

Buying a Digital Camera

1. Mega pixels, Mega pixels, Mega pixels
:::6, 5, 4, 3, 2 Mega Pixels, what is better and why? Take the mega pixel number and multiply it by a million, that is the number of photo dots (pixels) in a picture taken on that camera. The more pixels in a photo the more detailed it becomes. For home use, the best camera that is affordable has 6 mega pixels.
:::DC4-H Tech Team Recommends a 5.0 Mega pixel camera or better.
2. Point and Shoot Camera's
:::In the new digital photography arena, they are not only very popular, however they are the least expensive digital cameras. These cameras are fully automatic and usually don't provide a lot of creative control—that's why they are called "point and shoot." With resolutions up to 3 to 6 million pixels, you can get great prints.
:::DC4-H Tech Team Recommends Point and Shoot Cameras for everyone.
3. Zoom
:::There are two types of zoom: Optical and Digital. Optical zoom is when a camera physically moves lenses so that objects at different distances can be focused on. Digital zoom is a process in a camera; that takes the optically zoomed image and digitally enlarges and focuses a part of that image. It is difficult to take a picture with motion in it when a camera is digitally zooming. Also, if a person has jerky hands or can't hold a camera very still, the picture becomes streaky.
:::DC4-H Tech Team Recommends buying a camera that has the best optical zoom that you can afford. Companies try to say one camera is better than another because it can zoom farther but make sure they aren't talking about digitally zooming farther.

Dodge County 4-H Tech Team Mission

The Dodge County 4-H Technology Team is an educational group of Youth and Adults involved in 4-H to help other Youth and Adults through: Classes, DC4-H Web Site, and Technological Services.

We offer classes to everyone: youth, adult, 4-H Member, prospective members, and non-members. These classes cover topics pertaining to the 4-H Computer Project and its curriculum, as well as general information about computers, technology, and computer safety in this technological world.

We maintain the Dodge County 4-H Web Site which is to be used for providing general information about 4-H as well as our program in this county. It is also designed to educate by offering materials presented in the different projects including the computer project. The DC4-H Web Site can also be used as a recruitment tool to bring prospective members into the 4-H community.

We provide Technological Services to the 4-H community, by providing a knowledge base, a group dedicated to technology, and by volunteering, we hope to better our community and the 4-H program. We also wish to provide equipment that can be used for educational purposes within the 4-H program.



**Dodge County 4-H
Tech / Project Team**

**Tech Team/Computer Project
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Dodge County 4-H Technology Team

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Web: <http://dodge.uwex.edu/4h/>

Links of Interest:

<http://www.shortcourses.com/choosing/contents.htm>

<http://www.frostburg.edu/events/newpc.htm>

<http://www.tbfuller.com/classes/index.html>

Buying A New Computer or Digital Camera

Information and Recommendations on purchasing your next PC, laptop, and digital camera.



Buying a Computer or Laptop

This brochure will provide the fundamentals that you will need to buy your next computer or digital camera. This information was written on 10/23/2005 on information about computers and cameras available at that time, and therefore may not be as useful in a year or two.

The information listed first, in the list, is more important than that listed at the end.

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1. Brand, Brand, Brand

:::Dell, Gateway, HP/Compaq, Toshiba, Sony, and MPC are brand names that are on the market today. No matter what type of computer you are getting PC/laptop always buy name brand. The service and support will always be better. Even the local guy down the road will fix a name brand computer if you didn't buy it from him.
:::DC4-H Tech Team Recommends the Dell Dimension line for a home PC. Also, we recommend Sony Vaio or the Toshiba Satellite line for a laptop.

2. Operating System

:::In the PC market there is really only one choice that will work and that's Microsoft Windows. The versions that are available today on most systems are Microsoft Windows XP Home, Professional, or Media Center Editions.
:::DC4-H Tech Team Recommends for home use, the obvious choice of Windows XP Home Edition. If you are doing a lot of media type processes, then the choice is once again obvious, Windows XP Media Center Edition.



