Get Connected @ Northwestern University 2006

Your guide to computers, e-mail, networking, and technology on campus.
Getting started

There are many technology resources waiting for you at Northwestern University: computing and collaboration, high-speed networks and wireless access, essential software and online tools. All of these resources will expand the possibilities of your experience at Northwestern—but they can also seem overwhelming at first.

Northwestern University Information Technology (NUIT) is here to help and make it easy to get started. The information in this brochure is essential reading to get up to speed on the technology at Northwestern before you get to campus. Don’t miss the checklist on the back page and read about important topics such as:

- Bringing your computer
- Getting on the network
- Accessing your e-mail
- Connecting in residence halls or from off campus
- Learning safe computing habits
- Knowing your computing responsibilities
- Finding technical support

Of course, if you can’t find what you need here, NUIT is happy to point you in the right direction. Just check out our Web site at <www.it.northwestern.edu> or call us directly at 847-491-HELP (4357).
Computers @ Northwestern

Do I need a computer?
You bet! Computers are required equipment for incoming Northwestern students. You will need a computer for so many aspects of life on campus—registering for classes, getting e-mail, doing research, preparing school work, and even participating in your classes online.

What kind of computer do I need?
It doesn’t need to be brand new, but it should at least meet NUIT’s base recommendations found on the next page. You can be sure that your machine will work with all the resources Northwestern has to offer.

Even if you already own a computer, check the guidelines for your school on page 5 because some programs have additional requirements. Also consider that your computer will need to last at least four years.

If you need to purchase a computer, Northwestern offers a Web site to find vendors who offer student discounts at <www.virtualstore.northwestern.edu>. Student discounts may not secure the very best prices, so you should compare before you buy.

Windows or Macintosh?
The choice is yours—NUIT supports both operating systems. Double check with your school for specific requirements.

Where can I get the software I need?
Skip the big-box store and buy software through Northwestern’s Software Center. You’ll need at least a word processing program, and many other software programs are either free for download or available for the best prices around.* Titles include Microsoft Office, Maple, Mathematica, EndNote, and Symantec/Norton AntiVirus. Find out more at <www.it.northwestern.edu/software/students/>.

*Prices are subject to change.

Can I ship my computer to my residence hall?
It is best to bring your computer with you. If this isn’t possible, and you will be living in a residence hall, you can ship the machine to your address at your own risk:

Student Name
Residence Hall Name
Street Address, Room Number
Evanston, IL 60201

Choose a shipping company that provides tracking information, proof of delivery, and insurance, and request an arrival date of Thursday, September 7, 2006. Items arriving before this date will be returned. This service is provided as a courtesy only, and the package center will try to deliver small packages to your room before September 12. Oversized and late-arriving items will be held in storage. If items are not in your room when you arrive, claim your package with a photo ID at your residence hall’s mail room. If you have questions, contact res-life@northwestern.edu or 847-491-3541.
# Recommended Hardware Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer Processor/Speed</th>
<th>PC Desktop</th>
<th>PC Laptop</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.0 GHz or faster Pentium 4 or equivalent processor</td>
<td>1.6 GHz or faster Pentium M, 2.4 GHz or faster Pentium 4 or equivalent processor</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| RAM | At least 1 GB RAM | At least 1 GB RAM |

| Hard Disk | At least 60 GB hard disk | At least 40 GB hard disk |

| Ethernet Cards | 10/100 Mbps Ethernet | 10/100 Mbps Ethernet |

| Wireless Cards | N/A | 802.11b/g wireless |

| CD/DVD | CD-RW or combo drive | CD-RW or combo drive |

| Operating System | Microsoft® Windows XP Professional Service Pack 2 | Microsoft® Windows XP Professional Service Pack 2 |

| Video Cards | NVIDIA or ATI card with 128 MB RAM | NVIDIA or ATI card with 128 MB RAM |

