

Student Computer Recommendations

Duke University is committed to creating a Computer and Information Technology Intensive Environment (CITIE) and preparing its students for a technology-based future. As a Duke student, you will find that technology will be an integral part of your day-to-day life. With this in mind, a group of faculty, students, and representatives from Duke's Office of Information Technology (OIT) has developed a set of computer recommendations.

Please note that while computers will not be *required* for incoming students before Fall 2002, owning a computer of your own is recommended and will make your life at Duke easier. Computer labs containing Macintoshes, Windows PCs, and Unix workstations are available throughout campus. For more information on labs, visit <http://www.oit.duke.edu/labs>.

DukeNet - on-campus connections

Every dorm room at Duke is wired for high-speed Ethernet connection to DukeNet. DukeNet is the campus-wide network that connects residence halls, campus apartments, libraries, computer labs and teaching facilities to a wide array of technology resources. To connect your computer to DukeNet, an Ethernet adapter is required. A modem is not necessary for access from dorm rooms. If you plan to purchase a computer before coming to Duke, please choose one that meets the minimum configuration detailed below. Upon your arrival, you will receive a DukeNet Tools CD-ROM which contains a set of standard DukeNet software such as an anti-virus program, e-mail client, and web browser.

Losing the leash: A wireless pilot program

OIT is piloting a wireless program which enables students to access DukeNet from mobile computing devices such as laptops or Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) without being physically connected to the network. To see a detailed listing of wireless locations and additional information, visit <http://www.oit.duke.edu/access/wireless>.

Computer recommendations

If you plan to purchase a new computer before coming to campus or when you arrive, the following *minimum* configuration should meet your needs for your time at Duke.

Computer systems and Ethernet adapters sold by the Duke Computer Store are guaranteed to be DukeNet-compatible. The Duke Computer Store offers excellent pricing and guaranteed plug and play technology. To see a detailed selection of supported, educationally priced computer systems and Ethernet adapters, visit their homepage at <http://www.dukestores.duke.edu/cpustore>. All systems sold through the Duke Computer Store are eligible for financing through the Duke Computer Purchase Plan.

Laptop computers

IBM-PC compatible

- 600 MHz processor
- 128MB RAM
- 10GB hard drive
- 10/100 PCMCIA Ethernet card (if not included)
- Windows ME/2000 or higher, Linux/Unix
- CD-ROM, DVD-ROM or CD-RW
- *optional wireless Ethernet card

Apple Macintosh

- 400 MHz PowerPC processor
- 128MB RAM
- 10GB hard drive
- 10/100 Ethernet card (if not included)
- CD-ROM, DVD-ROM or CD-RW
- Mac OS 9 or higher
- *optional AirPort card

Desktop computers

IBM-PC compatible

- 833 MHz processor
- 128MB RAM
- 20GB hard drive
- 17" monitor
- preinstalled 10/100 Ethernet card
- CD-ROM, DVD-ROM or CD-RW
- Windows ME/2000 or higher, Linux/Unix

Apple Macintosh

- 533 MHz PowerPC processor
- 128MB RAM
- 20GB hard drive
- 17" monitor
- preinstalled 10/100 Ethernet card
- CD-ROM, DVD-ROM or CD-RW
- Mac OS 9 or higher

If you plan to bring an older computer, we suggest it have at least the specifications listed below. Please note that a computer meeting these specifications may not serve you adequately past your first year or two at Duke.

Laptop computers (older)

IBM-PC compatible

233 MHz processor
64MB RAM
4GB hard drive
10BaseT PCMCIA Ethernet card
CD-ROM
Windows 98

Apple Macintosh

233 MHz processor
64MB RAM
4GB hard drive
10BaseT Ethernet card
CD-ROM
Mac OS 8.1 or higher

Desktop computers(older)

IBM-PC compatible

400 MHz processor
64MB RAM
4GB hard drive
10/100 Ethernet card
CD-ROM
Windows 98

Apple Macintosh

300 MHz processor
64MB RAM
4GB hard drive
10BaseT Ethernet card
CD-ROM
Mac OS 8.1 or higher

Important things to consider

An older computer may be adequate for your first year or two at Duke, but we recommend you bring a computer that will last your entire four years. There are several aspects to consider when deciding whether to bring your current computer to campus. They include, but are not limited to:

Operating systems: OIT supports Windows 95/98/ME, Windows NT/2000 or higher, and Macintosh OS 8.1 or higher. An older computer may not be equipped for a newer operating system. Visit http://www.oit.duke.edu/standards/student_recs/operating_systems.html for more information.

Ethernet cards vs. modem cards: An ethernet card is required to gain access to DukeNet while on campus. We recommend 3Com Ethernet cards. If you feel that you also need a modem or an ethernet/modem combination card, please visit http://www.oit.duke.edu/standards/student_recs/ethernet.html for more information about the cards that work with DukeNet and the Duke modem pool. Additionally, for a list of off-campus Internet access options, visit http://www.oit.duke.edu/remote_access.

Wireless laptop cards are also available at the Duke Computer Store and are supported by OIT. Visit the wireless access page at <http://www.oit.duke.edu/access/wireless> for more information.

Processor speed & RAM: Current operating systems and newer versions of popular software require higher processor speeds and more RAM than previous versions. Visit http://www.oit.duke.edu/standards/student_recs/new_old.html for more information.

Hard disk size: Current operating systems and software require more space to be installed and to run than previous versions. Visit http://www.oit.duke.edu/standards/student_recs/new_old.html for more information.

Storage media: Many newer computers are available with special disk drives, such as Zip or SuperDisk drives that you can use for backup and transfer of files. These drives are also available in the computer labs, should you need to work on your files there. CD-RWs (CD burners) can also be a useful alternative to a standard CD-ROM. CDs are capable of storing more data than a standards Zip disk or SuperDisk, and cost less. Visit http://www.oit.duke.edu/standards/student_recs/storage_media.html for more information.

Support

OIT provides on-site support for many computing problems to on-campus freshman and upperclassmen, which includes assistance with connecting to DukeNet. If you purchase your computer before coming to Duke, be sure to bring along all documentation, warranty information, software CDs, and disks that are included with it. OIT may not be able to support your computer without these resources. Additionally, Duke Computer Repair offers full warranty and non-warranty hardware support for Dell, Apple, IBM and other computers. For more information, visit their web site at <http://www.dukestores.duke.edu/cpufix>.

For more information, visit the Student Computer Recommendations web site at http://www.oit.duke.edu/standards/student_recs.