

Hardware Requirements

Please see below for the tier in which your program falls under. Below this chart will provide all the necessary items needed to purchase for the program.

Program	Tier
Graphic Design	3
Music Business Management	1
Video Production	3
Photography	2
Advertising	1
Interactive Media Design	3
Fine Art	1
Journalism	2
Web Development	3
Broadcast	3
Interior Decorating	4

DO

Consider purchasing the following in addition to your laptop:



- USB-C Dongle that includes port for HDMI, USB-A and (optional) Ethernet. You can view an example of this [HERE](#).
- Carrying case or backpack to properly protect your laptop and accessories.
- USB Thumb drive with at least 16GB of storage space.

DO NOT



Purchase any subscriptions or software as this may be included with your program. This includes but is not limited to:

- Adobe Creative Cloud
- Microsoft Office

1



Minimum

Processor: Intel Core i3 (12th Gen) or AMD Ryzen 3 5300U

GPU: Integrated (Intel UHD / AMD Vega)

RAM: 8GB DDR4

Storage: 256GB SSD

Display: Full HD 1080p



Recommended

Processor: Apple M2 (MacBook Air)

GPU: Integrated (M2 GPU)

RAM: 8GB unified memory

Storage: 256GB SSD

Display: Retina Display (2560x1600)

2



Minimum

Processor: Intel Core i5 (12th Gen) or AMD Ryzen 5 5600U

GPU: Dedicated (NVIDIA GTX 1650 / RTX 3050)

RAM: 16GB DDR4

Storage: 512GB SSD

Display: Full HD 1080p



Recommended

Processor: Apple M3 (MacBook Air or Pro)

GPU: Integrated (M3 GPU)

RAM: 16GB unified memory

Storage: 512GB SSD

Display: Retina Display (2560x1600)

3



Minimum

Processor: Intel Core i7 (13th Gen) or AMD Ryzen 7 7700X

GPU: NVIDIA RTX 4070 or higher / AMD RX 7900 XT

RAM: 32GB DDR5

Storage: 512GB SSD

Display: 1440p/4K



Recommended

Processor: Apple M3 Pro or M3 Max (MacBook Pro)

GPU: M3 Pro/Max integrated GPU

RAM: 36GB unified memory

Storage: 1TB SSD

Display: Retina Display (2560x1600)

4



Minimum

Processor: Intel Core i7 (11th Gen or newer) or AMD Ryzen 7 5800H

GPU: NVIDIA GeForce RTX 3060 (Laptop version) or AMD Radeon RX 6700M

RAM: 16 GB DDR4

Storage: 512 GB SSD

Display: Full HD 1080p



Recommended

Processor: Intel Core i9 (13th Gen or newer) or AMD Ryzen 9

GPU: NVIDIA GeForce RTX 4080 or better

RAM: 32 GB DDR5

Storage: 1 TB NVMe SSD

Display: QHD (2560x1440) or 4K

For more information or additional help please reach out to Conner Pulis (conner.pulis@durhamcollege.ca) for assistance.

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

1. Do I need to purchase a specific brand of computer?

No, you're not required to purchase a specific brand. However, for compatibility with course software and support, we recommend Apple MacBooks or PCs that meet our minimum hardware requirements. Please see the tier list breakdown above for more info.

2. Can I use a Windows PC instead of a Mac?

It depends on your program. Some creative and media programs use Mac-only software or workflows while others only use PC. If you're unsure, please check with Conner Pulis (conner.pulis@durhamcollege.ca) before purchasing.

3. What if I already own a laptop? Can I use that?

Yes, **if it meets or exceeds our minimum specs**. Please refer to the Tier chart and ensure your device can run required applications smoothly. If you're unsure, contact Conner Pulis (conner.pulis@durhamcollege.ca) with your device model/specs. More info at the bottom.

4. Is 8GB of RAM enough?

For basic tasks (web browsing, email, word processing), **8GB is sufficient**. However, for design, editing, or media production work, we recommend **16GB or more** to ensure performance and stability.

5. What about Chromebooks or iPads?

Chromebooks and iPads are not supported. They are not compatible with several required applications (e.g., Adobe Creative Cloud, Maya, etc.). However, they can be useful as secondary devices for note-taking or mobile use.

6. Can I upgrade an existing laptop instead of buying a new one?

Possibly. You may be able to upgrade the **RAM** or **storage** on some older laptops. However, CPUs and GPUs are generally not upgradable. If your device is more than 4–5 years old, replacement may be more cost-effective in the long run.

7. What if I can't afford the recommended specs?

We understand that technology can be a significant investment. Please reach out to us and we can look into possible solutions to help you be successful in your program.

9. Are there student discounts for hardware purchases?

Yes! Apple, Dell, Lenovo, and other manufacturers offer **educational discounts**. You can also check with our campus bookstore or IT department for any institution-specific offers or bundles.