

Interior Design Professional Sequence Student Laptop Spec

(January, 2007)

The last year (and even the last few weeks) has seen dramatic shifts in both performance and pricing for laptops. The Core Duo processor and lower prices for memory mean that you can get much higher performance for about \$1,000 less than a year or two ago. The big variable for price is the display size; when I looked, it appeared that a larger display than the suggested one added almost \$1400 to the price.

The newer versions of software require more power, so it is often good to wait as long as possible before purchasing a high performance machine; next year's version of Architectural Desktop will require a minimum of 2GB of RAM. Since it is a big investment, it is recommended that students not purchase a high performance laptop until they have been accepted into the Professional Sequence.

Minimum Hardware Spec (Based on Dell Latitude D820 system. Other vendors have similar systems, but the level of campus support and help is not the same.)

Processor	Intel Core Duo T7200 Processor 2.0GHz-(or higher)	When word processing, you will not need the speed. When drawing, you will always want more than you can get.
Display	Minimum 15.4in UltraSharp WUXGA LCD Display Keep an eye on this one, as the 17" display prices are dropping and are easier to see.	There are other machines with larger screens, but this is where the price starts to go up quickly. The larger screens are easier on your eyes, so if you are not limited by budget, get the larger screen.
Memory	2.0 GB DDR2 SDRAM Minimum Best to get a single 2.0 GB chip, as there are only two slots, leaving one slot open for a future upgrade	Memory has a huge effect on speed when using graphics applications. If you have the monetary resources, memory is a good upgrade. Newer machines should be upgradeable to 4GB
Video Memory	Graphics card with minimum 256 MB Video Memory. Recommended 512 MB	The amount of video memory is an important factor in how fast you can work with graphics applications.
Hard Drive	100GB Hard Drive Minimum (Minimum Speed 7200RPM)	Hard drives larger than this hold more data, but the first place to spend money is on memory and video memory.
External Mouse	2-Button optical mouse with Scroll	The external mouse works better for drawing and keeps your skills compatible with a desktop machine.
Optical Device	DVD +/- RW drive	This is a necessity for backing up and transporting files. Graphics files can easily be 300MB or larger.
Battery	High Capacity	
Carrying Case	To fit computer and Accessories	Some are more like a backpack than a briefcase. Will you want to carry your computer while riding a bicycle?
Networking	Integrated 10/100 Ethernet Port	To connect directly to the network, or to a cable modem or DSL hookup.
Wireless Networking	Dell™ Wireless 1390 WLAN Mini-Card or new model	This lets you connect to the network in studio, and at other locations on campus such as the library and the union.

Min. Software Specification (Training available for students. All students should learn.)

Operating System	Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional	
Office Software	Microsoft® Office XP	Includes word processor, spreadsheet, Web layout, presentation and email applications.
Vector Drawing Software	AutoDesk Architectural Desktop Student Version – Do <u>NOT</u> buy just AutoCAD	The Spring 2007 SoHE lab will be using the Architectural Desktop 2007 version. The “workhorse” drawing software. Includes basic AutoCAD functionality as well as modeling and rendering tools.

Purchase Information

Hardware Vendor	Dell has special pricing for UW students. Visit the DoIT Tech Store: www.doit.techstore.wisc.edu Also www.dell.com and compare the academic price with small business	The system specified here often comes out priced less through the College of Engineering tab at the DoIT Web site. Check several Web locations to compare prices.
Software Vendors:		
Microsoft	Available through DoIT:	Standard academic package
AutoDesk	Free student version at: www.autodesk.student.com Also available through AutoDesk resellers on the Web. Look for AutoDesk Student versions. www.thecadstore.com www.academicssuperstore.com	Of course the free version is the most economical. For pay versions, choose annual subscription for students or perpetual license for students. Compare prices between vendors.
Adobe	Available through DoIT:	Standard academic package
Macromedia	Available though DoIT:	

Optional Software (Get training if purchasing. Improves employability.)

Raster Drawing and Editing Software	Adobe PhotoShop CS or above	The “workhorse” image editing software. Strongly recommended.
Web Design	Macromedia DreamWeaver	Incorporates multimedia
Presentations	InDesign	For portfolio and presentation creation.

Hardware Options/Upgrades (Not Required, But Nice to Have)

External Keyboard		Not portable, but more comfortable.
External Monitor		Not portable, but more comfortable
Printer	Varies, but inkjet models provide quality at a more reasonable price.	A good photo-quality printer lets you print portfolio pages at 12x18 format. Ink is the big expense, so ones with larger ink cartridges usually cost less to operate.
Additional Storage Device	Removable hard drive	Allows backups for that extra safety level.
Additional Battery	High Capacity	Gives longer portable run time.

Don't forget accessories like a case, a lock and USB memory.