

COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERIOR DESIGN

All students enrolled in the interior design program are required to acquire a laptop computer by the beginning of the second semester of their second year. This computer must meet or exceed the specifications listed below. The specifications, which are updated annually, are also available from the faculty. A substantial amount of software may be required depending on the specific course requirements.

PLEASE NOTE: Computer requirements change over time. The requirements noted below are current at the time of this writing, Fall 2006.

Hardware (Minimum Laptop Requirements)

- Recommended Processor: Intel Core Duo 1.8GHz or faster
- Minimum Processor: Pentium-M/Centrino/Core 1.6GHz (Equivalent)
- Recommended Memory: 2.0GB or higher for 3D Rendering purposes
- Minimum Memory: 1.0GB for AutoCAD software
- Recommended Hard Drives: 60 GB hard Drive or higher
- Recommended Optical Drive: 24X CD-RW/DVD Combo drive or DVD Burner
- Networking: 10/100 Ethernet or Gigabit Ethernet
- Wireless Networking: Campus uses 802.11b. 802.11a/b/g recommended for compatibility.
- Screen Resolution: WXGA or XGA (1024x768) or higher
- External Mouse
- USB 2.0 (Multiple ports recommended)
- Minimum Graphics card supporting 1024x768x16-bit color
- Recommended Graphics: Dedicated OpenGL & Direct 3D acceleration

Software

- Windows XP (operating system)
 - All the latest Service Packs and Security Fixes should be installed and updated on a regular schedule.
- Office XP Professional
 - All the latest Service Packs and Security Fixes should be installed and updated on a regular schedule.
- AutoCAD Educational Version (latest version at the time the computer is purchased)
 - Do not pirate (borrow or copy from a friend) your software. AutoDesk creates a variety of bugs designed to prevent this. When they pop up they destroy all work and freeze the computer.
 - All the Service Packs and Patches should be applied, as they apply to your use of the product.
- Anti-Virus
 - Anti-Virus software is updated on an almost daily basis to ward off viruses. It is not an optional program, it is a requirement to insure long term, trouble free computer operation.
 - You should download Symantec AntiVirus for free from the U of A email website: <http://mail.uark.edu/>
- **Recommended:** Adobe Creative Suite latest version.

UARK Recommendations

Think of this computer as a work place tool. This computer is a tool to help you succeed in college. Therefore, treat it seriously and remember that when it is not working, neither are you.

The faculty at the University is not responsible for the working, maintenance, or any assistance with your computer. It is incumbent upon you to insure that the computer works, and that you understand how to use the computer for all class requirements. Assignments are due when required, without fail or excuse. The College computer lab is maintained with full AutoCAD software as well as supporting software for all of your academic needs. When your machine is not correctly functioning, the lab or other computer labs should be used for back-up purposes. The link to the computer labs is: http://www.uark.edu/campus/compserv/labs_resource/complabs/

Having said this, here are some tips that we have learned over time that will help maintain a good working computer.

Best Practices for Your New Computer

- Carefully review the list of required programs for your new computer and assemble the required software and hardware. You may install the computer yourself or have someone more experienced do this for you.
- Install all the hardware and software that meets the requirements set forth by the Interior Design Program. Test all software and hardware to insure that everything is working properly. Do this prior to the beginning of the semester.
- Once tested and approved, create in Windows XP what is called a "Restore Point". This is simply a backup of the Windows configuration. If you install software in the future, and your computer stops working properly, you can restore back to this original point, which you know is a good working point in time.
- If at all possible, at the time you create a Restore Point, also do a complete backup of your hard disk. This can be done by burning files to a CD or DVD, or using an external backup hard drive which comes with software to backup your files automatically.
- At the beginning of each year, you may wish to:
 - Review the most current software specifications being given to the new students and upgrade your software, or
 - You may be having problems with your computer and wish to start from scratch for the new year.
- In either of the above cases, you can do the following:
 - Backup all your data from the previous year(s),
 - Re-format your hard disk and install all the software from scratch, thus giving you a nice clean, good working computer for the new year.
- You may also simply wish to upgrade your operating system (Windows) in a year or two, as newer and better operating systems become available.

General Do Not's

- Do NOT install games. Games are notoriously poorly made and often cause your important programs to mal-function.
- Do NOT install share-ware, free-ware, or other utilities. These too are often poorly designed and tested, and are impossible to troubleshoot when things go awry on your computer.
- Do NOT install desktop backgrounds or fancy screen savers other than what comes with Windows. These are REALLY notorious for causing problems.

Internet Use

- If you want to join a chat service such as MSN or AOL, do so, but do not join more than one of them. Find the one most of your friends are using and stick to it. All these chat services take up a lot of your Internet bandwidth (slows down your Internet connection, which is especially important if you are using a modem to connect to the Internet) and they love to collect lots of information about your use of the Internet.
- Have someone qualified set your Browser (Internet Explorer, Netscape, or otherwise) to prompt for cookies to be placed on your desktop. Cookies collect information about your use of the Internet and forward advertising to you. Just be very selective about what cookies you allow on your desktop.
- Think carefully about joining file downloading services (music, etc.). The recording companies are getting more and more aggressive concerning the downloading of MP3's and Windows Media Files.

Summary

Again, keep in mind why you bought this computer. It is CRITICAL to your success in the Design program. It is tool for writing papers, doing your CAD drawings, and general research while at the University. Guard carefully what you and others install on the computer and it's care and maintenance.