries are not listed. Readings are estimated averages at time of publication. Detailed information on BU-205: Types of Lithium-ion