This pamphlet does not cover buying a Apple style computer. If you are interested in a Apple please visit "<http://www.apple.com>".

3. Processor

:::The true heart and soul of the computer is its processor. There are two major competitors in the processor industry, they are: Intel and AMD. Intel is known for its Pentium line and AMD is known for its Athlon line of processors. Both are major competitors in the field. When buying a computer always look for the highest speed processor that can be found in your price-range. Also, judge what you will be doing with the computer; if you will be doing many tasks that require a lot of processing get a bigger processor, on the other hand if you are just going on the internet and doing word processing then look for a smaller processor.

:::DC4-H Tech Team Recommends the Intel Pentium 4 line of processors. A certain speed is hard to recommend but a 2.0-2.8GHz processor will be more than enough for everyone.

4. Memory/RAM

:::The other heart of the computer is its Random Access Memory (RAM) Bank. This bank is what allows a computer to multi-task. The RAM allows files and code to be put into quickly accessible chips and when the code is needed it can be quickly accessed. A rule of thumb is that more RAM is better. If you want to give your computer a good zip, always have more memory. There is a limit though, always stick within your price range, and judge the usage of your computer. If it is hardly used and only one to two things normally run at once, don't get as much memory.

:::DC4-H Tech Team Recommends 512MB of DDR-RAM.

5. I/O Ports, USB, Fire-wire, and Internet/Networking

:::Input/Output ports, USB, Fire-wire, and Networking components allow the information to be entered/inputted, viewed and worked on by the output ports. I/O Ports are used for Keyboard and Mouse, COMM, Parallel, video, Game, sound, and etc. Jjust get what you need, no more no less. Video Ports/Cards are sometimes customizable when a computer is ordered. If you will be doing serious graphic design or drafting look for a faster and better video card. USB and Fire-wire are two types of high speed communication cables. They usually communicate to peripherals for the computer such as printers, scanners, wireless mice, and cameras. As people use there computer more the often add numerous things that use USB and fire-wire ports, therefore more is usually better. Always get a dial-up modem at 56Kbps. Network-

ing has changed recently adding a new type to the world known as WI-FI. Before all that was to be worried about was a 10/100 Mega-bit Network Interface card and it didn't matter with brand or prices. Now the world of WI-FI has evolved. Now there are numerous styles of wireless networking or WI-FI, these standard are known by letters like B, G, and A. If you live in the country or have dial-up internet and don't plan on getting high speed internet do not worry about paying extra for wireless networking. If you are getting a laptop and planning on traveling with it, make sure it has built in wireless B & G.

:::DC4-H Tech Team Recommends 2 PS2 Ports, 1 Parallel, COMM, GAME, Video Card/Port, 1 sound card, 4 or more USB 2.0 Ports, 1-2 Fire-wire Ports, 1 NIC Port, 1 Modem. If a laptop WI-FI Wireless Standards B & G compliant, "A" standard if available.

6. Bays, CD-ROM, CD-RW, DVD-R, DVD-RW, and 3 1/2 In. Floppy

:::Possibly the most confusing part of buying a computer is what to fill the bays with on the front of your new computer. Recently, most computer companies stopped shipping computers with a 3 1/2 In. Floppy Drives, if you need one make sure that you ordered it with your computer. Also, if you want to make music or data CD's you need a CD-RW drive. If you want to have the option of burning home movies and large amounts of data then purchase a DVD-RW Drive.
:::DC4-H Tech Team Recommends purchasing a 3 1/2 In Floppy Drive as well as having a CD-Rom and CD-RW drive.



CD's, DVD's, and Floppy's seem to be the most confusing part of buying

7. Keep in mind packaged software that come with your new computer. Get some form of Microsoft Office 2003. Look to see which products you need when you buy packaged software, and don't pay too much for things you don't need.

Dodge County 4-H Technology Team

***Most recommendations work for both PC's and laptops unless otherwise stated.