

What Device Do I Need?

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What we'll cover in this workshop

- Are you trying to decide if you should replace your computer, phone, or tablet?
- Are you thinking about getting a smart phone, iPad, or other device for the first time?

In this class, we'll discuss how to decide when to replace your device, what device to buy for your particular needs, and how to move to a new device.



Do I need to replace my device?

- Has it started working very slowly?
- Is it physically broken?
 - For example, cracked screen, some letters don't work on the keyboard, case is broken
- Can you still update the operating system?
- Does it have all the functionality that you need?



Which device do I need?

- Strengths and weaknesses of each device:
 - Phone
 - Tablet
 - Laptop
 - Desktop
- When do you really need a desktop?
- Other devices
 - Smart Watch (FitBit, Apple Watch)
 - Dedicated ebook readers
 - Smart home devices



How do you use your device?

- Phone calls
- Texting
- Video chat
- Email
- Internet
- Office Suite: writing documents, spreadsheets, presentations
- Editing photos
- Editing videos
- Games
- Social media
- **Multi-tasking – here's where you really need a laptop or desktop**



Phone calls and texting

- Well, here you really need a phone
- A phone is your best personal security device
 - It can go everywhere with you
 - It integrates with other devices
 - You can get help in an emergency, and the important people in your life can reach you
- You can use other devices for limited calling
 - VOIP phone calls – e.g., voice-only Skype calls or FaceTime
- Phones integrate with smart watches



Voice and Data Connections

- Most of you will have phones that are receiving service from a phone company
- There are three different ways your phone works
 - Over the voice network (through your phone company)
 - Over the data network (through your phone company)
 - Over wi-fi
- Depending on your provider and plan, you may or may not have unlimited data through your phone company
- When you are on wi-fi, you are not using the voice or data that are included in the plan from your phone company
- On public wi-fi, you need to be mindful of security considerations
- In general for the voice connection, you need your phone, although some other devices (e.g., tablets and smart watches) can be enabled for voice.



Video chat

- Examples: Skype, FaceTime, Google Hangouts
- Works across all devices
 - FaceTime only works on Apple devices
- Generally, a larger screen is better, especially if you are trying to have a conversation where there is more than one person on each end of the call



Internet and email

- Browsers – applications for using the Internet
- Mail – through a browser or with a mail application

- Work across all devices
- Some Websites that have complex designs don't work well on phones and tablets
- For reading some large email attachments, you may need one of the larger devices



Office suites

- Examples
 - Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint
 - Apple Office: Pages, Numbers, Keynote
 - Apache Open Office
- Here's where laptops / desktops really shine
- You can read these files on a smart phone or tablet, but we don't recommend trying to use a phone or tablet to create or edit these types of files



Editing photos and videos

- You can do very simple editing on a phone or tablet
- But for anything complicated, you need a laptop or desktop
 - The larger screen makes it easier to work
 - Many of the programs that you use for this type of work are made to work on a laptop or desktop only



Games

In this category, I'm including three types of games:

- Games for phones/tablets
 - Games that work on laptops/desktops
 - Games that need specific gaming devices, e.g., a Nintendo Switch
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- Many games will work on multiple kinds of devices, but oftentimes will work best on a specific kind of device; however, some games can only be played on one specific company's devices (Apple, Android, etc.) or can only be played on a gaming device
 - For some games that work on your phone and your tablet, you may appreciate the larger screen on the tablet



Streaming music and video

- Streaming music: Apple music, Amazon music, Pandora, Sirius XM, Spotify, etc.
- Streaming video: Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, YouTube, etc.
- These functions work across all devices
- For video, you probably want a screen larger than the one on your phone
- From an Apple phone you can “cast” music streaming from the phone to a home-based device to listen to higher-quality sound
- Apple and Android phones can be connected to external speakers through Bluetooth
- Laptops and desktops can be connected easily to larger screens



Social media

- Examples: FaceBook, Instagram, Twitter
- Work across all devices
- Some work better on particular devices
 - For example, Instagram is really meant to be used on a phone



Multi-tasking

- Multi-tasking is important for many things that you do
 - Whenever you have two or more windows open at the same time, you are multi-tasking
 - For example, if you want to copy pictures or some text from a Website into a presentation, the best way to do it is with two windows open at the same time
- Phones provide very limited multi-tasking
- The new iPad OS provides some limited multi-tasking, but it's nowhere near the capability of a laptop or desktop

For anything where you need multi-tasking, you need a laptop or desktop



When do you need a desktop?

