

COMPUTER & NETWORKING

TECHNOLOGIES, LTD

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Laptop Buying Tips for Students

Special Points of Interest:

- Laptop Buying Tips for Students
- Mother's Day Sale
- 2018 Graduation Sale

Going off to high school or college without a decent laptop is like refusing to use pencil and paper. It instantly puts a ceiling on how much students can learn, how far they can go and how many lifelong abilities they can acquire. But don't just buy whatever is on sale; you need the right laptop for your specific needs.

Whether you're a student yourself or are shopping on behalf of a student, we've compiled eight tips on choosing the right student laptop to enhance learning now and in the future. Here are our quick tips, plus all the details you need to know.

Get specs for the long haul. You want something that isn't going to be obsolete before graduation, so keep an eye on the key internal components.

Display: Most budget and many mainstream laptops have low-res, 1366 x 768 displays that aren't very sharp and can't fit a lot of text on the screen, which makes them poor choices for writing papers or doing research. Unless you're buying a really inexpensive laptop or one with an 11-inch screen, getting a display that's at least 1920 x 1080 (1080p) resolution should be a priority.

You can go even higher, too, with resolutions of 2560 x 1440 (QHD) or 3840 x 2160 (UHD). These are great for photo and video students who need to view high-res source material, but



those display specs add to the price and subtract from the battery life. Touch screens add functionality to your laptop, but they consume a ton of power, shortening your battery life by 10 to 25 percent, so don't get one unless you really need it. CPU: If you want a system that provides solid performance for today and tomorrow, get an Intel Core i5 or Core i7 CPU. Make sure the processor model number has a 7000 in it (ex; Core i5-7200U), which means that you have the latest Intel 7th Generation chip. If you're on a tight budget, a Core i3, Pentium or Celeron CPU will suffice for light productivity work, and Intel's Core M processor delivers decent performance in slim-and-light designs.

RAM: Unless you're buying a cheap laptop for a younger child, 4GB is the bare minimum amount of RAM you should have in a laptop, and 8GB is ideal. That will run everything you need without dragging you down or interfering with multitasking.

Storage Drive/Hard Drive: Getting an SSD (solid-state drive) rather than a mechanical hard drive has a more significant effect on performance than buying a fast processor. Because SSDs have no moving parts, they run three to four times faster than typical 5,400 rpm or 7,200 rpm hard drives. That means faster app opens, start times and task switching, along with much better responsiveness. SSDs do cost a lot more while offering less storage, so if you have a lot of media files, you may need to store some in the cloud or on an external drive.

Wi-Fi: Make sure you get a laptop with 802.11ac Wi-Fi standard, rather than the older 802.11n.

Ports: USB Type-C ports are the future, but regular USB Type-A ports are the present. If you can get a laptop with a mix of both, that's ideal. Definitely try to get a laptop with multiple USB ports, so you don't need to carry a lot of dongles with you.

Get the right OS Consider the operating system. If you're heading off to college, check with the university about software requirements. Sometimes schools will need you to have a specific type of software or operating system to ensure compliance with future workloads. Windows 10 is the most popular operating system and most versatile; Microsoft's platform has millions of applications, supports both touch-friendly tablet mode and keyboard-friendly desktop mode and offers the helpful Cortana digital assistant.

Look for 8 hours or more of battery life Don't tether yourself to an outlet. Get a laptop that promises quality battery life, and look for systems with optional extended batteries for the longest run times. In general, you're better off buying a system with more than 8 hours of juice, regardless of the price. The average for ultraportable laptops is 7 hours, 55 minutes, based on the Laptop Mag Battery Test (continuous web surfing over Wi-Fi).





Mother's Day

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