# LAPTOP PURCHASE GUIDE
# 2022-2023

**Congratulations on your acceptance to MIAD!** As you prepare for the fall semester, it is important to consider the technology that will aid you in your creative pursuits. You have the freedom to bring the laptop of your choice to MIAD. We've created a guide with many of the frequently asked questions regarding laptops and technology at MIAD.

**Q. Do I need a laptop when I begin classes this fall?**
A. Yes, all MIAD students are required to have a laptop at the start of the semester. Laptops are used for studio and liberal studies assignments, research, other homework and email and general correspondence.

**Q. What software is commonly used at MIAD?**
A. First-Year Experience (FYE) students frequently use the Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Premiere, Acrobat). This is the most important software for your laptop to be able to handle. In addition, MIAD students use the Microsoft Office software and other less taxing software. Some upper-level students may utilize additional software.

**NOTE:** All MIAD students receive the Adobe Creative Suite and MS Office Suite as part of the MIAD Technology Fee. Please **do not** purchase this software independently as MIAD contracts a discounted rate for students.

**Q. I'm planning to purchase a new laptop. What kind should I get?**
A. It's important to consider what your needs will be as an FYE students and your future major. This chart should help you to identify the best laptop as you enter college at MIAD.

| MAJOR | LAPTOP | COST | PROS | CONS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Undecided**, desiring a solid entry-level Apple machine | Apple MacBook Pro 13" M1 Chip with 8-Core CPU and 8-Core GPU 256GB Storage | $1,199 | Handles standard Adobe Applications and programs for First-Year Experience at MIAD<br><br>Good battery life | Only 2 thunderbolt ports for cables and charging<br><br>Unable to run virtual software like Windows Bootcamp or specific Intel/ AMD applications |
| **Undecided**, desiring a solid entry-level PC machine | Dell XPS 15" (standard) Intel Core i5-12500H, 8GB memory, 512 GB SSD | $1,400-1,500 | Meets the Windows- only software requirements for some applications<br><br>Has the flexibility to install applications from all majors and handle the demands of each major Multiple inputs to connect to a variety of devices | Entry-level laptop will not handle 3D modeling and Virtual Reality (VR) software well |
| **NSP: Fine Arts** (not focused on computer-intensive 3D modeling, VR or video) | Apple MacBook Pro 13" M1 Chip with 8-Core CPU and 8-Core GPU 256GB Storage | $1,199 | Handles standard Adobe Applications and programs for First-Year Experience at MIAD<br><br>Good battery life | Only 2 thunderbolt ports for cables and charging<br><br>Unable to run virtual software like Windows Bootcamp or specific Intel/ AMD applications |
| **Communication Design** (graphic design, advertising, etc.) Apple Machine | Apple MacBook Pro 16" M1 Chip with 10-core CPU and 16-core GPU, 16MB memory, 512GB SSD | $2,299 | Offers the hardware for running intense Adobe applications<br><br>Good storage<br><br>Has additional graphics memory to better handle | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | graphics-intensive applications<br><br>4 Thunderbolt ports compared to the M1 laptop | |
| **Communication Design** (graphic design, advertising, etc.) PC Machine | **Dell XPS 15" (upgraded)**<br>i5, i7 or i9, 16 – 32GB memory, 1TB SSD | $1,800-2,500 | More RAM for additional video editing and multi-tasking of applications<br><br>Additional processing for rendering and multi-tasking applications<br><br>Multiple inputs to connect to a variety of devices | |
| **Illustration** (character development, graphic novels, editorial work, animation) | **Apple MacBook Pro 16"**<br>M1 Chip with 10-core CPU and 16-core GPU, 16MB memory, 512GB SSD | $2,299 | Offers the hardware for running intense Adobe applications<br><br>Good storage<br><br>Has additional graphics memory to better handle graphics-intensive applications<br><br>4 Thunderbolt ports compared to the M1 laptop | |
| **Product Design** or **Interior Architecture and Design** | **Dell XPS 15" (upgraded)**<br>i5, i7 or i9, 16 – 32GB memory, 1TB SSD | $1,800-2,500 | Meets the Windows -only software requirements for some applications<br><br>Has the hardware to handle renders and modeling<br><br>Multiple inputs to connect to a variety of devices and drawing tablets | |
| Best laptop for **3D modeling and Virtual Reality** (VR) programs | **Dell XPS 15" (upgraded)**<br>i5, i7 or i9, 16 – 32GB memory, 1TB SSD | $1,800-2,500 | Graphics card that can handle 3D modeling and VR<br><br>Has the RAM and processing power to better handle modeling<br><br>Uses Windows-exclusive applications | |

**Prices and specifications subject to change.*

**Q. Are 2-in-1, built-in touchscreen devices recommended?**

A. At this point, we do not recommend all students get a 2-in-1 as the technology is evolving and isn't always compatible with professional software. However, some students consider this option, and our recommended system is:

a. **Dell XPS 13" Touch Laptop**: Approximately $1400
   - Has drawing capability built in
   - Enough hardware to run Standard Adobe Applications
   - Lightweight and portable

**Q. Can I just bring a refurbished or older laptop?**

A. We recognize that technology comes in a wide range of prices and specifications. If your laptop is more than three years old, or you want to purchase a basic laptop, it will most likely be unable to handle the workload of even first-year digital coursework. No matter which major you choose, you'll need a laptop that can handle Adobe programs and Microsoft Office. Even a laptop purchased new in 2021 may need to be replaced during your college education depending on major and use of technology.

