

Living with Cyber Tips for Selecting a Laptop



A laptop is **REQUIRED** for all students in the College of Engineering and Science (COES). Recommended laptop specifications for Living *with* Cyber may slightly differ from COES specifications and are listed below:

Recommended System:

- PC with a recent version of Windows (8 or 10 is recommended) or a Debian-based Linux (Linux Mint is recommended) – 64-bit operating system required
- Intel or AMD with SSE2 support (e.g., Intel Core, Core 2, i5, i7; AMD K8, Phenom CPUs)
- 8 GB of RAM (minimum)
- 240 GB hard disk (or solid state) drive (minimum)
- 12-inch display (or larger) recommended
- 2 USB ports (recommended)
- WiFi capability*
- SD card reader* (recommended)
- Ethernet port* (recommended)
- Netbooks are **not** recommended

Instructor's System (in case you're curious):

- PC with Linux Mint 17.3 “Rosa” (Xfce desktop); see <http://www.xfce.org/>
- 2.5 GHz (dual core) processor
- 8 GB of RAM
- 512 GB solid state drive
- 17.3-inch display
- 5 USB ports
- WiFi capability
- SD card reader
- Ethernet port

Notes:

1. Please remember that your laptop will often go wherever you go, so think twice before purchasing a heavy laptop. However, the space of a larger laptop is often useful when programming. Also, it may be worth the investment to purchase a battery that provides extended life. Note that, when running on battery power, a laptop is considerably slower.
2. If you will be purchasing a new laptop, models starting around \$500 are acceptable. Purchasing a \$1,500 laptop will generally not help you be more successful. Upgrades that make sense: increasing RAM, upgrading to a solid state drive.
3. If you come to Louisiana Tech with an Apple (e.g., a Mac), please note that software installation and hooking up to the Raspberry Pi may be more involved and perhaps even problematic. In some COES courses, booting into Windows is required, since much of the software is Windows-based. If you do have an Apple, please note that technical support from your instructor will not be possible nor provided.
4. If you plan to use an older laptop, we recommend that you arrive at Louisiana Tech with a fresh installation of a recommended operating system. A computer service center in your town or a computer savvy friend should be able to help you with this installation if you have difficulty.
5. We recommend that you use your computer primarily for academic purposes. If you choose to load a variety of games, movies, and other media files, you may experience diminished computer performance.
6. The installation of anti-virus/anti-malware software is strongly encouraged before students arrive, particularly if you select Windows as your operating system. There are many **free** options.

* If your laptop does not have this internally, a USB adapter (purchased separately) works fine.

Software:

Word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software are required. Of course, MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint work if using Windows; however, LibreOffice Writer, Calc, and Impress are recommended **FREE** alternatives (for Linux, Mac, and even Windows). These should be installed before coming to Louisiana Tech.