Laptop Requirements for the BFA in Interior Design degree

All Interior Design software is run through the PC platform. If you are looking to purchase a new laptop or desktop computer, it is highly advisable that you buy a PC. You can get by with a Mac, however, it will need to be partitioned in order to be able to run Windows and subsequently the design software that we teach and use: AutoCAD, Sketchup, Revit most commonly; Enscape for computer renderings; and also, the Adobe Creative Cloud (which includes Photoshop, Premiere Pro, and Acrobat).

Also keep in mind that these requirements were created in the summer of 2022, and that technology moves fast. If you are using this as a reference at a time later than that, adjust the numbers accordingly to stay AHEAD of the technology curve. Meaning, don't buy something that is instantly obsolete.

The BFA in Interior Design program focuses both on designing and drawing by hand AND through the computer. As such, the first year of your studies is heavily weighted towards "hand-eye skills" such as drafting and model-building (although you will still need a computer for your GE classes for things such as research and paper-writing). If you are looking to invest in a laptop strictly for design, wait until you get closer to your 3rd semester (for traditional students straight out of high school). If you are a transfer or 2nd-degree student, plan to update your technology right away.

There are MANY computers and laptops that will be adequate for you. Use the following specifications to choose appropriately. If you are physically shopping at a store, print out this list and show it to the sales representative. If you are shopping online, use these stats to filter out a machine that is right for you. Plan to spend about $1,000-$1,500. Don't trust machines that are less than that; make sure the machine you are getting is really worth it if it costs more:

- Operating System: 64-bit Windows 11 (Windows 10 is fine as well)
- CPU: Intel Core i7 or AMD Ryzen 7
- Memory: 16 GB minimum / 32 GB preferred
- Disk: minimum 512 MB SSD (Solid State Drive)
- Graphics: Discrete Graphics Processing Unit with a minimum of 6 GB of VRAM. The VRAM needs to support Vulkan 1.1 (examples: NVIDIA GeForce RTX 2070 / Quadro RTX 4000 or AMD equivalent (eg. Radeon RX 5700 XT))

If you are worried about what brand to buy, go with the popular ones, or rather, ones that you can easily find reviews on and have tech support as part of their sales package. In actuality, the technological needs of an interior designer are identical to that of a video gamer, so brands that specialize in gaming computers should be considered.

Any questions, contact Professor MJ Divino, chair of the Interior Design program, at mdivino@kean.edu