

Super Mike's Computer Service – Tips for buying a new PC

What to look for when buying a new computer tower or laptop?

- As a general rule of thumb the most important things to consider are processor and memory. An Intel Core i3 or better for the processor is recommended. As for computer memory there are 2 types, RAM and DISK (hard drive). RAM is the performance based "temp" memory and you should look for a computer with 8GB+. DISK memory (hard drive) is measured in GB's as well but is a computers "long-term" storage area. This is where the Windows files, programs files, and your user files are stored. For 99% of computer users DISK storage is not an issue, we rarely fill our hard drives. 256GB or larger will work fine for most users. Make sure if you're purchasing a new computer it has a SSD(Solid State Drive).

What else do I need to think about when I purchase a new computer?

- Think about how you use your current computer. What programs are you using on a regular basis? Word, Excel, Quicken, Quickbooks? You will need to install these programs on a new computer. For example if you use Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint or Outlook) then you will need the install CD(or download from Microsoft Account) to install the program on the computer. Making a list of your programs helps you prepare to switch to a new computer. As consumers we access to free downloads for programs like Adobe Reader, iTunes, Zoom, Google Chrome, Firefox, and many others.

Should I purchase anti-virus with my new computer?

- Super Mike's recommended Microsoft Security Essentials(Windows 7) or Windows Defender(Windows 10 and 11). This free anti-virus software is provided by Microsoft free of charge. It is also preinstalled on all Windows computers. If you choose to purchase a security software program you're likely wasting your money.

Warranty?

- Always up to the consumer but consider these facts. Computer manufacturers have been in the business for 30+ years and are making quality products. The 1 year warranty that's included with a new computer is for hardware failure only. Hardware failures happen but are not as common as software failures. Software failures (Windows errors, program errors, and viruses) are not covered in the 1 manufacture warranty. Most consumers go with the 1 year warranty and take their chances.

How do I setup my new computer for use?

- First, get your current computer backed up. This requires an external hard drive or USB flash drive. Second, get the new computer up and running. It's good practice to remove any preinstalled junk software on the computer. Third, install your programs and any external devices like printers or scanners. Finally, transfer your user data to the new computer. Computer setup can be a technical process. A new computer "out-of-the-box" needs to go through a setup process.

What to do with the old computer?

- The big rule is to remove the hard drive from the old computer before you dispose. The hard drive contains your user data and you should retain it. Best Buy has a recycling program and takes up to 3 items per visit. Some fees may apply for laptops, computer monitors, and TV's.

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