| Monitor | 17" LCD display, with EnergyStar rating | N/A |

| USB Ports | At least 4 USB 2.0 ports | At least 2 USB 2.0 ports |

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### Macintosh Desktop

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<tr>
<th>Computer Processor/Speed</th>
<th>iMac G5 1.8 GHz, Mac Mini*, or faster processor</th>
<th>iBook G4 1.33 GHz, or faster processor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| RAM | At least 1 GB RAM (*512 MB for Mac Mini) | At least 512 MB RAM |

| Hard Disk | At least 40 GB hard disk | At least 40 GB hard disk |

| Ethernet Cards | 10/100 Mbps Ethernet | 10/100 Mbps Ethernet |

| Wireless Cards | N/A | AirPort card or any 802.11b/g compatible |

| CD/DVD | CD-RW or combo drive | CD-RW or combo drive |

| Operating System | Mac OS X 10.4 (Tiger) | Mac OS X 10.4 (Tiger) |

| Video Cards | NVIDIA or ATI card with 128 MB RAM (*32 MB for Mac Mini) | NVIDIA or ATI card with 32 MB RAM |

| Monitor | 17" LCD display, with EnergyStar rating for G5 and Mac Mini | N/A |

| USB Ports | At least 4 USB 2.0 ports | At least 2 USB 2.0 ports |

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Note: These are the minimum recommended requirements. Purchasing guidelines are updated periodically by NUIT. For the latest recommendations, please visit [www.it.northwestern.edu/hardware/](http://www.it.northwestern.edu/hardware/).

1. Wireless Local Area Network (LAN) is available in some areas on campus. To view which areas are wireless-accessible, visit [www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/wireless/locations.html](http://www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/wireless/locations.html).
2. A wireless card is not a substitute for a standard Ethernet card.
3. 802.11b/g is the standard for this environment. Future releases of the 802.11 standard are not currently supported by NUIT.
School-specific recommendations

**Feinberg School of Medicine**
Computers should meet NUIT guidelines and have Microsoft Office productivity software. Contact studentsupport@northwestern.edu with questions.

**McCormick School of Engineering & Applied Science**
Computers should meet NUIT guidelines.

**Medill School of Journalism**
As a Medill student you should have received a letter outlining specific requirements based on your status as a student (new, returning, and graduate). Special pricing and ordering instructions for hardware and required software is available at <www.cdwg.com/medill/>.

**School of Communication**
Computers should meet NUIT guidelines.

**School of Continuing Studies**
Computers should meet NUIT guidelines.

**School of Education and Social Policy**
Computers should meet NUIT guidelines.

**School of Law**
All incoming law students must have a computer that meets or exceeds the Law School’s Notebook Program guidelines at <www.law.northwestern.edu/notebook/>. If you have questions, contact IT@law.northwestern.edu.

**School of Music**
Computers should meet NUIT guidelines and be equipped to play streamed media with software such as QuickTime or RealAudio. Students should also have a good pair of headphones or a small sound system. Other peripheral devices may be helpful, such as a small MIDI keyboard for keyboard skills work and other courses, and music printing software to augment standard word processing titles for preparing papers.

**Weinberg College of Arts & Sciences**
Computers should meet NUIT guidelines. Specific software may be required by individual departments.
The Northwestern Network and E-mail

What is the Northwestern Network?
Think of it as the electronic version of the University. The NU Network is an array of Web sites, resources, and online tools for use by faculty, staff, and students. To access it, use your Network Identifier (NetID) and password at most computers on campus. From off campus, you can get on the NU Network by using Virtual Private Network (VPN) software. See page 8 for details about VPN.

What is a NetID?
It may look like just a few letters and numbers, but it’s really your passport to all the essentials on the NU Network. And just like a passport, this electronic identity should not shared with anyone—not even your best friend or roommate.

When you receive your NetID, you’ll replace the temporary password with your own—something that is unique to you and hard to guess. Hackers can crack easy passwords in seconds, so avoid using your birth date or common words like “wild” or “cats.”

A quick and even more secure way to pick a password is to use a passphrase. This is a secret sentence that you can easily remember and is unique to you, which results in a longer and more unusual password that is tougher for hackers to crack. For example, your passphrase might be something like “I Love Tater Tots With Cheese Sauce,” so your password could be “ILtt!WCS.” You can set up your password/passphrase at <https://snap.it.northwestern.edu> once you receive your NetID.

