



Nate's Computer Recommendations

For basic computer users

2021

These are my recommendations for basic computer usage such as web browsing, email, and word processing.

Brands

The following are my recommended brands for consumer-grade laptops and 2-in-1 devices..

- Apple
- Lenovo
- Dell
- Samsung

What to look for

Here are some key things to keep in mind when looking for a new laptop or 2-in-1 device.

- At least 8gb of RAM
- Hard drive capacity is not a significant issue, but hard drive speed is. If you don't mind waiting 5 to 10 minutes for your computer to boot up, you don't need to worry about this, but if you want something that starts up quickly, look for a laptop with an SSD.
- Almost any processor will be fine for you if you have an SSD hard drive. If you want something that doesn't feel slow, go for an Intel i5 or better, or AMD Ryzen 5 or better.

Where to buy

You can buy a laptop or 2-in-1 from BestBuy or other retailers, but be aware that sometimes they come with more pre-installed "bloatware" that can slow down your new computer. Here are some other places I recommend you look as well.

- Dell outlet: [dell.com/outlet](https://www.dell.com/outlet)
- newegg: [newegg.com](https://www.newegg.com)
- B&H: [bhphotovideo.com](https://www.bhphotovideo.com)

Operating Systems

Windows is still the dominant operating system for basic computer users. However, if you are not in need of Microsoft Office (Word, Excel and Powerpoint), there are some other options worth considering.

Chromebook

Chromebooks make a great option for a lot of basic computer users. It's simple to use, fast, and it's focused on your web browsing experience. ChromeOS is also a very capable operating system on it's own, and can do a lot more than people expect. You can even install Android apps, which opens a huge window of capabilities. Advanced users can also install Linux applications on ChromeOS, meaning there really is no limit to what you can do on a Chromebook.

MacOS

If you're already familiar with Mac, or you like the feel and interactions you have with apple devices, it might be worth it to consider an Apple laptop. The new MacBook Air M1 comes in at \$899, which is a bit more than you would spend for a Windows laptop for basic use, but the expectation is that it will last longer. Apple still makes reasonably solid hardware, and their devices tend to be significantly more secure.