



Technology for New Students Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need a computer on campus?

The quick answer is no. Students are not required to bring a computer with them to campus. There are over 200 computers available in public areas on campus that students may use including the library lab (open until 1am most days) and a 24-hour lab. However, most students find the convenience of having a computer in their room extremely beneficial. Computers have become the number one communication tool and help students keep in contact with each other. Students will, at times, find themselves having to visit a computer lab whether or not they have their own computer. Some software or hardware is only available in a computer lab and it would be cost prohibitive for students to purchase it themselves.

Should I buy a Windows computer or a Macintosh computer?

Approximately 90% of the computers purchased by the college are Windows-based Dell and the other 10% are Macintosh. ITS supports both platforms on the network, but most of the focus is on Windows computers due to the higher number. Students should purchase the computer they are most comfortable with.

Should I buy a laptop or a desktop?

There are really two factors that drive this decision: cost and portability. Desktops are generally cheaper, provide more computing power, have a larger screen, and are significantly cheaper than a laptop. On the other hand, laptops are much more portable and allow students to take it to class, the library, or just outside. There is also the added convenience of being able to take a laptop home over breaks. Unfortunately, with this portability also comes a higher likelihood of damage. For this reason, ITS strongly recommends that students who purchase laptops also purchase a warranty that covers accidental damage (i.e. Dell's CompleteCare). Additionally, the computer should be treated with the same security as cash, don't leave it sitting unattended and remember to keep it locked up when not in use – use a security cable.

What about these new netbooks?

A netbook is an ultraportable computer. These netbooks provide extended battery life, are extremely low weight, can easily be transported, and generally cost a fraction of a standard laptop. With these advantages also come some disadvantages. First, the screens are generally smaller (approximately 9/10") and the keyboards are smaller as well. Second, these devices are generally less powerful. They have slower processors, can handle less memory, and have smaller hard drives. With this in mind, the netbooks work on the network as would any other laptop or desktop. You should balance the needs of the computer against the extra portability when choosing to purchase a netbook or a laptop.

Should I buy Windows XP or Windows Vista?

We anticipate that all college computers will be upgraded from Windows XP by the time the class of 2013 graduates. Therefore, we recommend that new computers are purchased with Windows Vista. This would allow students to use the same computer for all 4 years without having to upgrade the operating system. If you find yourself more comfortable using Windows XP, you may do so; both are currently supported on our network.

What do I need to connect my computer to the network?

An Ethernet card is required to connect to the college's network. Almost all new computers will have an Ethernet card already in them. You will also need an Ethernet cable (25' recommended) which can be purchased at any computer store or the college's bookstore.

Is there wireless Internet available on campus?

Most of the academic buildings and each of the residence hall lobbies are covered by the college's wireless network. In areas that are not covered by wireless (such as the student rooms, there are adequate wired network connections to plug in computers. The wireless network will support 802b/g wireless cards. Configuration instructions and specific locations of coverage can be found on the [ITS Wireless Access webpage](#). Please note it is against the college's acceptable use policy to install your own wireless router, access point, or gateway.

Should I buy Antivirus software?

Students should not purchase antivirus software. ITS requires that all computers on the network run Symantec Antivirus Corporate Edition and Webroot Spysweeper. ITS provides this software for free and it will be available for installation when students arrive on campus in the fall. If you plan to use the computer over the summer, ITS recommends you get a free trial version of antivirus software. These are generally available from most manufacturers when you purchase the computer. Please note that you will need to uninstall this trial version before installing the required software.

What other software should I buy?

Students will find themselves writing papers and creating presentations for many of the classes they take. Therefore, it is strongly suggested that students purchase Microsoft Office 2007 (Microsoft Office 2008 for the Mac). As a student, they are eligible for an academic discount on the software. Through the college's software contract, students may purchase Microsoft Office from JourneyEd. (<http://www.journeyed.com/select>) JourneyEd's current price for the professional edition is approximately \$80. (MSRP: \$499.95).

Are discounts available on the computers too?

Yes. Through the college's purchasing agreements with Dell and Apple, students are eligible for a small discount (5-8%). These discounts can be accessed through the Bookstore's website at <http://www.etown.edu/computers>.

What other software should I install before arriving on campus?

All computers connected to the network are also required to have the most current updates for their operating system. To save time when registering your computer in the fall, ITS recommends that you install any updates during the summer. Windows users can get their updates from <http://www.windowsupdate.com> and Macintosh Users should go to the Apple Menu and select Software Update. It is good practice to regularly check for new updates. *These updates are as critical to your computer as running antivirus software.*

Do I get a college e-mail account?

All students are provided with a college e-mail account (@etown.edu). These accounts are considered the official method of electronic correspondence and students are required to check this e-mail account on a regular basis. Students will be provided with their account information (username and password) during summer orientation. All official correspondence after summer orientation will be sent only to these accounts. Students can check their e-mail via the web at <http://mail.etown.edu>.

Does the college provide network storage?

Each student received 100MB of storage on the network in their "Public and Private" folders. These folders can be used to access files from anywhere on the campus network. Additionally, the public folders are often used to share files between students working in a group. Students also receive 35MB of storage for a website.

Do I need to bring a printer to campus?

Every lab has a high speed laser printer available and there are also eXpress print stations available throughout the campus. Students are allocated 500 black and white printed pages per semester. Almost every student prints fewer pages than their quota. If students do use their quota, additional pages can be purchased for five cents. Printing that is done for clubs, organizations, or a department does not count toward this quota. Even though a printer is not required, some students find it very beneficial to have their own printer in their room so they do not have to visit a lab each time they want print.

Is there cable television available on campus?

Each room and common area is wired for cable television. ITS provides the standard cable lineup provided by Comcast free of charge. Some students choose to get one of the expanded packages (including Digital or HD) and can do so by contacting Comcast directly (1-800-COMCAST). Students are responsible for paying the upgrade charge to Comcast. A complete listing of the channels provided can be found on the [ITS Cable Channels webpage](#).

I have some additional questions, who can I talk to?

The staff at the ITS Helpdesk would be happy to answer any questions you may have about purchasing a computer or any technology at Elizabethtown College. The ITS Helpdesk can be reached at 717-361-3333 or via e-mail at helpdesk@etown.edu