How to find the right laptop for you

Buying the right laptop to suit you and your needs can be a difficult and confusing process. To help, this digital guide will describe what you should think about and what to look for when buying a new laptop.

What do you want a laptop for?

The first step is introspection- think honestly to yourself about why you want a laptop. You may want to use emails, to do online shopping, or to access your online banking.

Understanding what you want out of a laptop is key to understanding how much you want to spend on such laptop.

If you only want to use a laptop to send emails, use the internet, and use applications such as Word and Excel, then you will likely only need to buy lower to medium priced laptops- usually around £200- £800.

If you intend to run complex, intensive programmes, such as video editing software or intensive games, then you would look for the higher end, usually £800+

Introspection also requires you to think about your own digital skills and how confident you are in using a laptop. As will be explained, if you have very little digital skills or experience, ChromeOS laptops may be your best bet

Windows or MacOS?

These are the systems which run your laptop and the applications you use on it

The majority of laptops run either Windows or MacOS systems, and so you will most likely be deciding between one of the two.

The MacOS system run solely on Apple Mac products. The Windows system runs on many other laptop brands (Samsung, HP, Lenovo etc.)

Both systems are relatively similar in their simplicity of use. Hence, the best advice would be to stick with what you know. If you have had a Windows in the past, stick with a Windows laptop. If you've had a Mac, stick with that. They both work quite differently and so you may find it difficult to adjust to a new system.

It is important to note that Apple Mac products are on higher end of the price range. So, to access MacOS, you will likely have to fork out more cash than for a Windows laptop.

Or ChromeOS?

ChromeOS, released only a few years ago, is a new system of which a growing number of laptops are running on.

Due to how simple it is to use, this could be a great option for those buying/using their first laptop

This simplicity is found in its trimmed down interface, making it easy to navigate through the smaller number of applications that it runs

These applications include Gmail, Google Search, and Google Docs.

If you are only interested in using a laptop for simple things such as emails, the internet, and writing documents, then this is a great option

ChromeOS runs on a range of laptop brands, such as Samsung and HP. But it is often priced at the very cheap end of the spectrum, with many options around £200. This also makes it a very appealing choice of system.

Think About Size

Laptops come in many different shapes and sizes. It is important to think about yourself and how you would use the laptop to understand what size is best for you.

Smaller laptops, often around the 13" screen size, are great for those who wish to carry their laptop around with them, perhaps to take it on the train or in a cafe. This is because they are smaller and lighter than larger models

Larger laptops, around the 17" screen size, are better for those who will use the laptop solely at home, and for those who may need a bigger screen with larger font sizes

Medium sized laptops, around the 15" screen size, are the happy medium between the two, allowing some level of mobility and reasonably large font sizes

Summary

Finding the right laptop requires introspection into your laptop skills and what you wish to use the laptop for. Combine this with an understanding of the best system and size, and you will hopefully have a much clearer idea of which laptop is best for you.

And with this laptop, comes the many fruits of the world of technology and the internet!

Contact us
If you would like to learn more or receive digital support then you can contact us via email or telephone:
- digitalinclusion@ageukcamden.org.uk
- 020 7239 0400