

Introduction

Please read this section thoroughly and carefully.

We understand that you are joining the Rady School of Management for a degree in Accountancy, Analytics, Business, or Finance—not Information Technology. However, the information on this page will help ensure you have a smooth educational experience regarding your personal technology. All students are required to have a laptop computer as a resource during their studies at the Rady School of Management.

When to Buy

We recommend delaying your laptop purchase until immediately before the start of your first quarter, within 30 days or less of your arrival on campus. For students starting in Summer Quarter, this means purchasing your computer in June or July at the latest, while for students starting in the Fall Quarter, this means purchasing your computer in July or August. This timeline allows you to take advantage of 'back-to-school' savings events offered by manufacturers and ensures you get the latest technology available.

What to Buy

The table below shows the recommended configurations to ensure a solid working environment for your education and research at the Rady School of Management. Both macOS and Windows computers will work for all Rady programs. Focus on hardware requirements rather than the operating system. While all laptops have become thinner and lighter, avoid extremely thin models. The increased data-intensive nature of our programs requires a computer that can handle demanding tasks. Ultra-low-power processors used in ultra-thin laptops, along with limited expandability, make them a poor choice. Avoid Core i3 and processors older than the 13th generation. The latest generation is 14th gen as of November 2023. Do not skimp on hard drive space (SSD) or memory (RAM).

Laptop Hardware Requirements

Component	Recommended	Minimum	Notes
Processor	Intel i9 (14th Generation)	Intel i5 (13th Generation)	Look for the '14th Generation Core Processor' brand. ARM-based chipsets for Windows are not recommended.
	All M3 processors M3, M3 Pro, M3 Max	M2	
Hard Drive	1 TB (SSD)	512 GB (SSD)	SSDs drastically improve performance. If it's not SSD, do not purchase that laptop.
Memory (RAM)	24 GB	16 GB	Minimum 16 GB recommended, especially for MSBA students. 8 GB will NOT work.

Warranty	3 Years parts and labor + Accidental Protection	3 Years parts and labor	Extended warranty recommended for coverage during your time at Rady.
Battery Life			A laptop that can easily go 6-8 hours on a charge is recommended. Not all classrooms have enough power outlets.
Networking	WiFi 6/802.11ax	Wireless 802.11 a/c/n/ac	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. ★ ★ ★

Operating System

Windows 10 Home/Professional/Education Version 22H2 or
Windows 11 Home/Professional/Education Version 23H2.
Ensure you upgrade as needed.

macOS Ventura (Version 13) or macOS Sonoma (version 14).
Upgrade during breaks like Winter or Summer.

Office Suite

Microsoft 365 (provided for free during your education at Rady).

Other Software

Up-to-date antivirus software such as Sophos, Avira, or Windows Defender.

Handouts

Instructors no longer provide printed handouts. Digital copies will be available via Canvas.

In-Class Note Taking

Some instructors may not allow laptops for note-taking. Consider a tablet with pen input or a convertible PC for digital notes (e.g., iPad Air or iPad Pro with an Apple Pencil).

Tablet and Netbook/Chromebook Support

These devices do not meet the minimum hardware requirements for Rady. They are suitable as secondary devices only.

Mobile Device Support

Limited support is available for mobile devices like smartphones and tablets.

Rady IT Support Policy

The Rady School IT provides support for currently enrolled Rady students with laptops meeting the minimum requirements. Support includes assistance with software installation, configuration, troubleshooting of the Rady School supported applications, account issues, and virus/spyware removal on a best-effort basis. The Rady School IT does NOT provide data backup, hardware repair, support for third-party peripherals, or operating system [installation](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I use Copilot+ PC for my program?

Microsoft has recently announced that they are offering [Copilot+ PCs](#) with their own Microsoft Surface and with other OEMs such as Acer, ASUS, Dell, Lenovo and others. This computer line is very new and is yet to be tested at our school. We recommend NOT to purchase these computers for your program at this time.

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

If your current laptop, purchased within the last year, meets the minimum specifications, it should be sufficient. We strongly suggest purchasing an extended warranty.

Which versions of Windows are supported by the Rady Help Desk Team?

Windows 10 (22H2) and Windows 11 (23H2) in 'Home,' 'Professional,' or 'Education' editions.

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

Only the United States English versions of operating systems and office software are supported to facilitate easy collaboration and efficient support.

What applications are needed and which versions of Microsoft Office are supported?

An up-to-date antivirus and Microsoft 365 Office (including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint). Do not purchase Office 365; it is provided for free.

Can I use my work computer for my schoolwork?

No, it is advised against using a work computer due to potential conflicts with the Rady School settings and lack of Administrator rights.

Where can I buy my new laptop and software?

You can purchase from any vendor, but the UCSD bookstore offers significant savings for students. Examples of suitable laptops can be found on the [UCSD bookstore website](#).