How do I use my Northwestern e-mail?
Simple—just go to <www.northwestern.edu/webmail/> and log in using your NetID. This is an important way to communicate on campus, so you are required to have a University e-mail account. You will receive your NetID prior to coming to campus, and when you do, make sure to activate your account and check it for updates.

Through the Webmail site, you can get your Northwestern e-mail from any computer hooked up to the Internet. On your computer, you can also route your mail through software with more features, such as Outlook, Entourage, or Apple Mail. Learn how to set up these programs for your Northwestern account and see other account options at <www.it.northwestern.edu/accounts/email/>.

How do I keep out the junk?
Too bad junk mail doesn’t go away just because you get a new e-mail address. Luckily, Northwestern’s E-mail Defense System (EDS) works to keep out most of the junk sent to your University account.

It works like this: EDS scans e-mail for common junk mail traits and rates each message. If a message is rated as likely to be junk, it won’t be sent to your inbox, but to quarantine instead. You will get a regular digest of the messages in your quarantine, so you can see if any legitimate messages were placed there.

Messages are automatically deleted if they have a junk probability rating of greater than 94 for undergrads and greater than 99 for grad students.

You can also set up your junk filters on your local e-mail program as a secondary defense. Read more and see your EDS account options at <www.it.northwestern.edu/security/eds/>.
Connecting in residence halls

How do I connect my computer in the residence hall?
Every resident gets a high-speed network connection. It’s fast, easy, and all yours. All you need is a 25-foot 10BaseT Ethernet cable to connect your computer to the network jack. Cables longer than 25 feet can cause connection problems.

Before you can access the Internet, your computer hard drive has to be clean. When you first plug in, NUIT uses a program called NetPass to check your machine for vulnerabilities such as viruses. If it detects a problem, NetPass gives you cleanup instructions and then re-scans your computer. It’s a good idea to get secure before you get to campus, so follow the five easy steps for computer security found on page 9.

Residence hall rooms are not wireless-enabled, but you’ll find wireless access at more than 80 buildings on campus. Don’t try to install your own, though. University policy strictly prohibits routers and network extenders because they increase vulnerability to viruses and other network problems.

What kind of TV service is available?
How’s this for a perk: if you live in a residence hall, you get selected TV channels broadcast to your computer. Just like the Internet, Northwestern University Television (NUTV) comes to you via the NU Network, so you can watch from your computer and avoid fights over the remote.

Every student living in a residence hall can check out popular channels such as CNN, ESPN, MTV, and VH1, plus local broadcasting. Channels are selected by student surveys and are subject to change. Find out more about NUTV at <www.northwestern.edu/nutv/helpguide/>.

I’ve got my cell phone, so do I need a landline phone in my room?
One phone isn’t enough. NUIT highly recommends that every student room have a landline phone to plug into the phone jack for 911 calls and other emergencies. So even if your cell phone is the primary way you call, make sure to bring an inexpensive desk phone too.

Another thing to think about: your existing cell number may be a long distance call for your new friends on campus. You can make it easy to get all your calls by changing your number to a local area code. Many providers can do this without changing your service.

If you are looking for a new cell phone plan, find information and topics to consider at <www.it.northwestern.edu/telephone/mobile/>.
Connecting from off campus

How do I connect to the NU Network from off campus?
It’s simple: first get service, then use VPN. For the service, you’ll need to choose and sign up with an Internet Service Provider for either cable modem, digital subscriber line (DSL), or dial-up access. NUIT recommends subscribing to cable or DSL for connection speeds that closely match service on campus and allow quicker downloading. To find out more and research the best plan for you, visit <www.it.northwestern.edu/offcampus/index.html>. Some providers offer special nine-month rates for students.

