

Avonside Girls' High School

Digital Devices for Learning



In 2021 all students in Years 9 – 13 are expected to bring their own device for learning. This will enable each of them to access a wide range of opportunities for learning which are beyond the classroom walls, and the geographical limits of our campus. The use of the own device for learning will enable students to collaborate in solving real-world problems, and to develop the critical thinking skills which are essential in the 21st century.

Avonside has a **Windows platform**, and is authorised to offer Microsoft Student Advantage. This means any student can freely download Microsoft Office Suite software (worth \$900+) on to their personal device(s) while enrolled at Avonside. Many of the learning activities are promoted through this platform. For this reason a **Windows machine** (or a more expensive MacBook) are the preferred devices – an Ipad, a Chromebook, or any Android device cannot take full advantage of this environment.

These are the important things to consider when purchasing a tablet/netbook/laptop for learning:

Recommendations for Learning at Avonside		Essential?
1. Operating System	A Windows 8 (or 10) machine, or a MacBook . N.B. An Ipad , a chromebook or an Android tablet are not suitable.	yes
2. Screen	At least 10 inches A smart phone or an 8" tablet is not adequate for learning activities at high school	yes
3. Battery	At least 6-8 hours needed to last through the school day	yes
4. Keyboard	YES (could be an attached 'cover')	yes
5. Memory	At least 4GB	
6. Hard drive capacity	At least 64GB on-board storage. This is an absolute minimum, and will suffice in the junior school, but may not be enough in the senior years. Solid state memory (DDR, SSD, eMMC) are faster, lighter and more reliable than an optical hard drive (HDD)	yes
7. Weight	This aspect needs to be considered. Lighter is better. A netbook, or a tablet with an attached keyboard, is very portable, while a (full-sized) 15" laptop can weigh up to 2.5kg.	
8. Camera	Can be useful, but is more easily managed on a phone.	
9. Cover protection	This might be the keyboard attached to a tablet, or a "sleeve" protection. The device needs to "travel safely" in a school bag/backpack every day.	yes
10. Mouse	A new device is likely to have a touchpad	no

While any wireless device may access the internet at Avonside, not all devices are suitable for our learning environment and communicating with our network. Many students have more than one device (eg a smartphone, and a laptop) and choose which one is better to use for each task – different devices have differing features, and differing levels of usefulness.

Features	Smartphone	Tablet	Netbook	Laptop
Large screen size	✗	✓	✓	✓
Fits in a pocket	✓	✗	✗	✗
Battery lasts all day	✓	<i>Essential – check specifications</i>		
Short start up time	✓	✓	<i>Some models</i>	

Usefulness	Smartphone	Tablet	Netbook	Laptop
Basic reference, e.g. dictionary, calculator, simple searching	✓	✓	✓	✓
Internet research	✓	✓	✓	✓
Taking photos recording audio/video	✓	✓	<i>Possibly, but not the best tool</i>	
Manipulating photos, editing audio/video	✗	✓	✓	✓
Communicating with the teacher or other students (e.g. email, text message)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Creating and working with typical documents	✗	<i>limitations</i>	✓	✓

Cost will affect any choice made about technology. The higher the cost generally means more features, greater capacity, faster processing.