- If you never take your computer outside your home and you always use it in one place, you get more for your money with a desktop
- Desktops are generally more powerful than laptops
 - Economical if you need a lot of “power”
 - Expandable in terms of memory and storage beyond what you can get in a laptop
- Jobs that need a desktop
 - Complex video and sound editing
 - Complex photo editing or art where you work with very large files
 - Anything 3D related
 - Some video games
 - Complex programming, statistical analysis, etc.



Summary

	Smart Phone	Tablet	Laptop	Desktop
Phone calls	X			
Texting	X	X	X	X
Video chat	X	X	X	X
Email	X	X	X	X
Internet	X	X	X	X
Writing documents	Reading only	Reading / small edits	X	X
Spreadsheets	Reading only	Reading / small edits	X	X
Presentations	Reading only	Reading / small edits	X	X
Multi-tasking		Limited	X	X
Editing photos	Very simple edits	Very simple edits	X	X
Editing videos	Very simple edits	Very simple edits	X	X
Video games	X	X	X	X
Streaming music & video	X	X	X	X
Social media	X	X	X	X



Which operating system?

- Android (Google), Apple, or Microsoft?
- What have you been using and what are you comfortable with?
 - Apple and Microsoft operating systems are roughly equivalent
 - ChromeBooks (Google operating system) do not provide the breadth of functionality that Apple and Microsoft provide – think “seeing the world through a browser interface”
 - Android tablets and phones may lack some of the functions that Apple provides, but they are generally less expensive
- Integration across devices
 - Apple does this very elegantly – as long as you log in to the same Apple account on all your devices, there will be complete integration
 - Certain functions, e.g., calendar, cloud drives, can be integrated across operating systems
 - Google drive and Google photos can be integrated across all three operating systems
 - iCloud drive can be shared across operating systems – but you need at least one Apple device
 - Browsers can be integrated across devices – as long as you use the same browser on all your devices and you have a log-in for the browser company (e.g., for Google, for Firefox/Mozilla)



Other devices

- Smart watches: FitBit, Apple Watch
 - You need one of these to track exercise
 - Both need to integrate with a phone
- Kindle Paperwhite vs using Kindle software on other devices
- Smart home devices
- Voice activation on all devices: Siri, Alexa, Google Assistant



Minimum requirements for a laptop / desktop

- Windows 10 or Mac OS
- 8 GB of RAM (random access memory) – stores the applications and documents that you are using at the moment
- 500 GB disk drive – holds all your applications and files
 - We recommend a solid-state drive (SSD) because it has no moving parts to break
- High definition display – to provide clear display
- HDMI video port – to connect a monitor or projector
- Wi-fi – standard equipment
- Bluetooth – for wireless headphones, wireless mouse, and other peripherals
- Two or more USB or USB-C ports to connect other devices (e.g., external hard drive, mouse, thumb drive, external keyboard, etc.)
- Other things to consider
 - Almost no laptop comes with a DVD/CD drive – if you want to listen to CDs or watch movies from a DVD, you can buy an external DVD drive; they are very inexpensive
 - Do you want a touch screen?
 - Do you want to connect an external monitor?
 - Do you want an external hard drive for backups?
 - Will your current printer work with your new computer?



How to move to a new device

- Back up all your data to an external hard drive and/or to the cloud
- Considerations for phones and tablets
- Considerations for laptops and desktops
- Considerations when moving between operating systems (Mac to Windows or Windows to Mac)
- The Tech Lab staff are happy to help you set up your new device
 - One caveat: We can only help with devices that you can bring into the Lab
 - Because the set up for a new laptop can take 2 or more hours, we'd appreciate it if you register or come speak to us to make an appointment ahead of time
 - For other devices, e.g., phones or tablets, you should allow at least an hour
 - Be sure to bring along all of your important passwords (for example, your Apple id/password, your Microsoft id/password, your email password)



Learn More at the PSRC Technology Lab

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Thank You

