

Computing Services

The Office of Information Resources and Technology

The computer market today experiences an extremely fast turnover time, almost as fast as processor speeds themselves. Most of us use our smartphones, tablets, and netbooks more than our laptops. While we agree that these newer devices are convenient and even cool, your academic experience will be much enhanced with a “good old-fashioned” laptop!

Since 1983, Drexel has required all students to have access to a personal computer, the first University in the country to do so. With your computer you can check email, participate in online courses, collaborate on projects and papers, and do research in our libraries and on the Internet. As the digital world has expanded, providing more resources and opportunities, it has also increased in its complexity and in the speed with which new resources become available. The question, however, always is, “What kind of computer should I buy?” Below is a summary of what you should bring to Drexel and what services you can take advantage of while you are here.

Computer Requirements

www.drexel.edu/irt/DownloadsAndComputers

Drexel recommends that students purchase computers that meet criteria not just for today’s computing needs, but for those of the next few years. While you will get good use out of your mobile device, it is as important today as in 1983 to have personal access to a fully featured computer. IRT offers recommendations which are keyed to the current marketplace and our specific campus infrastructure. We strongly recommend that you verify specific platform or model requirements with your program’s department. Some components, such as the Wi-Fi or the video card, might need to meet a particular specification, but the brand or the size is a personal preference. You can refer to our recommendations for guidelines.

A laptop is highly recommended because it gives you the mobility offered by Drexel’s campus-wide wireless network. If you live on campus, you also will need to purchase an Ethernet cable for the wired in-house network. Our website, www.drexel.edu/irt/computers, has links to some vendor websites where you can shop for and purchase hardware at higher-education pricing. Make sure that the hardware and warranty you choose will last throughout the next five years.

IRT has a special phone number and email address for questions regarding computer selection; the number is 215-895-5855. The email address is computer@drexel.edu.

Software Requirements

IRT makes it easy to obtain productivity software in two ways: through free downloads of licensed software, or through discounted purchases of fully featured media. For instructions and access to our download server, visit www.drexel.edu/irt/software.

You can choose a free download of Symantec Endpoint Protection (antivirus and intrusion-protection) software. Every computer on the campus network should have it installed. You can also obtain various licensed academic software packages which might be required in your curriculum. As new versions of our licensed software are released by product publishers, we make them available on the above site.

Through discount partnerships, IRT provides additional methods of obtaining application software and an optional remote backup service. Find these in DrexelOne, the Drexel online portal, on the tab labeled “drexel” at <http://one.drexel.edu>.

- From JourneyEd, you can purchase Adobe products, Quark Xpress, obtain free Microsoft DreamSpark, and other education-discounted software not already included in Drexel’s distribution license.
- From Connected Backup/PC you can purchase backup/recovery service at various price points to help you avoid an unfortunate loss of data and information.

Computer labs on campus are also equipped with the software necessary for any classes held in them.

Picking Up Your Computer Accounts

As a Drexel student, you are entitled to several computer accounts, including email and access to the DrexelOne portal. For details, please visit www.drexel.edu/irt/accounts.

Internet Access

DragonFly – Drexel's Wireless Network

DragonFly, Drexel's secure, high-performance wireless network, is available throughout the University, and it makes use of the fourth and most current generation of Wi-Fi CERTIFIED™ technology. To optimize wireless laptop performance, be sure your laptop is equipped with wireless support for 802.11n Wi-Fi with a dual band (2.4 and 5 Ghz) wireless radio.

Older generation devices using Wi-Fi a/b/g are also supported, but these devices offer reduced performance and less signal reception. For instructions on how to configure your wireless device, connect to the DrexelGuest network or visit <http://dragonfly.drexel.edu>.

For more information on how to use our wireless network, registration, features, and equipment, see www.drexel.edu/irt/networks/wireless.

On Campus

Students who will live in one of Drexel's residence halls can use both wired and wireless networks. The wired network is more than 10x faster than wireless, so it's worth bringing an Ethernet cable to campus. Each term, when you first use the wired jack, you'll see a setup website that records your user-ID and checks your computer for a firewall and up-to-date antivirus software. After that, it's smooth sailing at high speed.

Off Campus

If you don't already have Internet access where you will live during the school year, you should get it because you will need it to access academic, research, and other electronic resources at Drexel. The security scan that is performed in the residence halls isn't available off campus. If you need to access a network resource that's only available on campus, IRT will provide you with VPN software that makes your computer look as if it is.

Security

Students whose computers remain unsecured run the risk of infecting their computers, infecting other computers on the network, and ultimately having their network access suspended. It's your responsibility to keep your computer secure by applying security and other computer updates soon after they become available.

Peer-to-Peer Downloading and Sharing

Software to download music, videos, games, and apps is easy to come by, but comes with risks. It is a violation of both University policy and federal law to share such

copyrighted material without permission of the copyright holder. Virtually everything worth using, watching, or listening to is copyrighted. Most P2P software automatically shares out your downloads, so it's easy to accidentally violate the law. Penalties can be very high (University fines or suspension; lawsuit fines up to \$100,000 per file). Don't install P2P apps unless you really know what they do and your plans are only to trade non-copyrighted materials or copyrighted materials for which you have the right of redistribution.

Online Learning

Many courses at Drexel are delivered either fully online or contain components that are delivered online. Instructors can choose to activate their course space at the beginning of each term. Many instructors will post informational content such as syllabi and course notes that you can then access 24 hours a day. Other uses may include assignment collection, test delivery, and resource collection. You can access online course spaces from the course lists on the student tab in the DrexelOne portal.

The Online Learning Team of IRT supports and trains users in this system. The team staffs the Instructional Technology Center in Korman and maintains a helpdesk specifically for questions about use of the online learning tools.

The OLT is located in Korman 109 and can be reached at 215-895-1224. You can learn more about using Blackboard Learn on our website at <http://www.drexel.edu/irt/help/resourcesStudent>.

For More Information

IRT maintains a robust website at www.drexel.edu/irt, and publishes the IRT Tech Update each term. Each of these information sources announces new services and applications, additions or changes in policy, online learning information, and tech tips and tricks. On the website you can report a problem or chat with a student tech consultant. Your first copy of Tech Update will arrive in September in your Drexel email. You can view current and previous issues at www.drexel.edu/irt/news/publications.

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