

# BUYER'S **guide**

## Multimedia Laptops

Although laptop prices have leveled out recently, they continue to become more powerful.

The budget laptops profiled here—priced less than \$900\*—boast good-sized hard drives, fast processors, solid graphics performance, and often flash memory card readers. They all include DVD recording drives (which can also burn and read CDs).

All come standard with wireless networking capability. This feature raises the price slightly, but it dramatically increases the versatility of the machines. Students and teachers won't be tied down with wires just to navigate the network, allowing computers to be useful in the library, during lunch breaks, on field trips, and even potentially from the student's home.

Laptops aren't typically as upgradeable as desktops, but most of these can easily accept more RAM at the least. Nearly every one of these systems can also be ordered with a bevy of upgrades and options such as larger hard drives, faster CPUs, as well as software bundles and OS upgrades.

Nearly all the Windows laptops are capable of running Microsoft's Vista, but you might want to specify at least 1 GB RAM, or better yet, 2 GB for full functionality.

As always, size is also a price factor in the laptop category. Small, lighter units typically command a premium, except when it comes to the screen size. However, larger screens typically drain batteries faster.

Prices are basic, educational pricing can be significantly lower.

Vendor	Model	URL	Price	Size (in.)
Acer	Aspire AS3100-1868	<a href="http://www.acer.com">http://www.acer.com</a>	\$610	10.6 × 14.1 × 1.3
Apple	MacBook	<a href="http://www.apple.com">http://www.apple.com</a>	\$1,299*	8.92 × 12.78 × 1.08
Averatec	AV2370-HM1E	<a href="http://www.averatec.com">http://www.averatec.com</a>	\$799	11.69 × 8.38 × 1.44
Dell	Inspiron 1501	<a href="http://www.dell.com">http://www.dell.com</a>	\$639	10.45 × 14 × 1.44
Gateway	NX570X	<a href="http://www.gateway.com">http://www.gateway.com</a>	\$699	10.5 × 14.2 × 1.33
Hewlett-Packard	Compaq Presario V6000Z	<a href="http://www.hp.com">http://www.hp.com</a>	\$575	10.12 × 14.05 × 1.56
Hewlett-Packard	Pavilion dv9000z	<a href="http://www.hp.com">http://www.hp.com</a>	\$899	11.65 × 15.16 × 1.57
Lenovo	3000 c200	<a href="http://www.lenovo.com">http://www.lenovo.com</a>	\$699	10.9 × 13.1 × 1.3
Sony	VGN N320E	<a href="http://www.sony.com">http://www.sony.com</a>	\$899	10.4 × 14.3 × 1.4
Toshiba	Satellite A200/205	<a href="http://www.toshiba.com">http://www.toshiba.com</a>	\$739	10.5 × 14.3 × 1.55

\* The cost of the Apple machine included here is higher than the upper limit of \$900. We included it to help Apple users find a low-cost laptop.

Weight (lbs.)	CPU Speed	CPU Brand	RAM	Hard Drive	Screen size (in.)	Graphics	Drives	Special Features
6.2	1.8 GHz	AMD Sempron 3400+	512 MB	80 GB	15.4	ATI Radeon Xpress 1100	DVD±R/RW/CD-R	MS Vista Home Basic, 5-in-1 media reader
5.1	2.16 GHz	Intel Core Duo	1 GB	120 GB	13.3	Intel GMA 950	DVD±R/RW/CD-R	iSight video camera, OS X v 10.4
4.08	1.6 GHz	AMD Turion 64 X2	1 GB	100 GB	12.1	nVidia GeForce Go 6100	DVD±R/RW/CD-R	4-in-1 media reader, MS XP Media Center Edition
6.7	1.87 GHz	AMD Turion 64 X2	1 GB	80 GB	15.4	ATI Radeon Xpress 1150	DVD±R/RW/CD-R	3-in-1 card reader, MS Vista Home Basic
6.25	1.73 GHz	Intel Pentium dual core	1 GB	80 GB	15.4	Intel GMA 950	DVD±R/RW/CD-R	6-in-1 media card reader, MS Vista Home Premium
6.6	1.7 GHz	AMD Athlon 64 X2	1 GB	80 GB	15.4	nVidia GeForce Go 6150	DVD±R/RW/CD-R	Multi-format card reader, Vista Home Basic
7.8	1.7 GHz	AMD Turion 64 X2	1 GB	120 GB	17	nVidia GeForce Go 6150	DVD±R/RW/CD-R with	Multi-format card reader, Vista Home Premium
6.13	1.73 GHz	Intel Celeron M	512 MB	80 GB	15	Intel GMA 950	DVD±R/RW/CD-R	MMC, SD, and Memory Stick card reader, Vista Home Basic
6.3	1.6 GHz	Intel Core Duo	1 GB	120 GB	15.4	Intel GMA 950	DVD±R/RW/CD-R	Memory Stick, Memory Stick Pro card Reader, Vista Home Premium
6.29	1.73 GHz	Intel Pentium dual core	512 MB	80 GB	15.4	Intel GMA 950	DVD±R/RW/CD-R	IEEE-1394 port, Vista Home Basic