

New PC Specifications

Use these general specifications when shopping for a new PC. They apply equally to desktops and laptops.

Component	Notes
Processor	Intel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for Intel i-series processors. The i5 is the sweet spot where you get best performance without spending too much If you are looking at a processor outside the i-series, such as Dual-Core or Quad-Core, look for a processor number greater than 5000 (examples: a 2200 will be too slow, a 7600 will be fast) Avoid Celeron
	AMD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AMD markets their products based on price/performance so most will be fast Avoid Sempron
Operating System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Windows 7 Home Premium or Pro 64 bit Pro is only really needed if the computer will be part of a domain or you want to run XP compatibility mode Avoid Basic (lacks Aero user interface and Media Center) Avoid Ultimate (only useful for encryption)
Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4GB minimum (more is better) Memory refers to system memory and the more you have the faster your system will run (to a point anyway)
Hard Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 250GB minimum (more is better) Consider RAID configurations for business or gaming computers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAID 0 uses 2 hard drives to boast performance usually for gaming or video editing. If either drive fails, you lose everything. RAID 1 uses 2 drives as mirror images and protects against a single drive failure. If one drive fails the other kicks in.
DVD Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DVD/RW (single drive) Avoid Blu-ray (unless you use Blu-ray discs)
Graphics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated is better than Integrated Windows 7 features a 3D graphical interface. Therefore you need powerful graphics processing to get good performance. It is no longer the case that only gamers need powerful 3D performance. Dedicated graphics boost performance because all graphics functions are handled by a separate graphics processor PCs with dedicated graphics cards or chips will mention Nvidia or ATI graphics