COMPUTING AT THE MORITZ COLLEGE OF LAW
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I have to buy a computer for use in law school?

The Moritz College of Law does not require that you purchase a computer and provides a well-equipped computer lab for all law students. There are, however, significant benefits to having your own computer and we suggest that you buy one if at all possible. You are entering a profession in which the use of computers is ubiquitous and in which information technology is very important. At an immediately practical level, you will be expected to produce written work, using standard word processing software, throughout your law school career. Prospective employers will expect neatly printed application letters and resumés. Many faculty allow students to use computers to take notes in class, and to write answers to examination questions. In addition, a computer equipped with a modem or network card will give you access to Lexis, Westlaw, the internet, and email from your home.

What use will I make of a computer during law school?

At a minimum you will use a computer to prepare written research projects and for assignments in your Legal Writing & Research class. You will also learn in the first semester how to use the Lexis and Westlaw online legal research systems. In addition, some of your professors will use email listservs or web-based course sites to communicate with you. Also, many faculty members permit students in their courses to use a computer to write answers to examination questions.

Should I buy a desktop or a laptop computer?

You need to compare the respective benefits of laptop and desktop computers before deciding which one to buy. Desktop computers have several advantages over laptops: you can purchase more computing power, memory, and storage space for less money and have a larger monitor and keyboard in the bargain. In addition, desktop computers are less likely to be stolen than laptops and are almost impossible to misplace.

On the other hand, you can’t lug a desktop PC to your classes or around the Moritz Law Library. Consequently, if you are interested in portable computing, you should seriously consider purchasing a laptop. You can use the laptop in most classes (there are electrical outlets by each seat in each classroom) and in the Moritz Law Library. If you purchase a wireless network card for your laptop, you will also be able to access the internet and email via the Moritz College wireless network.
What brand of computer should I buy?

The Moritz College of Law does not recommend a specific brand of computer. We do suggest, however, that you purchase a Windows-based (or “IBM clone”) computer rather than an Apple/Mac. The legal profession uses Window-based personal computers almost exclusively, as does the Moritz College. If you have been an Apple user in the past, this would be a good time to learn to use a Windows machine.

Not surprisingly, when purchasing a computer it is important to select one from a company known for making reliable products and for providing quick service if a component fails during the warranty period. This latter point is important since the Moritz College does not have the staff to fix your computer if something goes wrong. You will also want to buy the “most” computer you can afford. Do not be concerned, however, if you buy a machine which is a step or two behind the cutting edge; virtually all of the computing you will be doing in the course of your work in law school involves word-processing, online legal research, email, and the internet. Most computers on the market today will handle this level of computing without trouble.

Should I buy a printer?

Yes, if you want to print at home. You do have the option of copying your documents to a disk or flash drive, bringing it to the College, and using the computer lab printers. Remember that printing in the computer lab costs $.05 per page except for print jobs sent from Lexis and Westlaw to the printers maintained by those two companies.

Does OSU offer discounts on software or hardware?

The OSU Bookstores and the Office of Information Technology offer a wide variety of site-licensed or educational-discounted software. You can, for example, purchase a packaged array of popular Microsoft desktop software, the “Buckeye Bundle,” which includes the current Microsoft Office suite at a significantly discounted price. OSU provides all OSU students with a free download of McAfee’s Enterprise anti-virus software and other products. Ohio State students can also purchase computers from several vendors at a discount. You can find more information at it.osu.edu.

Is there a computer lab in the Moritz College of Law?

The College maintains a computer lab for the exclusive use of its students. The lab is in the Moritz Law Library and is equipped with over 40 computers containing Corel WordPerfect and Microsoft Office suites, CALI programs, and access to Lexis, Westlaw, the internet and email. The lab also has two, high-capacity laser printers to which the computers are networked. Printing costs $.05 per page and operates on a card-swipe system, using your Buck-ID card and debiting your Buck-ID account. The Computer
Training Room, also in the Moritz Law Library, with another 15 workstations, is also available when not being used for training. In addition, the lab has laser printers supplied by Lexis and Westlaw for printing from those online legal research systems. Printing from Westlaw and Lexis is free as long as you send the print-jobs to the Lexis and Westlaw printers.

**Is there access to the internet from locations in Drinko Hall outside the computer lab?**

Yes, all of Drinko Hall, including the Moritz Law Library, is covered by the Moritz College wireless network (MoritzLaw). The OSU wireless network is a separate wireless network that can be used elsewhere on the main campus. Through the MoritzLaw wireless network, you will have access to the internet, email, Westlaw and Lexis. To use the MoritzLaw wireless network you will need a laptop computer equipped with an IEEE 802.11a/b/g compliant wireless network interface card. You must also register your laptop computer with us (only registered computers have access to the Moritz wireless network). We will provide you with more information on the MoritzLaw wireless network, and with assistance in installing the card, and configuring and registering your laptop, when you arrive at orientation.

**Does OSU provide me with access to the internet from my home?**

If you plan to live in the South Campus Gateway apartments, you will have wired internet access in your apartment. If you plan to live in an OSU dorm, you will have network access to the internet through ResNet. For other internet options, check [it.osu.edu](http://it.osu.edu).

**Whom can I contact with questions?**

If you have questions, please contact:

Sharron Tucker, Systems Specialist/Help Desk  
Room 282 (Moritz Law Library)  
Phone: (614) 247-6885  
Email: tucker.293@osu.edu