Connecting Personal Computers @ Lehigh

Worldwide, personal computers have become integral to the process of research and learning. On campus, Library & Technology Services (LTS) provides over 600 computers in labs across campus for student use. All students who bring personal computing devices to campus automatically have access to services provided by the STARS (Student Technology and Repair Services) Team. The services provided by the STARS team is free to all Lehigh students.

Benefits

Direct, High-speed Access to the Internet and Lehigh Network (LAN)

Our campus network backbone employs multiple links to the Internet and offers speeds that range from 80-160Gbps. With this high-speed, high-capacity network students can expect to experience performance that greatly exceeds home-based connections (DSL/Cable) on both wired and wireless devices.

Microsoft Office

The latest versions of the MS Office suite for Windows and Mac are available to all Lehigh students. The suite includes Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Access. Information on how to download and install MS Office will be sent to students by August 1.

Microsoft Software

Microsoft Azure Dev Tools for Teaching is a service that provides access to a variety of Microsoft software for learning, teaching and research purposes. This software includes all versions of Windows, Visual Studio and many other popular Microsoft applications. Information about registering for this service and how to access it will be sent to all students before classes begin.

File Storage Space

- 10 GB of backup-protected Lehigh LAN disk space (H: Drive)
- 25 GB Lehigh Google Drive cloud storage space
- 5 TB Microsoft OneDrive for Business cloud storage space
- 5 TB Lehigh Dropbox cloud storage space

Secure Wireless Networking

Students have access to Lehigh's secure wireless network which covers most locations on campus completely, including residence halls.

Assistance with Computer Problems

Students can receive 1-on-1 assistance with computer problems from specially-trained Student Technology Consultants.

What Kind of Computer to Bring to Lehigh

Most recent survey data shows that almost every Lehigh student brings his or her own computer to campus. Make sure that the computer you will be bringing to campus meets that minimum requirements for use at Lehigh.

Existing Computers

These specifications are the bare minimum specifications for a computer you have already owned for some time that you are planning to bring with you to campus. These requirements ensure that a computer will be able to run all the necessary software used in typical coursework.

New Computer Purchase

For those who are purchasing a new computer to bring to Lehigh, it is a wise to make an investment in a computer that will last through your time at Lehigh. While there are some differences in the specifications for new computers that can have a significant impact on long-term performance, most computers on the market today should meet these specifications easily at a reasonable price and provide acceptable longevity. Since the computer you purchase will likely be used for much more than just school-related work, the general recommended approach is to buy the computer that you will enjoy using for personal use but also meets Lehigh's recommended specifications.

Note: Chromebooks are not recommended as a primary device for coursework. While a Chromebook can be used for some course-related activities, they lack key features that traditional Windows/Mac devices offer and which may be required for some courses..

Personal Printers

Printers are available for student use at both libraries and most public site computer labs around campus. Students are given a generous printing allowance (up to 1,500 pages per year) to cover their printing needs. There is a nominal cost per page for printing once a student has used up his/her yearly allowance.
Minimum Computer Hardware Recommendations

Existing Computers

- Processor (CPU): 2.0GHz or higher
- Memory (RAM): 8GB or higher
- Hard Drive: 250GB or higher

New Computer Purchases

- Processor (CPU): 2.0GHz dual-core or higher
- Memory (RAM): 16GB
- Hard Drive: 500GB or higher

Supported Operating Systems

(in order to get the most assistance from support staff)

Mac

- Mac OS 12 (Monterey)
- Mac OS 11 (Big Sur)

Windows

- Windows 11
- Windows 10

Important Information About Purchasing a New Computer

Warranty Recommendations

Making sure to buy the proper warranty coverage for your new computer is critical - and can often mean the difference between whether or not your computer can be serviced by Lehigh's hardware technicians on-campus. Generally, in order to qualify for warranty repair by Lehigh, the recommended brand computer must have been purchased directly from the manufacturer, either by phone or through the manufacturer’s Web site. For computers purchased from retail stores such as Staples, Best Buy, Wal-Mart, etc., Lehigh typically cannot perform any type of in-warranty repair, because the warranties are provided by the store and not the manufacturer. In addition, most computer models sold in retail stores are consumer-line models which are not typically eligible for hardware repair support at Lehigh.

Most manufacturers offer extended warranty coverage as well as what is referred to as "accidental damage protection". For example, if you drop your computer off of your desk or spill liquid on the keyboard, these would be considered "accidental damage" as opposed to a part of the computer being simply “defective”. Accidental damage protection is usually offered separately from the standard extended warranty coverage. In some rare cases, a store like Best Buy may offer their own accidental damage coverage if the manufacturer does not. In all cases, it is best to research your warranty options carefully before making your final purchase. Lehigh recommends purchasing an extended warranty (3-4 years) with on-site service. Avoid depot service warranties as this requires the computer to be sent out to the manufacturer as opposed to receiving service on-site.

Hardware Repair at Lehigh

Lehigh is an authorized repair center for the following brands/models: Dell, Lenovo (business class), and Apple computers. Lehigh recommends these brands/models as students who own these computers and encounter hardware problems can have the computers serviced on campus without the delay involved in contacting the manufacturer's technical support.

PC vs. Mac

If you are on the fence about purchasing either a PC or a Mac, we've listed some quick facts about both platforms that you may find helpful to making your ultimate decision.

Read more detailed information about computer recommendations, brands, models, and warranties

Important Things To Do/Know

Before Arriving On Campus

Before arriving there are several steps you can take to prepare your computer for use at Lehigh. These steps include installing the University-recommended antivirus software, securing the computer for Internet access and choosing a method for backing up important data. The steps are covered in detail in the document: "Preparing & Securing Your Computer for Use at Lehigh".

In addition students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the main services offered by LTS - "12 Essential LTS Services Every Student Should Know".

During the School Year
If, during the school year, a student has a computer problem or question, assistance is available from the STARS Team. To obtain assistance a student simply needs to request help using the online request form on the STARS Web site, or visit the STARS Desk on the main floor of the EWFM Library.

Questions About STARS

Students and parents are encouraged to explore the STARS Web site for more information about the program. The Web site contains a First-year Student FAQ with answers to many of the typical questions that freshmen and parents have asked in the past. If you have specific questions please feel free to contact us directly.