

Purchasing a Computer to Use at Elizabethtown College

This information was prepared by the Elizabethtown College Information and Technology Services (ITS) Department for students entering in the fall of 2023. Please visit our website for the most up-to-date information: <http://www.etown.edu/its>.

Recommendations

Information and Technology Services (ITS) supports both Windows-based computers and Macintosh computers on campus. 90% of the college-owned computers on campus are Windows-based computers and therefore most support is focused on the Windows machines. Macintosh computers accounted for 30% of student machines last year.

Generally, students find that laptops are more convenient to use throughout the campus and are easier to take home during breaks. Last year, approximately 95% of student computers were laptops.

We do not recommend a specific computer brand. Therefore, we recommend using an independent reviewer of manufacturers. For example, [Consumer Reports](#) reviews computers each year in a variety of categories. Pay particular attention to the **repair history** of the various brands. Any of the brands that have been reviewed should work with our campus network.

We also do not recommend using tablet devices running mobile operating systems (e.g. the Apple iPad, Android Tablet, Chromebooks, and mobile devices) as replacements for a laptop. They have limited processing power and can only run mobile-compatible apps, which limits what software can be installed on them.

Elizabethtown College has purchasing arrangements with both Dell and Apple. You may purchase a computer at a small discount (5-8%) from these vendors by going to <http://www.etown.edu/computers>.

Microsoft Office will be provided to all actively enrolled students through the Microsoft Student Advantage program. Download and installation instructions will be provided to students later in the summer. Additional software can be purchased at an educational discount through academic resellers like JourneyEd (<http://www.journeyed.com/select/>).

We recommend the same specifications for students as we purchase for our faculty and staff. These specifications are machines that we expect to last for four years without hardware upgrades. We also recommend an extended warranty with onsite service and accidental damage coverage. These systems may be a little more expensive, but can balance out over lower priced systems which may not last for four years or have a limited warranty.

Recommended Computer Specifications for the Elizabethtown Campus Network

This information was updated in April 2022 for students entering in the fall of 2022.

	Windows-based Computers		Macintosh	
	Recommended Specifications (new computer)	Minimum Specifications* (used computer)	Recommended Specifications (new computer)	Minimum Specifications* (used computer)
Processor	Intel Core i5/i7 Quad 11th- 13th (current) generation	Intel Core i3	Apple M1, M2	Intel Core i3
Memory	8-16 GB	4 GB	8-16 GB	4 GB
Hard Drive	250+ GB <i>Solid State Disk (SSD) will provide better performance</i>	120 GB	250+ GB <i>Solid State Disk (SSD) will provide better performance</i>	120 GB
Media	(optional) External USB DVD+-RW drive		(optional) External USB DVD+-RW drive	
Wireless for Laptops	802.11 ac	802.11 g/n	802.11 ac	802.11 g/n
Laptop Warranty	3-4 year onsite next business day with insurance against drops and spills (eg. Dell's CompleteCare)		3 year AppleCare+ Accidental Damage Protection	
Desktop Warranty	3-4 year onsite next business day		3 year AppleCare Protection	
Operating System	Microsoft Windows 11	Windows 10	MacOS 13 Ventura	MacOS 11 Big Sur
Microsoft Office	Microsoft Office 365		Microsoft Office 365 for Mac	
	Microsoft Office will be provided for free to actively enrolled students through the Microsoft Student Advantage program. Download and installation instructions will be provided to students later in the summer.			
Webcam & Microphone	A webcam and microphone are recommended for videoconferencing. Many laptops have a webcam and microphone built into the laptop. An external webcam or microphone can be connected to desktops.			
Network Adapter and Cable	All campus buildings have wireless coverage and each room has wired Ethernet jacks. To use the faster speeds of the wired connections, computers need a compatible 10/100 Ethernet card and an Ethernet cable (25 foot recommended) with RJ45 connectors. These cables are available at the College Store or other electronics retailers. For machines without an Ethernet card, external USB adapters are available for purchase.			
Required Antivirus Software	FortiClient antivirus is required on all computers connected to the campus network. This software will be provided for free during fall orientation. If purchasing a new computer this summer, an antivirus free trial (e.g. Norton or McAfee) should be used until the fall orientation.			

* A computer with the minimum specifications will work on the campus network at this time, but may no longer be supported over the next few years. These machines may need to be upgraded or replaced at that time.

Additional questions? Please feel free to contact the ITS Help Desk:

helpdesk@etown.edu | 717-361-3333 | Nicarry Hall, room 125 | www.etown.edu/its