What is VPN and why do I need it?
VPN is your secure “tunnel” to the NU Network. When you use Virtual Private Network (VPN) to connect to the NU Network from off campus, you are protected from anyone trying to gain unauthorized access to the data you are sending and receiving. With VPN, the NU Network recognizes you as a student and gives you access to the same information you get on campus.

VPN is included in your operating system and easy to configure. Find complete instructions on the NUIT Web site at <www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/vpn/>.

Where can I find computer and media labs?
Wherever you are on campus, a computer lab is not far away. Check your e-mail between classes, or get together for a group project. But limited hours of operation mean the labs shouldn’t be your primary computing resource. See locations and availability of NUIT computer labs at <www.at.northwestern.edu/ctg/labs/>. Computer labs are also provided by most Northwestern schools, so contact your program for locations.

The University Library is home to two great computer resources. Near the Library entrance, you’ll find the Information Commons. It’s a space for technology, learning, and collaboration with more than 50 workstations, plasma screens for laptop hookup, and booths for group work.

On the lower level, the NUIT MediaWorks Lab gives you access to the same digital tools as those used by industry professionals. Use programs to edit video and audio, manipulate photos, and develop Web content. You don’t need an appointment, just walk right in and get creative. Find out more at <mediaworks.it.northwestern.edu>.

Where can I find wireless access on campus?
Connect without a cable in more than 80 campus buildings. Look for the “Wireless Zone” signs, or view a complete list of locations at <www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/wireless/locations.html>. You’ll want to stick with University-supported access points; installing your own wireless access is prohibited by University policy.
Security @ Northwestern

How can I protect myself from computer viruses, scams, and identity theft?
These are important topics, and NUIT makes it easy to get control before your computer gets control of you. Protect the NU Network and secure your computer with five simple steps:

**Step 1: Antivirus Software**
When it comes to keeping your computer safe, antivirus software is a must. This will kill many of the bugs that can infect your machine. Use Symantec AntiVirus software—free to download for Northwestern students—and set it up to keep your virus definitions current. Check out instructions at <www.it.northwestern.edu/5steps/step1.html>.

**Step 2: Software Updates**
Updates and patches will keep your system safe from malicious programs that exploit software weaknesses. It’s easy to set up automatic software patches and security updates, just follow the instructions at <www.it.northwestern.edu/5steps/step2.html>.

**Step 3: Password Security**
It goes against everything you learned in kindergarten, but in this case, don’t share. Instead, get a strong password/passphrase and keep it secret. Telling others your password or using a simplistic one can give hackers easier access to the information on your machine. Use a combination of at least eight numbers and letters for your computer password as well as your NetID. Read more about secure passwords at <www.it.northwestern.edu/5steps/step3.html>.

**Step 4: Spyware Protection**
If you wouldn’t want someone looking over your shoulder to see what you are doing, then you don’t want spyware on your computer either. These programs sit on your machine without your knowledge and report what you are typing or what Web sites you visit. Make sure you are spy-free and use Spybot Search & Destroy. Get instructions on how to download it at <www.it.northwestern.edu/5steps/step4.html>.

**Step 5: Firewall Protection**
Connecting to the Internet without a firewall is like advertising your unlocked room as “Free Stuff Here.” A firewall can help protect against hackers and other security attacks. Your computer may already have one built in, but make sure it is enabled by using the instructions at <www.it.northwestern.edu/5steps/step5.html>.

And Don’t Forget Physical Security
Virtual security is important, but so is the old fashioned kind. In your room, keep your laptop safe and use a security cable to tether it to an object that is not easily moved. On campus, keep your laptop in your sight at all times.
Be responsible and resourceful

What do I need to know about using University resources appropriately?
It is important to know you are not just a user of the NU Network—you are a contributor too. All students have a responsibility to use University resources in a safe, secure, and legal way. So keep your NetID and password/passphrase secret and respect the rights of other users of the NU Network. Don’t get caught by surprise that you are violating University policy. Instead, review NUIT’s policies of use at <www.it.northwestern.edu/policies/>.

