How to pick a new computer

This information was updated in Spring 2024 for the 2024-25 academic year. You can see a list of course-specific information on the [Recommended Kit List](#) page.

􀀀 Chromebook, Android Tablet, Netbook

We do not recommend students purchase these products because they usually have pretty low specifications and do not have access to most open-source software available for Windows, Linux, and macOS devices.

􀀀 iPad

We do not recommend students purchase an iPad because it does not give them proper access to the operating system needed for software development, which will be a core part of most courses at CCI.

􀀀 Mac

If you want a new Mac, we recommend any Apple Silicon laptop, such as M1, M2, or M3. We no longer recommend Intel Macs.

The main difference between the MacBook Pro and MacBook Air is that the Air has no cooling fans, which means as it gets hotter, the computer will slow down to avoid overheating, whereas the Pro can turn on fans to keep running cool and at full performance.

> **Memory:** Make sure you buy a computer with at least 16GB RAM.

[MacBook Pro 13" with M3](#)

	A	B	C
Chip	M3	M3 Pro	M3 Pro
Processor	8 core	11 core	12 core
Graphics	10 core	14 core	18 core
Neural	16 core	16 core	16 core
Memory	16GB	18GB	36GB
Storage	512GB	1TB	1TB

	A	B	C
Price with discount	£1,789	£2,119	£2,649

[MacBook Air 13" with M2](#)

	A
Chip	M3
Processor	8 core
Graphics	10 core
Neural	16 core
Memory	16GB
Storage	512GB
Price with discount	£1,399

We also recommend purchasing [AppleCare+](#) or a similar repair warranty and insurance scheme.

AppleCare+ 3 years	**MacBook Air 13" with M2**	**MacBook Pro 13" with M1**
Price with discount	£179	£249

Around August/September each year, Apple will run the [Apple Back to School deal](#), which, in addition to the discounted prices above, will include a giveaway, has included gift cards or AirPods in the past.

🖥 PC

If you are specifically looking at a Windows or Linux computer, you may get better value from purchasing a desktop computer for home use and taking advantage of the [large number of PCs and MacBook Pro laptops](#) that are available on campus during and between classes.

PC Laptop

Generally, we're pretty big fans of Dell (Precision, XPS, G Gaming, or Alienware), Razer HP Z and OMEN brand computers. However, there is a large market, and you should pick what's best for you. The following specs give you an idea of what to look for...

> Check for USB-C charging and display connection, as plug-in stations at CCI all use this.

	Minimum	Recommended
Processor	Intel i5 12th, 13th or 14th generation processor	Intel i7 13th or 14th generation processor
Graphics	*See info below!*	Any NVIDIA RTX 3xxx or 4xxx series GPU
Memory	16GB	32GB
Storage	512GB	2TB or better
Display	13" 1080p	13-16" 1440p (QHD) or 2160p (4K)

> **Minimum graphics**
> The minimum graphics required will depend on the course. If you study areas such as machine learning, data science, or 3D, you should try to obtain any NVIDIA RTX 3xxx series GPU or higher.

PC Desktop

At CCI, we primarily use Dell desktop computers, with some HP and Viglen computers used elsewhere at UAL.

	Minimum	Recommended
Processor	Intel i5 12th, 13th or 14th generation processor	Intel i7 13th or 14th generation processor
Graphics	Any NVIDIA RTX 3xxx series GPU	NVIDIA RTX 4xxx series GPU
Memory	16GB	32GB
Storage	512GB	1TB or better
Display	24" 1080p (FHD)	27" 1440p (QHD) or 2160p (4K)

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