**Q. I want my own drawing tablet. What does MIAD recommend?**

A. MIAD has many professional Cintiq tablets with built-in monitors on campus available to all students, however, here are some we recommend for personal use and portability:

- **XP-PEN Deco01 10" x 6.25" Graphics Tablet**: $69
  https://www.amazon.com/10x6-25-Graphics-Battery-Free-Shortcut-Pressure/dp/B077P6BQP7
- **XP-PEN Artist13.3 Pro 13.3 Inch IPS Drawing Monitor**: $299
  https://www.amazon.com/XP-PEN-Artist13-3-Full-Laminated-Graphics-Function/dp/B07VPHR6GD

**Q. I also need extra storage space. What does MIAD recommend?**

A. All MIAD students receive unlimited storage through Google Drive, so backing up large files is available at no cost. This process can be much slower than storing your data (like large Photoshop or video files), so you may want extra storage. Here are 2 options:

- **Seagate Portable 2TB External Drive**
  https://www.amazon.com/Seagate-Portable-External-Hard-Drive/dp/B07CRG94G3/
- **LaCie Rugged USB-C 2TB External Hard Drive (drop and rain resistant)**
  https://www.amazon.com/LaCie-Rugged-USB-C-External-Portable/dp/B01N7QFZLQ

**We're here to help!**

If you have further technical questions, please contact Tech Services, at 414.847.3364. If you have activated your MIAD email account, you can also create a support ticket at support@miad.edu

If you would like to discuss student/parent loan options to help finance a laptop, please contact the MIAD Financial Aid Office at 414.847.3271.

**Please note that MIAD does not receive compensation to make laptop or technology recommendations.*

**Specifications and Terminology**
Below is the breakdown of specifications for each laptop presented and related terminology. You'll also find recommendations on what to look for should you decide to customize a machine yourself. Please note some of these links will expire and product specifications may change.

**Apple 13" MacBook Pro:** M1 Chip with 8-Core CPU and 8-Core GPU 256GB Storage = $1199
https://www.apple.com/us-hed/shop/buy-mac/macbook-pro/13-inch
Apple M1 chip with 8-core CPU, 8-core GPU, and 16-core Neural Engine
8GB unified memory
256GB SSD storage[1]
13-inch Retina display with True Tone
Magic Keyboard
Touch Bar and Touch ID
Force Touch trackpad
Two Thunderbolt / USB 4 ports

**Apple 16" MacBook Pro:** 2.66GHz 6-Core Processor 512GB AMD Radeon Pro 5300M = $2199
https://www.apple.com/us-hed/shop/buy-mac/macbook-pro/16-inch
2.6GHz 6-core 9th-generation Intel Core i7 processor
Turbo Boost up to 4.5GHz
AMD Radeon Pro 5300M with 4GB of GDDR6 memory
16GB of 2666MHz DDR4 memory
512GB of SSD storage[1]
16-inch Retina display with True Tone
Magic Keyboard
Touch Bar and Touch ID
Four Thunderbolt 3 ports

**Dell XPS 13" 2-in-1 PC** = Approximately $1400
https://www.dell.com/en-us/shop/dell-laptops/xps-13-touch-laptop/spd/xps-13-9310-laptop/xn9310cto200h
11th Generation Intel® Core™ i5-1135G7 Processor
Intel® Iris Xe Graphics
16GB 4267MHz LPDDR4x Memory Onboard
512GB PCIe NVMe x4 Solid State Drive Onboard

**Dell XPS 15" (standard)** = $1400-1500
https://www.dell.com/en-us/shop/laptops/new-xps-15/spd/xps-15-9520-laptop
9th Generation Intel® Core™ i7-9750H (12MB Cache, up to 4.5 GHz, 6 cores)
NVIDIA® GeForce® GTX 1650 4GB GDDR5
16GB DDR4-2666MHz, 2x8G
512GB M.2 PCIe NVMe Solid State Drive

**Dell XPS 15" (upgraded)** = $1800-2500
https://www.dell.com/en-us/shop/dell-laptops/new-xps-15-laptop/spd/xps-15-9520-laptop/xn9520cto020s?view=configurations
10th Generation Intel® Core™ i7-10750H or i9-10885H (16MB Cache, up to 5.3 GHz, 8 cores)
NVIDIA® GeForce® GTX 1650 Ti 4GB GDDR6
32GB DDR4-2933MHz, 2x16G
1TB M.2 PCIe NVMe Solid State Drive

**Terminology:**
8GB RAM (16GB, if possible): RAM is Random Access Memory this is what is used to temporarily store data when using applications, video games and other services.

500GB Storage Solid State: This is the storage for your computer. This is where all your data and files is stored on the computer. Solid State is a type of storage and is also referred to as flash storage. What that means is that there is no moving hardware and is similar in makeup to RAM, only it stores data in larger quantities and is fast to retrieve. This is the minimum size recommended to accommodate your programs and your files at MIAD.
4-Core processor Intel or AMD or M1: The processor is the handler of input and output of information from applications and functions on the computer. The faster the speed and more Cores are in the computer the faster it will perform in carrying out those tasks.

1GB Video Memory Graphics Card: This is the display component that is used to power the visuals in your computer in applications, games and your design programs. The better the processing power and memory, the better it can perform in carrying out those tasks.

Thunderbolt 3 Port: Thunderbolt 3 is a new type of cable designed to not only transmit data at high speed but also power. Because of this, you can use a variety of accessories and equipment via just this port. External Graphics Docks require this and can be useful if you need more power than what is in your laptop.

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Via your MIAD email account: support@miad.edu

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