

CONSIDER A LAPTOP FOR YOUR NEXT COMPUTER

Most of the folks who visit the PSRC computer lab these days bring a laptop computer. And, if you're in the market for a new computer, you may want to consider a laptop instead of a desktop setup. Here's why:

1. **Laptops are cheaper.** You can buy a mid-level laptop PC for about \$450.¹ And, that's all you need to buy. It has its own screen, keyboard, trackpad (you can add a mouse), speakers, microphone, Wi-Fi, DVD drive, and camera. A comparable desktop setup would be a few hundred dollars more.
2. **They're portable.** Indeed, they're as portable as your lap. You get up from here and sit there, and your lap goes with you. Just imagine sitting by the fire on a cold winter night writing your memoirs on your laptop on your lap. (Of course, you'd need a fireplace.) You can also bring it to our computer lab if you need help. (The laptop, not the fireplace. Your lap will accompany you.)
3. **They're extensible**². You can add a monitor, wireless keyboard, mouse, and so on and use it like a desktop when it's not in your lap. You only need to connect the video wire to the monitor.



I, myself, use a laptop that I connect to a separate monitor, keyboard, and mouse when I'm at home writing these articles. When I go to a PSRC board meeting (I'm the board secretary), I type my notes on my laptop, which also has our bylaws, the meeting agenda, and past meeting minutes since Genesis. We sit at a conference table, so my lap is vacant.

Here's a list of what I consider to be minimum specs for a laptop PC:

- Intel Core i5 processor (the part that does the computing)
- Windows 10
- 500 GB disk drive (holds all your applications and files)
- 8 GM random access memory (RAM—stores the applications and documents you're working on at the moment)
- DVD read-write drive (less essential, unless you want to watch a movie)
- High definition display (1920 x 1080 pixels)—very important
- HDMI video port (to connect to a monitor or projector)
- Wi-Fi (standard equipment)
- Bluetooth (for wireless headphones and other peripherals)

¹ Apple MacBook laptops are MUCH more expensive. They're also nice. Very nice.

² I've always liked this word. It fits nicely here, don't you think?



If you buy a laptop, come to the PSRC computer lab and we'll help you set it up. Volunteers are available on Tuesdays from 1 to 4 p.m., and Friday from 10 a.m. until noon.

Next month, I'll write about tablet computers.