

University of Nebraska College of Architecture

2024-2025 Computer Policy

All students in the College of Architecture's Architecture, Interior Design, and Landscape Architecture programs are required to lease, purchase, or have ready access to a laptop computer that meets or exceeds the specifications listed below. Incoming students are highly encouraged to use a Windows PC.

Hardware Specifications:

Processor	Intel or AMD Ryzen (series 7 or better)
Graphics Card:	Nvidia or AMD graphics (See below)
RAM:	16Gb minimum
Hard drive	512 Gb minimum
Display size	15-inch minimum
Operating System	Windows

Warranty:	3-year recommended
Required accessories:	Flash Drive: Printing or file transfers External Mouse: 3-button with scroll wheel

Graphics Cards

There are two major manufacturers of high-performance graphics cards, often referred to as a "GPU" (Graphics Processing Unit) Nvidia and AMD. Intel is trying to get into this market with its Arc series, but they are not recommended. Nvidia makes two separate lines of cards. The GeForce line is marketed for gaming and the Quadro line is for industrial applications. Here is a breakdown of each company's current line-up of cards and a recommended minimum model number for each that is needed to run the required software in UNL College of Architecture programs.

NOTE: What is deemed as a "gaming card" is still very capable of running all the programs used by the college. The difference is that the "industrial cards" have been extensively tested and earned an ISV (Independent Software Vendors) certification for compatibility. This is why a similarly performing "Industrial card" will cost more than a "gaming card."

Nvidia Quadro line (Industrial)		Nvidia GeForce (Gaming)	
Model	Rating	Model	Rating
RTX A2000 or higher	Recommended	RTX 4060 or higher	Acceptable
RTX T1200 or A600	Acceptable	RTX 4050 or lower	Not Recommended
RTX T600 or lower	Not recommended	RTX 3060 or higher	Acceptable
		RTX 3050Ti or lower	Not Recommended

AMD Radeon (M=Mobile)	
Model	Rating
Radeon RX 7600M	Acceptable
Radeon RX 6600M or higher	Acceptable
Radeon RX 6550M or lower	Not recommended

UNL Huskertech Computer Shop

For the last several years the UNL Huskertech Computer Shop has offered laptop packages specifically configured for students in the College of Architecture. Because of the positive response, the Computer Shop will again offer packages for students in the College of Architecture. Since 2013, they have worked with Dell to arrange special educational pricing.

Information will be posted on the Huskertech sales website as the terms are finalized. You can also check with the UNL Huskertech Store directly (402-472-5151) for more information on what options are available. They are located in the Nebraska Union at 1400 R Street room 122. <https://its.unl.edu/huskertech/>

The College of Architecture recognizes that some students may already own a computer with comparable specifications, perhaps only falling short on RAM, processor speed, or graphics capability. While such a computer may be suitable in the short term, it will be necessary for you to acquire a computer that meets or exceeds the specifications listed below during, or soon after your first year of school.

Please be advised that any custom-ordered computer takes between a few weeks to over a month from the time an order is placed, to the time the computer is received. All students are expected to have their computer purchased and software installed on or before August 21st, 2024.

Apple products are no longer supported due to compatibility issues with Apple's Silicone processors and application software used in the programs. In November 2020 Apple launched its proprietary ARM-based "Silicone M#" processor that replaced Intel processors in their entire lineup of computers.

Even though "virtual machine" software such as Parallels or VMware can run Windows as a program on an Apple computer is available, it can only use the "ARM" processor version of Windows. Which is different than the version installed on a normal Windows PC. Many software packages will not install at all or have reported performance issues or crashes when run in this environment. The College of Architecture has never endorsed trying to run any of the required software on a virtual machine due to its inability to efficiently run the programs required by the College of Architecture.