Purchasing Personally-owned Computers

Frequently Asked Questions

What brand and model should I buy? Lehigh recommends purchasing a supported model from one of our recommended brands; Apple, Dell, or Lenovo. For Apple and Dell computers all models are fully supported for hardware repairs on campus. For Lenovo only business model computers are supported for on-campus hardware repair. Lenovo business model computers include Thinkpad and ThinkCentre lines.

Should I buy a Windows PC or a Mac? Both platforms are fully supported at Lehigh for student use. To help student decide which is the appropriate choice the STARS Team has a PC vs Mac document that lists the pros and cons of each platform.

Can I use a Chromebook at Lehigh? Chromebooks are not suitable to use are your only computing device. While a chromebook can be used for some coursework there are several Lehigh services critical to student academic work that will not work on these devices. All students should plan to bring either a Windows or Mac computer with them.

Is discounted pricing available from Apple, Dell and Lenovo? Yes, all 3 recommended vendors provide discounted pricing to Lehigh students. Use the links below to access the individual vendor purchasing pages.

How much of a discounted price do I get on computers purchased through this site? The amount of discount varies from 2%-6% on the different vendor sites and depends on the model computer selected. Computer vendors typically change pricing throughout the year so the percentage discount varies greatly. It is best to compare the pricing on a computer from the regular vendor web page with one configured through the Lehigh pages to see the price difference.

Do I need my own printer? LTS provides access to printers in both libraries and many computer labs across campus. However, many students find it convenient to get their own printer (inkjet or laser) to keep in their room.

Recommended Vendors Discounted Pricing

- Apple Personal Purchases
- Dell Personal Purchases
- Lenovo Personal Purchases

Warranties & Repair

The primary reason for LTS’s selection of recommended computer brands is that our Computer Repair Services team (CRS) technicians have been trained and certified to provide computer repair and upgrade services for those brands. These services are available for faculty, staff and students for both institutional and personal computers.

Be aware though, that the CRS technicians can only do in-warranty work on systems covered by manufacturer’s warranties, and depending on the vendor, they may be limited to working on only the business-line machines (Lenovo). Please refer to the CRS Policy for a complete description of the policy and procedures regarding computer repair and upgrades.

Selecting Warranties

Below are some guidelines you should consider when deciding on a warranty for a new computer.

1. Length of the warranty - Most vendors offer at least 3 or 4 year extended warranties. You should consider getting a warranty that will cover your computer during the period of time you'll be at Lehigh.
2. Accidental Damage Protection - This is an add-on option to a regular warranty that covers damage caused by accidents (spills, drops, etc) that a normal would not. This option is appropriate for higher priced laptops to cover the repair cost in the event of catastrophic accident.
3. Repair Options - Some manufacturers offer on-site and/or depot repair warranties. For Lehigh users on-site means that in most cases a hardware repair can be done on campus in our hardware repair department (CRS). With Depot repair warranties a computer must be sent back to the manufacturer for repair. LTS recommends getting an on-site warranty whenever possible.

Hardware Configurations

Below are LTS recommendations for configuring a new computer. These are not meant to be minimum requirements for use on Lehigh’s network, but rather they ensure that systems remain usable over a span of 4 years. Individuals should always consider their own specific needs and preferences when making the final decision on how their computer should be configured.

Note: Chromebooks are not recommended for student use at Lehigh. While they can do some of the everyday coursework tasks they have limitations that make them unsuitable as a students only computing device. Several Lehigh services critical to student academic work will not run on Chromebooks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Target</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operatin g System</td>
<td>Windows 10 or current version of Mac OS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processor</td>
<td>Intel core i5 or i7 CPU or AMD Ryzen CPU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>16 GB RAM (More for Media Work, additional OSs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Drive</td>
<td>250 GB (500+ for Desktops)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wireless</td>
<td>802.11n internal wireless card (laptop only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webcam</td>
<td>Internal built-in webcam for video conferencing and zoom meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printer</td>
<td>USB-connected small inkjet or laser printer (wi-fi printers will not work on Lehigh’s secured network.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warranty</td>
<td>3-4 yr. extended, from the manufacturer, with &quot;accidental damage protection&quot; for laptops, if available.</td>
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Options/Upgrades

- External USB hard drives for backup of data files.
- Internal hard drive larger than 256GB if you intend to store large data files or programs.
- Personal printer (inkjet or laser).
- Laptop users may benefit from several items including:
  - a carrying case that protects the machine while you travel to or around campus.

Operating Systems

Windows
Recent versions of Windows 10 are fully supported for student use at Lehigh. Older versions such as Windows 7 will not work on the Lehigh network.

Apple macOS

New Macs will come with latest version of macOS, which is fully supported by LTS.

Linux and Other Unix Flavors

In addition to Macs, there is a small number of Linux and other Unix-flavored machines in use on campus. Support for these systems is limited, but those using them are largely self-supporting.

Recommended Vendors

- Apple Personal Purchases
- Dell Personal Purchases
- Lenovo Personal Purchases
- a higher capacity battery, for longer times away from a power outlet.
- a Theft-Recovery program, such as LoJack for Laptops. Many students have benefited from this type of service. The Lehigh Police also offer laptop registration for free.