

A Guide to the College of Art First-Year Student Computer Recommendations 2021-2022 Academic Year

1. When is a computer needed for first-year students? When is software needed?

We require that you acquire a computer and software at the start of your first year. Instruction in digital technologies will begin at the start of the first semester.

We encourage you to plan ahead to make sure the system is working properly and all software has been loaded before classes begin in the fall.

2. Which computer systems and platforms are recommended for incoming first-year students?

The Sam Fox School recommends either an Apple MacBook Pro laptop or Windows laptop. Based on industry standards, our College of Art curriculum uses software that is designed for both platforms; however, the professional design and art practice industries continue to be primarily Apple-based.

3. What should I do if I can't afford to purchase a computer/software at this time?

We understand that some students may need assistance in purchasing a computer. If you would like to learn more about your options, we encourage you to speak with a counselor in Student Financial Services (SFS). Counselors can be reached at 314.935.5900, 888.547.6670, or financial@wustl.edu.

4. Can I use a computer/software I already have?

Yes. However, a well-performing computer and software are critical for the completion of studio projects over a 4-year college career. Beginning in the first year, we *strongly encourage* your computer to match or exceed the requirements we specify in Item 8, and be loaded with the software programs for studio instruction (see Item 9). If you do not have the recommended hardware and software, it will impact your course work.

5. Will I receive any training from the Sam Fox School?

There will be workshops at the start of the academic year that will include:

- Network connections for Internet and printing
- Best practices for computer, software use, maintenance, backups, and installation
- Tours of resources throughout the facilities

In addition, our [Information Technology team](#) is available for one-on-one consultation by appointment. Students may also contact WashU's [Student Technology Services](#) team, located near the residential halls, for support. Course-related software training will be provided in various courses.

6. Will a computer last for all four years at the Sam Fox School?

The standard life of a laptop computer is three years with good care and maintenance. It is possible, if you purchase a computer in your first year, that a new computer may be required in your senior year in order to complete your area of study. This is especially true in the areas of communication design, fashion design, and photography, which rely on technology that demands significant speed and memory space. However, how you care for your computer will impact its life span.

7. Are there recommended vendors we should contact?

Optional vendors that provide educational discounts are listed with each item of required hardware and software (Items 8 and 9). You may also purchase the required software at samfox.onthehub.com

8. What is the recommended hardware for first-year students?

These are standard manufacturer specifications as of spring 2021. From time to time, manufacturers might update specifications. Students are welcome to use any local or national retailers to find the best fit for their budget within the listed specifications. If you have questions about specifications, please contact Richard Viehmann at 314.935.9286 or viehmann@wustl.edu.

Minimum requirements

Display: 15-inch minimum (newer model is 16" which is good)

Operating System: Mac OS X or Windows 10

CPU: 2.6GHz 6-core 9th-generation Intel Core i7 processor (or more GHz if able)

RAM: 16 GB DDR3L SDRAM (32 GB is best)

Disk Space: 512 GB Solid State Storage (or more if wanted)

Graphics Card: Radeon or NVIDIA with 4 GB memory

Resolution: 2880 by 1800 native resolution at 220 pixels

Warranty: Standard 3-year or Safeware 4-year Protection Plan

External Back Up: 2 TB or more external drive (for backup)

Adapter: USB-C Digital AV Multiport Adapter (USBC, HDMI and USB 3.0 connections)

Optional Vendor: <http://www.wubookstore.com>

9. What is the recommended software for first-year students?

Adobe® Creative Cloud®

We now provide Adobe at a cost of \$50 per year, which is billed to your student account and a license emailed to you in August of each year. This a required cost through the University and represents a \$200 annual discount over traditional pricing.

(includes the following)

Photoshop, Lightroom, Illustrator, InDesign, Experience Design (Beta), Adobe Premiere Pro, After Effects, Project Felix, Dreamweaver, Acrobat Pro, Adobe Muse, Animate, Adobe Audition, Bridge, Character Animator (Beta), Media Encoder, Fuse (Beta), Flash Builder, InCopy, Prelude, Adobe Spark, Scout, Story Plus, PhoneGap Build, Creative Cloud, Gaming SDK, Extension Manager, ExtendScript Toolkit

Microsoft Office Suite (free for WashU students)

Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook

Vendor: <http://email.wustl.edu/office-apps/>

Optional Vendor: <http://www.wubookstore.com>

10. What is recommended in the junior year for communication design?

Desk-side presentations of work and viewing design and illustration work at a large scale are important parts of the curricular experience in communication design. You are *strongly encouraged* to secure the following items to support your experience in the communication design program at the start of your junior year:

27-inch 4 K Display External Monitor (optional, but extremely helpful for video work)

Laptop Lock (often difficult to acquire depending on your hardware selection, but recommended)

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Monitor Lock
Surge Protector
Photo Scanner Epson v370 (8.5 by 11 inches) (optional but recommended)
1 TB (or more) external back up

11. What is recommended in the junior year for fashion design?

WACOM tablet (Medium) or iPad Pro with Apple Pen
Surge Protector
Laptop Lock (optional)
2 TB or more external backup drive (optional)

12. What is recommended in the junior year for photography?

1 TB or more external backup drive

13. What is recommended in the junior year for time-based + media art?

2 TB or more external back up (optional)
Apple platform is strongly recommended (optional)
Additional film and sound editing software can be purchased with an educational discount such as Final Cut Pro or Logic Pro (optional)
Surge protector
Professional headphones (for example Sony MGR 7506) (optional)