

ARCHITECTURE | Computer Guidelines

Guidance on Computer Acquisitions for Undergraduate Architecture Students

As a new design student entering the first year, studios and courses will not require the full capacity of the computer specifications described below. The student will need to be able to run Zoom, Adobe Creative Cloud and Autocad in the first year. A laptop computer, webcam, scanner and good camera will be required as early as the first week of the first semester. Check course requirements. A smartphone with a good camera and following the procedures described in University tutorials can be effective in documenting work. *The investment in a good workstation and large screen monitor is recommended as soon as possible and before the second year.*

If this is a new purchase, we recommend getting a “desktop computer” over a “laptop”, as they can be upgraded in the future as needed, and allows the student to get as large a monitor as possible – we recommend at least 24” or larger.

For students who prefer Apple computers, we recommend the Macbook Pro attached to a larger monitor, or an iMac Pro, and will need to purchase and install Windows 10 separately. This will require a minimum of 16Gb memory.

Recommended Specifications for Undergrad Online Student

Windows 10 Operating System

Processor/CPU : Intel i7 (minimum) i9 (preferable)

RAM : 16GB +

Graphics Card / GPU : Nvidia Quadro or Nvidia GTX series with 4GB or more on-board memory,

Hard Drive : Solid-State (SSD) with 256GB or more to load the OS and software, with an additional 1TB or more conventional hard drive for general storage

Typically when searching for a computer for work, we recommend including the term "Workstation" in the searches; this is a class of computer built to handle high software loads and long running time. However, due to their more powerful hardware they are more expensive than a typical off-the-shelf PC. They are almost always only available made-to-order online through the manufacturer's website. Some of the ones we would look for as a base for comparison are the following, but it does not have to be one of these specific models.

Desktop System options:

Dell Precision Fixed Workstations

HP G4 / G8 Workstations

Lenovo ThinkStation

Workstation Laptop options:

Dell Precision

MSi Stealth / MSi WS-series

HP ZBook

Razer Blade Pro