Rather than plugging into an outlet or a computer USB port, there are new and emerging charging technologies that make it faster and easier than ever to get life back into your phone. This is good news for anyone who depends on their phone day and night. Wireless charging technology is the future goal for developers. Here are some alternative ways to charge your phone that are being developed:

Wireless Charging Stations

The companies developing wireless charging stations for smartphones like the iPhone 6 (http://www.t-mobile.com/cell-phones/apple-iphone-6.html) have big plans to scale usage of their products and for universal adoption.

According to CNET (http://www.cnet.com/news/wireless-charging-still-has-strings-attached/), there are two current standards for wireless cell phone charging: the Power Matters Alliance (PMA) and Qi. They both use inductive charging, but on different wavelengths. PMA produces the Duracell Powermat, which is in Starbucks in the Boston-area and will soon be in McDonald’s in Europe. It’s developing charging stations to be more interactive, too. They enable store personnel to see how long customers are using chargers and even offer items like coupons for...
store products. Qi is used with high profile cell phones such as the HTC Droid DNA (http://www.htc.com/us/smartphones/droid-dna-by-htc/) and Nokia Lumia 920. Soon, it also will support the Galaxy S4.

The Alliance for Wireless Power (A4WP) uses technology based on magnetic resonance. This is different than inductive charging because instead of placing the phone in charging cradles on a mat, users simply place their devices on the mat for wireless charging. This means several devices can charge on a single mat at the same time, even if just a part of the phone is touching the mat. Furthermore, A4WP mats can charge devices through several layers. For example, you can place a magazine over the mat with the phone on top, and your phone will still charge.

**Faster Charge Times**

Lithium battery technology is allowing smartphones to hold charges longer, and now Qnovo wants to make these batteries charge up to 75 percent faster, reports Forbes (http://www.forbes.com/sites/antonyleather/2014/07/31/new-battery-tech-cuts-smartphone-charge-times-by-75/). They have developed software that can be used with existing operating systems and an augmented chipset that monitors battery voltage, temperature and usage to speed up charging. They are working to get their technology into most cell phones in 2015.

In addition, by 2016, StoreDot expects to sell a slim battery made with nanotechnology that is able to charge a smartphone in 30 seconds.

**Micro-Windmills**

Micro-windmills are another piece of technology being tested for smartphone battery life. Invented by research associate Smitha Rao and electrical engineering professor J.C. Chiao, 10 micro-windmills can fit on a single grain of rice. These micro-windmills are not only miniscule but also are sturdy because they are made from a durable nickel alloy material. And, another major perk is that they can be mass-produced inexpensively.

According to the University of Texas, Arlington (http://www.uta.edu/news/releases/2014/01/microwindmill-rao-chiao.php), Chiao and Rao envision embedding the windmills into the sleeves of cell phones so they are available when the battery is low. Then, all the user has to do is simply wave the phone in the air, hold it out the window of a moving car or hold it in front of a fan in order to charge it.

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