Laptop Requirement: Technical Specifications and Guidelines

As artists and designers, you will be working in an increasingly digital landscape. The Parsons curriculum addresses this by making digital literacy a foundational component of first-year coursework. Parsons requires all new first-year students to have a laptop for in-class and at-home use related to their studies. The requirement ensures that all students share a consistent learning experience as they develop their digital skill set.

This document provides information about approved laptop models as well as a detailed list of minimum and recommended specifications.

All new first-year students are required to check in their laptops for logging and verification via laptopcheck.newschool.edu. If you do not have a laptop that meets the minimum specifications, you will be expected to upgrade accordingly—this may involve purchasing new components to modify your configuration or purchasing a new laptop.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do I need a laptop that meets such high technical specifications?
— Your first-year courses require the use of multiple Adobe software applications—even at a minimum, these applications demand a high level of computer performance to function smoothly. Adobe also updates their products regularly, so it is ideal for your laptop to meet high enough specifications to last throughout your time at Parsons.

Do I have to buy Adobe Creative Suite too?
— No. Please do not purchase any Adobe software. The university provides new students at Parsons with a full subscription to Adobe Creative Cloud, the latest software suite released by Adobe. (Creative Cloud is also installed throughout our campus computer labs.) Your Creative Cloud subscription will continue throughout your four years at Parsons and for one year following graduation, at no additional cost to you. You’ll receive access to your subscription when you arrive on campus.

Can I use the laptop I already own for my classes?
— If you are considering using your current laptop to fulfill Parsons’ requirement, you must ensure that it meets the minimum specifications. To assess this, check your hardware by visiting laptopcheck.newschool.edu and running the system requirements application provided there. If your laptop does not meet these standards, you are expected to reconfigure it as needed or purchase a new one before classes begin.

Does it matter if I use a Mac or a PC?
— It is generally a matter of preference to select a Mac or PC. However, note that in the School of Constructed Environments, (Interior Design, Architecture and Product Design) the preferred platform is PC.

Is there anything else I need to be prepared in terms of technology?
— It is recommended that you have an external hard drive (at least 1 TB) for storage and backup.

Are there any discounts available through Parsons and The New School?
— If you are interested in purchasing an Apple laptop, be sure to visit The New School’s Apple Store for Education site, which provides a discount on Apple products. Other technology discounts available through The New School can be found on the Information Technology Deals page.*

*Please note that these companies offer discounts on many computer models that do NOT meet our requirements. And many attractive features, like color, lightweight and portability are not to be prioritized over the capacity to run programs.

PLEASE HAVE THE TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS LISTED ON THE NEXT PAGE WITH YOU DURING PURCHASE AND CONFIRM THAT YOUR SELECTED ITEM MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specifications</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED Specifications for those who are choosing to purchase a new laptop. These guidelines are based on the level of standard recommended in many programs at Parsons.</th>
<th>MINIMUM Specifications for those who are choosing not to buy a new laptop and want to bring an existing laptop to school. Updating to the RECOMMENDED standards may be required in the course of the Parsons education.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPU</td>
<td>Intel® i5 or i7 7thGen 2.2GHz or faster, or AMD equivalent</td>
<td>Intel® i5 or i7 6th Gen 2.0GHz or faster, or AMD equivalent</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAM</td>
<td>16 GB or Higher</td>
<td>8 GB or Higher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Storage</td>
<td>512 GB SSD Drive (Solid State Drive) or Higher</td>
<td>256 GB SSD Drive (Solid State Drive) or Higher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Video Card</td>
<td>Discrete video card with 2GB of RAM or More. Avoid “integrated” as those feature video on the motherboard which negatively impacts performance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wireless</td>
<td>802.11n or newer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Display</td>
<td>13 inch with 1920 x 1080 resolution or greater</td>
<td>13 inch with 1280 x 800 resolution or greater</td>
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