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### **How To Buy A Computer:**

I will cover many of the "basic items" to examine when comparing desktop computer systems so that you can make an informed purchasing decision. Processor choices are a bit more difficult now. It is still really a choice between an AMD and an INTEL **PROCESSOR**. The difference really comes in how many cores there are in the processor and its relative speed. Look at the gigabyte speed of the processor offered and compare the prices. AMD will be cheaper but I feel the INTEL is more reliable. Look for 2.5 Gigahertz.

Most desktop computers now use a type of **MEMORY** (RAM) called DDR2. It is best to have at least 1GB of memory in the system and preferably 2GB. Memory speeds can impact performance as well. The faster the memory, the better the performance should be.

**HARD DRIVES** really boil down to size and speed. The larger the drive and the faster, the better the performance and capacity. In a desktop, it is best to have at least 250GB or more of storage space these days.

Most systems sold now feature **DVD BURNERS**, even the budget systems. Speeds should be 16x for the recordable speed. Dual or Double Layer media support is also a common feature although less likely to be used due to media cost. I suggest having a DVD reader and well as a DVD writer for copying convenience.

Many upgrades and peripherals to computers now connect through external interfaces instead of internal cards. Check to see how many and what type of external ports are available on the computer for use with future peripherals. It should have at least six **USB 2.0 CONNECTORS** and one FireWire port.

**LCD MONITORS** are pretty much the standard now because of their reduced size and power consumption. The real issue is more about size and cost of the LCDs. The price difference between 17 and 19-inch models make 19-inch the best overall value although 20 to 22-inch models are quickly dropping in price.

Generally speaking I suggest buying as much muscle as you can afford now. Adding internal upgrades will include labor costs. Laptops cost about 30% more and are trickier to upgrade. Plan on spending around \$600 for a good desktop. The monitor, keyboard and mouse will bring that cost up to about \$900. Variations on cost is determined by the above components. Nothing new...you get what you pay for.

### **Basic Training:**

My fall classes are full but winter classes will be forming soon. Check my website as they become available. Don't forget to register for my newsletters at [www.ohcomputertraining.com](http://www.ohcomputertraining.com). I will keep you updated with news on upcoming classes as well as hints and tips.

Janis Weber, owner of Ohio Computer Training, is a personal computer tutor. E-mail questions or comments to [jwpctutor@gmail.com](mailto:jwpctutor@gmail.com). Contact her for personal training at 419-885-4255. Visit [OhComputerTraining.com](http://OhComputerTraining.com) for archived articles and upcoming classes.