Buying a new laptop----------Written as of 22-2-2026

At one time, laptops were expensive and underpowered, but not anymore. Laptops have the same features and as much or more power as desktops.

Note: I am only talking about Microsoft here for I have used this system for 26 years. I have no knowledge of Apple computers only that my Daughter uses Apple and finds those computers excellent. Apple uses the Mac operating system (macOS), which works seamlessly with iPhone and iPad. It controls Apps more rigorously than Microsoft which offers more versatility. Many useful apps run on both but not all. You can use programs like Microsoft Office on Apple computers. How Microsoft updates its operation system varies over time. Windows 11 is the only type of Windows available now although in the world over 40% of people still use Windows 10 which is an excellent model. I still use 10 on my desktop computer but have laptops with both 10 and 11.

RAM.
Generally speaking, more memory your computer has, the faster it will run. But the more RAM your computer has, the more you can do with your computer – and the more responsive your PC will be. You'll see a lot of low-end computers with 4 GB of RAM, but unless you're planning on doing very little, you're not going to be happy with a computer with only 4 GB of RAM.
I suggest that you look for a computer with at least **8 GB of RAM.**

Solid-state drives (SSDs).
SSDs last longer and are faster than the old HDDs because SSDs have no moving parts. They last longer than HDDs. All the laptops now have SSD's. SSDs measure the amount of storage on your computer, they will hold all your files, documents, photos, videos and music etc. I suggest that you look for a laptop with at least 250 GB.

The Processor.
The processor is the brain and heart of your PC. It processes all the information that comes in and what you ask the computer to do. It controls the speed and how fast your computer, will work.
Most computers these days will have AMD processors and higher priced computers use Intel processors. Any computer you buy running Windows 11 will have a processor that is adequate to run Windows 11.
Intel uses **i3, i5, and i7** processors. i3 usually has fewer cores and a smaller cache, so it's not built for heavy multitasking or editing large files. When you are a student, a casual user, or are purchasing a simple home laptop and are under budget, i3 may remain the best processor option, particularly at the entry level.
AMD processors are now more popular, especially the **Ryzen** series, offer excellent multi-core performance, making them a better choice. I use an AMD Ryzen 5

processors with integrated Radeon Vega graphics. They generally provide better integrated graphics performance compared to Intel Core i5 processors.

Screen size.

Screen size, though, is a personal choice. Choose the screen size that you like best, and that suits the way you use your computer. You probably won't want anything smaller than a 15″ display. This is what I use. I just find the 14" display and keyboard too small for my eyes and fingers.

Computer brands

Most brands you recognize should be fine. Some people hate certain brands because they have had trouble with that particular brand in the past. However, all brands have good and bad reviews. HP, Dell, Acer, ASUS, and Lenovo all have their fans and their detractors. All are quite reliable.

Windows 11 Home or Professional?

The professional version is more expensive and not needed for the ordinary person but fine for more advanced users and gamers.

Shop around. You'll find great deals if you spend some time and look around. Most of you would find any of the computers we listed above more than adequate for your needs. If you take your time and shop carefully, you can find a PC that does everything you need it to do at a price that fits your budget.

Here are typical models similar to mine. (Noel Leeming)

NOW **$1,119.00**

HP Laptop 15.6 Inch FHD Intel Core 5-120U 8GB RAM 1TB PCIe SSD Windows 11 Notebook

NOW **$1,069.00**

Acer Aspire Lite 15.6 Inch Ryzen 5-7430U 16GB RAM 1TB SSD Windows 11 Notebook

Harvey Norman

Asus Vivobook Go 15.6" Laptop - Intel Pentium Silver 8GB-RAM 256GB-SSD (E510KA-EJ134W)

$100 HARVEY NORMAN BONUS GIFT CARD!

$788

Lenovo IdeaPad Slim 3 (8th Gen) 15.6" Laptop - AMD Ryzen5 16GB-RAM 512GB-SSD - Arctic Grey (82XQ00SQAU)

$100 HARVEY NORMAN BONUS GIFT CARD!

$998