

2023 Laptop Guidelines

Please read this section thoroughly and carefully.

We realize you're coming to Rady for a degree in Accountancy, Analytics, Business, or Finance, not Information Technology. However, the information on this page can help ensure you have a smooth educational experience, at least with regard to your personal technology. All students are required to have a laptop computer as a resource during the pursuit of their studies at the Rady School of Management.

When to Buy

We recommend that you delay purchasing your laptop until immediately before the start of your first quarter, i.e. within 30 days or less of your arrival on campus. For students starting in the Fall Quarter, this would mean purchasing your computer sometime in July/August. This timeline is recommended both to take advantage of the many "back-to-school" savings events offered by manufacturers, as well as ensuring that students are purchasing the latest technology available.

What to Buy

The table below shows the recommended configurations of the system that will ensure a solid working environment for your education and research endeavors while here the Rady School of Management. Before you look at the recommendations, however, here is a summary.

Both macOS and Windows computers will work for all Rady programs. We suggest you focus on hardware requirements rather than the operating system. While all laptops have gotten thinner and lighter, we recommend staying away from extreme examples of this trend. Due to the increased data-intensive nature of our programs, students will need a computer that can competently handle demanding tasks and the ultra-low-power processors used in these ultra-thin laptops, along with limited expandability makes them a poor choice. Stay away from Core i3, and/or less than 10th generation processors. Do not skimp on hard drive space or Memory and consider that SSD hard drives will drastically increase computer performance.

Below are the minimum and recommended hardware requirements for your laptop. These recommendations are based on the current technology and our experience of supporting our graduate students with their studies here at Rady. You will be a student for the next one, two or three years and combining this with our years of experience as a support team, we have created these recommendations based on what we have seen work, and what we have seen fail.

Laptop Hardware Requirements

	RECOMMENDED	MINIMUM	Notes
Processor	Intel i9 (13th Generation)	Intel i5 (11th Generation)	<p>Rady IT Recommends Intel's latest processor family for the best performance. Look for the "13th Generation Core Processor" brand name. You can also tell from the model number: Systems with a 13000 number after "Core i5" or "Core i9" e.g. Core i7-13710.</p> <p>All Apple M1 & M2 chip processors will also work.</p> <p>NOTE: If the specs show a "Core M" processor, that is a very low power, ultra-mobile version and you should select a different model computer.</p>
Hard Drive	1 TB (SSD)	512 GB (SSD)	<p>As a rule, purchase as much space as you can afford, though if you choose a solid-state drive (SSD), you will get more performance though at a higher cost per gigabyte. Rady IT recommends at least a 512 GB drive, regardless. Again, SSD hard drives will drastically improve your computer's performance. If it is not SSD, do not purchase that laptop.</p>
Memory(RAM)	24 GB	16 GB	<p>All new laptops are equipped with a minimum 8 GB of RAM, however, if the model you are considering has the option, we suggest getting 16 GB or greater for any new computer.</p> <p>MSBA students, your professors strongly recommend 16 GB of memory (RAM) or more. 8GB of memory will NOT work.</p>
Warranty	3 Years parts and labor + Accidental Protection	3 Years parts and labor	Rady IT strongly recommends the purchase of an extended

	RECOMMENDED	MINIMUM	Notes
			warranty to cover your time as a Rady graduate student.
Battery Life			Not all classrooms have a 1-1 student/plug ratio, and for exams you may be required to have your laptop operating for several consecutive hours. So, a laptop that can easily go 6-8 hours on a charge is recommended.
Networking	Wireless (802.11 a/c/n/ac & WiFi 6/802.11ax)		As a student you will be on the wireless network only. Wired networking is not required.
Region	Manufactured for U.S. only		

Software Requirements

*****Rady IT Help Desk can only provide support for the United States, English language versions of operating systems and Office productivity suites.*****

	REQUIRED	Notes
Operating System	Windows 10 Home or Professional or Education Version 22H2 (or later-latest is 22H2) or Windows 11 Home or Professional or Education Version 22H2	Windows 10 version 22H2 is the current version of Windows 10. You will be responsible for upgrading your computer during your program. If you need to upgrade your operating system version to 22H2, do so before starting your classes. Monthly updates should still be applied but refrain from upgrading the operating system after you start your program. MSBA program students will need Windows 10 Build 22H2 or Windows 11 Build 22H2. Click on the Windows logo and type "winver" without the quotes and enter to see which version you currently have installed. Please note: Microsoft support for version 21H2 ends in June 2023. If your operating system is 21H2, you should upgrade to 22H2 before your program begins.

	REQUIRED	Notes
Operating System	macOS Monterey (Version 12) or macOS Ventura (Version 13)	It is important to stay with the same operating system when you start your education at Rady. If you plan to upgrade, plan to do so during breaks like Winter or Summer break. The current macOS version is Ventura. To find out which version macOS is currently running on your computer, click on the Apple logo on the top left corner and select "About this Mac"
Office Suite	Office 2019 & Office 2021 Microsoft 365	Microsoft Office 365 University edition is provided to you for FREE during the length of your education here at Rady. You do NOT need to buy Microsoft Office. Follow these instructions to download and install Office Suite for free after getting your Active Directory account setup. If you decide to buy the product on your own, instead of using the one provided: Microsoft changes the packaging and names of the Office packages, but look for one that includes Excel, Word, PowerPoint at a minimum.
Other	Anti-Virus & Anti-Malware Software	Any up-to-date antivirus such as Sophos, Avira or Windows Defender is sufficient to meet UC San Diego's minimum network security standards.

Handouts

Starting with the Fall 2023 Quarter, instructors will no longer provide printed course handouts (slides, documents, etc.). Instead, Instructors will share digital copies of course handouts in advance of class via Canvas in PDF or PowerPoint format. If you prefer printed handouts, you will be responsible for printing them yourself using the available student printers on campus or a printer of your own.

