

## Computer Recommendations for Engineering Students

### Tablets

Some students like to use a tablet for note taking and viewing eBooks. Since some laptops have this feature integrated, you should investigate laptop options before buying multiple devices.

### Laptops

- Windows based
  - Most engineering software is Windows based and so Apple computers (Macs) are not recommended for engineering students. Although there are workarounds for this for Apple users, we find **it generates significant and continuous additional work** for students and the support structure is very limited.
- Memory: Either 32GB RAM or 16GB that is expandable to 32GB
- Hard Drive/Solid State Drive (SSD):
  - 512 GB SSD
  - Solid State drives are recommended over HDD (Hard-Disk Drive) because they are more reliable and provide significantly faster read and write times.
- Processor: Released within the last 12 months and Intel i5 equivalent or better
- Ports:
  - At least 2 USB ports, USB C is recommended as it is becoming standard.
  - HDMI port is optional, one can purchase an adaptor USB C to HDMI
- MS Office: MS Office 365 is a collection of apps and cloud services you can use to be productive across a variety of devices from just about anywhere. Calvin faculty, staff, and students can download the full Microsoft Office productivity suite on up to 5 personal devices for free. <https://calvin.edu/offices-services/information-technology/tools/office-365/index.html>
- Touchscreen: Although not required, if you like to take notes online, a touchscreen and pen may be a good option instead of a separate device. You can use Microsoft OneNote (free for Calvin students) or a different app to organize your notes.

### Miscellaneous

- A USB Flash (Thumb) drive: While you can store your files to the cloud, it is sometimes helpful to have a physical device to transfer/store your files. Hint: if you have a USB Flash drive, please put a "ReadMe" file in the root directory with your contact information. This would make it easier to return a lost drive.
- Mouse: Some software (CAD) works significantly better with a mouse versus a touchpad on a laptop.
- Calculator: Students are required to have a calculator. Using an app on a cellphone is not permitted during tests.