

Purchasing a Computer for College?

In choosing the computer that you will use to enhance your college education, you may have asked yourself these questions.

- Is a PC or a MAC the best choice?
- Should I get a Desktop or a Laptop?
- Should the computer have wireless capabilities?
- What printer is best for me?



YOU ARE GETTING WAY AHEAD OF YOURSELF.

Ask yourself these questions first.

What college or university will I be attending?

Once you have decided on a school, go to that school's web site and look up the answers to the following questions.

What is my intended area of study or college major?

Most academic colleges within a university make recommendations on the type of computers that will serve the needs of the students enrolled in that area of study. Talk to the academic advisors and the university IT Department to determine if a Mac or PC, desktop or laptop, wireless or not wireless will be the best choice for your major.

What are the hard drive requirements for computer use on my college campus?

The university's IT Department will have a list of operating systems that the campus network will support. Most universities have this on their web site. They will also list the buildings on campus that have wireless capabilities and a list of cables necessary for campus networking from your computer.

Have I read and understood the Acceptable Use Policy for my university?

The university's AUP informs you of acceptable and non-acceptable downloads, internet sites, hardware, software, peripherals, campus computer lab usage, and network access. The AUP also defines the enforcement and consequences of any actions not in compliance with the university's policies.

What additional computer requirements are needed for my particular area of study?

Some academic departments will have particular softwares that are necessary for some classes in lieu of or in addition to the course book(s). Ask your advisor in your selected major for a departmental software list as well as the necessary hardware requirements needed to run the software. Computers with wireless networking capabilities for printing may also be required for daily classtime work. Check the university's web site as well as the professors' web pages.

What are the computer network requirements for my dorm?

The university's web site should list the residence halls' network capabilities, ie. is it a wireless dorm or one with a stationary connection. A device to secure and lock your laptop to prevent theft is also a great investment and can be found at most major office/business supply stores as well as through the maker of your laptop.

If I live off-campus, what type of internet service and network is available?

The house or apartment manager should be able to answer any internet connection questions and should also be able to direct you to the local internet providers.

What type of printer should I purchase?

Most computer companies (such as Apple, Dell, Gateway, Compaq, IBM, Sony, HP) will recommend printers that are compatible with their computers. Know the cost and availability of ink replacement for the printer you select. This will help you in deciding on the actual printer to purchase.

How much can I afford to spend on technology for college?

For your budget, get the essential hardware, software, and networking equipment necessary for your major area of study at your chosen university. If you then can afford the extras that you just want, such as an iPod, a DVD player and/or burner, a digital camera, or external speakers, then you are one lucky student.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

<http://www.apple.com/>

<http://www.dell.com/us/en/gen/default.htm>

<http://gateway.com/index.shtml>

<http://www.hewlett-packard.com/>

<http://www.ibm.com/products/us/>

<http://www.sony.com/>

<http://h18000.www1.hp.com/>

FYI: Listed below are just a few articles on the internet that will help you understand the difference between a PC and a Mac.

"The PC versus Macintosh Question"

drBOB's BASICS

<http://www.indiana.edu/~simms/drBB/drBB_pc-mac.html>

Judgment Call: Mac vs. PC

written by Hahn Choi and Brett Larson on Wednesday, August 01, 2001

"Two TechTV LabRats face off in a Mac/PC showdown"

<http://www.g4techtv.com/techtv/vault/features/31407/Judgment_Call_Mac_vs_PC.html>

Pcs Vs Macs..which do you prefer?

<http://scotland.gojobsite.co.uk/Careernews/advice/mac_pc.html>

"The Macintosh versus the PC" from Stephen McGloughlin's book MULTIMEDIA CONCEPTS AND PRACTICE.

<http://www.nvcc.vccs.edu/home/nvportg/macintosh_versus_the_pc.htm>