In Class Note Taking

Some instructors may not allow the use of laptops in class for note-taking to reduce student distractions. If you do not want to print handouts or otherwise take handwritten notes, consider purchasing a tablet with pen input as a note-taking device, such as an iPad with the Apple Pencil. Alternatively, a convertible PC such as a Surface Pro or a Lenovo Yoga, which lays fully flat and supports pen input, would also be permitted.

Tablet and Netbook/Chromebook Support

Tablets (Apple's iPad, Samsung's Galaxy Tab, Motorola's Zoom, Amazon Kindle Fire) and Netbooks/Chromebooks (small laptops with a 10-11 inch screen with limited memory and

processing power), **DO NOT** meet the minimum hardware requirements for the Rady School of Management. While these are useful secondary devices, they cannot replace your primary laptop. Tablets and Netbooks are suitable for consuming content (checking e-mail, surfing the Internet, watching a video), but they are not compatible with educational software necessary to produce the coursework in your graduate program. If you chose to purchase a tablet as a secondary device, [Apple iPad Pro with a pencil](#) would work great.

Mobile Device Support

Rady IT only offers limited, best effort support for mobile devices. This includes smart phones (e.g. iPhone, iPad, Pixel, Android Phones, Windows Phone) and tablets (e.g. Kindle Fire, Samsung Galaxy Tab).

Rady IT Support Policy

Rady IT will provide the following support to all currently enrolled Rady School of Management Full-Time (FT), FlexWeekend (FW), FlexEvening (FE), Master of Professional Accountancy (MPAc), Master of Science in Business Analytics (MSBA) and Master of Finance (MFin) students whose laptop meets the minimum hardware and software requirements

- Assistance with software installation, configuration, and troubleshooting of Rady supported applications and tools such as wireless connection, printers, VPN, and email.
- Assistance with account issues (e.g. official name changes, a year or program changes, password reset, access problems, etc.).
- Assistance in diagnosing and troubleshooting hardware and software problems with your laptop on a best effort basis.
- Virus and spyware removal and prevention on a best effort basis (hard drive rebuild/deletion is not a service provided by Rady IT).

Rady IT does **NOT** provide the following services:

- Data backup and retrieval (we can recommend data retrieval companies).
- Hardware repair and depot (shipping and receiving) service.
- Connectivity with home or work wired and wireless networks.
- Support for third party peripherals (e.g. smartphones, digital cameras, MP3 players, etc.).
- Installation of operating systems on student PC or Apple computers. You must have your Operating System installed on your computer.

Frequently Asked Questions

Below are general guidelines and frequently asked questions that may be helpful for you in determining what kind of system you will need to bring with you, and for general questions regarding using your laptop during your time studying with us.

Q: Do I have to buy a new laptop just for this program?

A: If you have purchased a laptop recently, within the last year and it meets the minimum specifications; it is more than likely powerful enough to handle the workload here at Rady. We also strongly suggest you purchase the manufacturer's extended warranty to cover any damage to your system for at least the time you are here at the Rady School of Management.

Q: Which versions of Windows are supported by the Rady Help Desk Team? Which is the right one for me to use for my coursework?

A: The Rady Help Desk currently supports Windows 10 and Windows 11 - 22H2 version, "Home", "Professional" or "Education" editions.

If you would like, you can follow the instructions in this video to upgrade the "Home" version to the "Education" version for free after enrolling in your first classes at Rady. You have 31 days to complete the upgrade from the moment you submit this order. You can right click on the Windows logo on your desktop and select "System" to find out which version and edition of Windows operating system your computer currently is running.

Q: What languages of Operating System are supported by the Rady Help Desk Team?

A: Rady students have very diverse backgrounds and come from dozens of foreign countries. All courses are taught in English and to facilitate easy collaboration with other students, as well as efficient and effective support by the Rady Help Desk Team, we **strongly** encourage you to install and use the English language versions of your operating system and office software. The Rady Help Desk can only provide support for the United States, English language versions of operating systems, and Office productivity suites. We cannot emphasize this enough!

Q: What applications are needed and which versions of Microsoft Office are supported by Rady Help Desk Team?

A1: An up-to-date antivirus. There are many free options available including Windows Defender for PC and Avira or Sophos for Mac.

A2: Microsoft Office 2019, Office 2021 or Microsoft 365 version of Office. The names of the Office packages can change over time (Professional, Professional Plus, University, etc.), but look for a version that includes at least Word, Excel, PowerPoint. All English Editions of Office 2019, Office 2021 and Microsoft 365 Office products are supported by the Rady Help Desk. If you do not have a license to Microsoft Office 365, do not buy it. It will be provided to you free of charge. Versions prior to Office 2019 are not supported.

Q: Can I use my work computer for my schoolwork?

A: Short answer: No, we advise against the use of a computer that is owned by anyone other than the student. The software that is typically installed with corporate laptops may interfere with Rady settings for VPN and email access. Also, in many cases, end-users (you, the worker) are not given Administrator rights to the system, and so cannot install software or make the necessary configuration changes to enable smooth interoperability with Rady and UC San Diego systems.

Q: Where can I buy my new laptop and software to run with it?

A: You can purchase from any vendor, though purchasing from the [UCSD bookstore](#) lets you leverage your student status for both your hardware and software purchases at a significant savings over other retail outlets. If you want to see an example of a laptop that fits the recommendations, [see this page for Dell laptops \(Dell Latitude 14 matching our requirements\)](#) or [this one for Apple MacBooks \(MacBook Pro matching our requirements\)](#) Want to order it from the bookstore? [Click here](#).