

Computer/Device Purchase Guidance – SY 22-23

Rochambeau, French International School

At Rochambeau, our student device protocol is as follows:

GS – CM1:	iPads (Stay at School) ¹
CM2:	Chromebooks (Stay at School – Stylus/Touch enabled) ²
6eme – 3eme:	Chromebooks (Travel – Home/School - Stylus/Touch enabled) ³
2nde – Terminale:	Bring your own device (BYOD)

Rochambeau is a platform agnostic school, supporting all computing platforms equally. As students' progress in our educational program, we recommend the use of computing devices over the use of tablets as a primary device.

For parents of 2nde through Terminale or families looking to provide computer access to your children at home, here are some things you should consider if/when you are in the market to purchase a new device.

Things to consider:

1. Is this device going back and forth to school? (weight)
2. How much time will this device be used each day? (weight/screen size/battery life)
3. Does your child do anything advanced on the device (video editing, advance image editing or coding, 3D design or rendering)? (performance, screen size)
4. How long should the computer be used before considering a replacement? (performance/specifications, grade level)
5. Do you predominantly use one platform or another at home? (Mac vs. PC vs. Chromebook – support, software purchases, etc.)
6. Larger computers are generally cheaper because they are less popular, but they weigh more, however, gaming laptops OR workstation-level laptops are the opposite (cost more)
7. Computing platforms don't matter as much these days. What matters most is software compatibility – Is there something your child needs to use that ONLY exists on one platform or another?
8. If you have different types of computers at home, support is typically handled through the manufacturer or third-party service (Apple, HP, Lenovo, for example or via Microcenter/Best Buy Geek Squad, etc.) – If you are using a single platform at home, consider the implications of adding a different one. Many families have a variety of devices at home (Mac/PC/iOS)?
9. Generally, newer processors, increased RAM (16GB or more) and larger hard drives, the longer the computer will last, but will also more expensive
10. Average lifespan of a computer is 3-4 years (can be longer on some platforms and/or with advanced processor/RAM/hard drive configurations). NOTE: There is a relationship between cost and longevity
11. Business-class computers will typically last longer than consumer models
12. Where possible, try to avoid the three months to a year of a brand-new technology (processors, operating systems, etc.) as they can have bugs that you will need to work through
13. We are not going to talk about desktops here, but the specifications noted below will also apply. There are other features in desktops like video cards, etc. to consider if it will be used for more advanced tasks (gaming, programming, etc.)
14. If you need a larger screen, consider purchasing an external monitor for your home

¹ Device assigned for in-school use. Additional uses may be allowed under certain circumstances

² Device assigned for in-school use. Additional uses may be allowed under certain circumstances – New for SY 2021-22

³ Devices travel to and from school daily.

Specifications you should look for in a new computer:

Processors:

Apple: M-series processors (current processor is the M2) on 13-inch MacBook Air/Pro/iMac 24" (desktop), M1 Pro/Max or M2 for Macbook Pros

Chromebook: Intel Celeron/Pentium (average Chromebook), Intel Core/AMD Ryzen Processors (higher-end Chromebooks)

PC: Gen 12 or 11 (Gen 12 Processors are the current models) Intel Core Processors -

<https://www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/products/details/processors/core.html> - We recommend an i5 or faster OR AMD Ryzen 5 or 7 – 5000 Series or higher

RAM:

Apple: 8-16 GB of RAM (NOTE: RAM is an expensive upgrade on all Apple Products)

Chromebooks: 4-8 GB of RAM (NOTE: Average Chromebooks come with 4GB)

PC: 8-16 GB of RAM

Hard Drive Capacity:

Apple: 256-512 GB

Chromebook: 32-64GB (NOTE: As this is a Google device, most of the files are stored in the cloud, higher-end Chromebooks will have storage like a PC/Mac)

PC: 256-512 GB

Screen Size:

Apple: 13.3"/14"

Chromebook: 11" - 13.3"

PC: 13.3" - 15.6"

Typical price range for a new computer

NOTE: Lower-priced computers will usually mean shorter lifespan. Price ranges represent the average price of a computer you would buy a student.

Apple: \$1000-\$1500

Chromebook: \$300-\$900⁴

PC: \$600-\$1300

Examples:

Apple:

MacBook Air (M1 can still be found... M2 is a better investment)

MacBook Pro 13" OR 14"

Chromebook:

Acer Chromebook Spin 713 (13.3")

Google Pixelbook GO

Lenovo 500e (our current device) (11.6")

Lenovo ThinkPad C13 Yoga Chromebook

Lenovo Flex 5 Chromebook

Lenovo Chromebook Duet (10.1")

PC:

Dell XPS 13

HP Envy 13

HP Spectre x360 14

Lenovo L13 or L13 Yoga (Yoga means 360-degree hinge and stylus) – our Current Faculty model

Microsoft Surface Pro or Surface Laptop

⁴ Chromebooks are based on Google technology and are added here as it is a platform that we use at the school. It doesn't run programs like a traditional computer (Mac/PC). Higher priced Chromebooks should be looked at carefully for features/performance

Samsung Galaxy Book2 360

Best Places to Purchase:

Apple:

Microcenter

Amazon

Best Buy⁵

Apple (usually have deals for students in the mid to late summer)

Chromebook:

Microcenter

Amazon

Best Buy

Directly from the Manufacturer⁶

Costco⁷

PC:

Microcenter

Amazon

Best Buy

Directly from the Manufacturer⁸

Costco⁹

Links to Sale Sites (may stop working when sales/promotions are over):

Best Buy:

<https://www.bestbuy.com/site/back-to-school/parent-hub/pcmcat1530201105801.c?id=pcmcat1530201105801>

Microcenter:

https://www.microcenter.com/search/search_results.aspx?Ntt=5206&Ntk=Adv

Apple:

No Current K-12 promotions – If you have a child in college, you can buy through those promotions:

<https://www.apple.com/us-edu/shop/back-to-school>

Costco:

https://www.costco.com/computers.html?currentPage=2&pageSize=24&sortBy=item_page_views+desc&keyword=OFF

NOTE: If you have a child enrolled at a university, their bookstores also offer discounts to students and should be considered for students that may be graduating

Final Thoughts

Purchasing a new device for your child or family is an important decision. While we didn't mention it, warranties on computers are tricky and usually add between \$200-\$400 to the price, depending on features like accidental damage coverage, battery coverage, etc. Check the base warranty on the device you are considering (usually a year; three years for a business class computer, typically) There are dozens of devices out there to choose from so focus on specifications, needs, price, and online reviews to provide some guidance as you work through this process.

⁵ Microcenter and Best Buy routinely have sales on Apple Products, where Apple does not

⁶ Manufacturers typically will have regular seasonal and Back-to-School sales and may also offer student discounts

⁷ Costco, on PC products typically offers a free, extended warranty on computers

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