What about file sharing?
There is a lot of buzz out there about file sharing, so here’s a rule of thumb: assume you cannot download or distribute anything you find on the Internet unless you have written permission such as a license agreement. For your own protection, and the security of the NU Network, do not share software or music files even when you legally purchase them. If you do, you will lose the right to access the NU Network. There is a lot more to know about this topic, so check out <www.it.northwestern.edu/security/illegaldownloading/>.

What kind of online tools are important at Northwestern?
Online tools at Northwestern can help with almost everything, from managing your academic career to listing all the fun events on campus. Here’s a short list of popular sites:

- University Online Directory — Find contact information for all faculty, staff, and students at <directory.northwestern.edu>.
- CAESAR — Register for classes and manage other aspects of your Northwestern career through the Computer Assisted Electronic Student Access Route at <www.northwestern.edu/caesar/>. Make sure to use CAESAR if you have an address change after August 1, 2006 (changes before August 1 should go to ug-admission@northwestern.edu).
- Plan-It Purple — See every event happening at Northwestern for a given day or week at <planitpurple.northwestern.edu>.
- HereAndNow — Link to campus and Evanston-area resources on this student-focused site at <hereandnow.northwestern.edu>.
- Course Management System — Use this class-specific tool to share files and discuss topics at <course-management.northwestern.edu>.
Before you come to campus:

- Set up a secure password/passphrase once you receive your NetID at <https://snap.it.northwestern.edu>.
- Use your NetID to access your Northwestern e-mail account at <www.northwestern.edu/webmail/>.
- Review NUIT and school-specific recommendations before buying or bringing a computer.
- Browse for student-discounted software at <www.it.northwestern.edu/software/students/>.
- Bring a 25-foot cable to connect to your high-speed Internet jack.
- Bring an inexpensive phone to connect to your residence hall phone jack.
- Configure your computer’s VPN to connect to the NU Network at <www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/vpn/>.
- Make sure your computer is secure and install antivirus software, security updates and patches, spyware detection software, and check firewall settings. For instructions, go to <www.it.northwestern.edu/5steps/>.
- Review and abide by NUIT responsible use guidelines and policies at <www.it.northwestern.edu/policies/>.
- Update any changes to your contact information on CAESAR after August 1, 2006, at <www.northwestern.edu/caesar/>.

Where can I go for technical support?

Say your computer blows up the day before a deadline—what should you do? Don’t panic. Instead, get help from the NUIT Support Center on software, services, wireless applications, and virus troubleshooting. The Support Center is open to all faculty, staff, and students. Call the NUIT Support Center at 847-491-HELP (4357) or e-mail consultant@northwestern.edu.

If you live in a residence hall, you can also use the Residential Networking (ResNet) program. This trained team of student consultants, called ResCons, provide hands-on assistance with computer issues. When you get to campus, you can set up an appointment with your ResCon or read more about their services at <www.it.northwestern.edu/student-support/resnet/>.

Keep in mind that the NUIT Support Center and ResNet don’t support hardware problems or operating system reinstallations, but they can help you find a repair service for these issues. A list of providers can be found at <aquavite.northwestern.edu/virtualstore/index.cgi/personal/repair.html>.

Tell me more about NUIT

Congratulations—you read this brochure and you are ready to Get Connected on campus. And now you also know a thing or two about what we do here at Northwestern University Information Technology (NUIT). We’re the central computer and networking group servicing Northwestern University. But our job is broader than just computers and cables. We work to make sure these information technology tools support your academic career, and advance the University’s competitiveness, influence, and reputation. You’ll find us involved in many aspects of your life on campus—from residence halls to classrooms, from research to administration.

Sounds like fun, right? NUIT is always looking for student employees to staff the Support Center, computer labs, and residence halls. You’ll learn about computers, networks, and the Internet while developing technical and interpersonal skills. For information, go to <www.it.northwestern.edu/about/studjob/>.

If you have any questions about the information in this brochure, e-mail gettingconnected@northwestern.edu.
Northwestern University Information Technology
1800 Sherman Avenue
Evanston, Illinois 60201
Phone: 847-467-1512
Fax: 847-467-6500
www.it.northwestern.edu

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