GET Connected @ Northwestern University

Your guide to computers, e-mail, networking, and technology on campus.
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—and 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 available to you 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 NU 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).
**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 minimum recommendations found on page 4. 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.univsvcs.northwestern.edu/Purchasing/personal.html>. Student discounts may not secure the very best prices, so you should compare before you buy.

**Windows or Mac?**
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, Adobe titles, Autodesk titles, 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 to:

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

Choose a shipping company that provides tracking information, proof of delivery, insurance, and request an arrival date on or after Thursday, September 11, 2008. Items arriving before this date will be returned. The package center will try to deliver small packages to your room. If items are not in your room when you arrive, claim your package with a photo ID at your residence hall’s mail room. This service is provided as a courtesy only. If you have questions, contact res-life@northwestern.edu or 847-491-3541.
Minimum recommended Hardware

**PC Laptop**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer Processor</th>
<th>Intel Core 2 Duo 2.0 GHz or equivalent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RAM</td>
<td>At least 2 GB RAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Disk</td>
<td>At least 60 GB hard disk (5400 RPM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wireless Cards</td>
<td>802.11b/g/n wireless (WPA2 compatible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD/DVD</td>
<td>CD-RW/DVD combo drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating System</td>
<td>Microsoft® Windows XP Professional Service Pack 2 or Windows Vista Business edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Card/VRAM</td>
<td>28 MB video RAM; For Windows Vista, add DirectX 9 graphics with a WDDM driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USB Ports</td>
<td>At least 2 USB 2.0 ports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mac Laptop**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer Processor</th>
<th>MacBook 2.0 GHz Intel Core Duo</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RAM</td>
<td>At least 1 GB RAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Disk</td>
<td>At least 80 GB hard disk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD/DVD</td>
<td>Combo drive or SuperDrive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating System</td>
<td>Mac OS X 10.4 (Tiger) or 10.5 (Leopard)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Card/VRAM</td>
<td>128 MB video RAM; For Windows Vista, add DirectX 9 graphics with a WDDM driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USB Ports</td>
<td>At least 2 USB 2.0 ports</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**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/>.

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>.
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.

Coming to campus with a desktop? Check your recommendations on the NUIT Web site at <www.it.northwestern.edu/hardware/>.
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 will receive a letter outlining specific requirements based on your status as a student (new, returning, and graduate), as well as detailed ordering and purchasing information. For the latest information, please see <www.medill.northwestern.edu/it/techspecs.aspx>.

**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.
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 be 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 “I Love Tater Tots With Cheese Sauce,” so your password could be “ILtt!WCS”. You can set up your password/passphrase at <www.it.northwestern.edu/netid/index.html> once you receive your NetID.

How do I access my Northwestern e-mail?
Simple—just go to <https://u.northwestern.edu/> and log in using your NetID. Your Northwestern @u.northwestern.edu account is an important way to communicate on campus, and you are required to have one. You will get a NetID before coming to campus, and when you do, make sure to activate your e-mail and check it for updates.

What else can I do with my @u.northwestern.edu account?
The @u.northwestern.edu collaboration service includes more than just an @u.northwestern.edu e-mail account. You’ll also get to use the calendaring, instant messaging, document, spreadsheet, and presentation applications. Working on a group project in the middle of winter? No problem. The great thing about this service is that you can easily edit and contribute feedback to your document in the location of your choice.

Read more about how you can best collaborate at <http://www.it.northwestern.edu/stucollab/index.html>.
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 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 90 buildings on campus. Don’t try to install your own wireless network, 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 TV 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/>.

Will I have a landline phone in my room?

University-provided landline service in student rooms is available on a per-request basis beginning September 1, 2008. Additionally, emergency phones are readily available throughout the residence halls for emergency 911 access. See Residential Technology Services for Students for more information at <www.it.northwestern.edu/rts/index.html>.

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/mobile_index.html>.
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/]. Some providers offer special nine-month rates for students.

What is VPN and why do I need it?
Virtual Private Network (VPN) is your secure “tunnel” to the NU Network. When you use 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 University 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 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 90 campus buildings. Look for the “Wireless Access” signs, or view a complete list of locations at [www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/wireless/locations.html]. For safe connections, stick with the University network, named “Northwestern.” Installing your own wireless access is prohibited by University policy.

If you use Windows XP or Vista, your computer may need a quick setup or additional hardware to get on the wireless network. It is easy to get started with NUIT’s wireless connection wizard—learn more at [www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/wireless/].
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 easy steps:

Step 1: Start Now
So just how safe is your computer? If it’s not well-protected, it’s vulnerable every time you are online. Getting control of security doesn’t have to be difficult—especially with the tools from NUIT. When you get to campus, Northwestern’s NetPass system will check your computer for selected security risks the first time you try to connect to the NU Network from on-campus housing. If it detects a risk, your computer will be quarantined until the problem is fixed. Students living off-campus must connect securely via Virtual Private Network (VPN). Avoid any connection delays and follow the steps found at <www.it.northwestern.edu/getcontrol>.

Step 2: Secure Passwords
Your NetID and passphrase/password are powerful assets, allowing access to the NU Network and its resources. But if your passphrase/password falls into the hands of a cybercriminal, it becomes a weapon against you. Sharing it, even with people you trust, jeopardizes your private e-mails and financial records, along with the security of the entire NU Network. Only you should know your passphrase/password—keep it secret. Learn more at <www.it.northwestern.edu/getcontrol/securepasswords.html>.

Step 3: Protective Programs
Viruses, spyware, and other malware can bring your computer to a grinding halt, causing irreparable damage or allowing hackers to steal passwords and personal information. Once on your machine, a virus can infect others on the NU Network. Keep your guard up with industry-standard protective software. NUIT provides Symantec™ antivirus products free for download to ensure that your machine is continually protected. You should also use Spybot – Search & Destroy to avoid spyware. Find links to downloads at <www.it.northwestern.edu/getcontrol/protectiveprograms.html>.

Step 4: Secure Settings
Even a brand-new computer isn’t perfect. Cybercriminals can abuse security flaws in the operating system and programs almost immediately after release. When the manufacturer learns of these exploitable holes, they issue small programs called patches to fix the vulnerability. For hassle-free security, set your computer to automatically install these updates. Instructions are online at <www.it.northwestern.edu/getcontrol/securesettings.html>.

Step 5: Smart Habits
Good habits are your first line of defense when cybercriminals try to trick you and your computer. Be aware of what you download, post online, and transfer via portable devices (flash drives, mp3 players, or PDAs). Why? Because some free files and unexpected IM file transfers often carry viruses and other malware, and posting your e-mail address to public Web sites makes it vulnerable to junk mail harvesting tools. Get tips to be cybersmart at <www.it.northwestern.edu/getcontrol/smarthabits.html>.

And Don’t Forget Physical Security
Virtual security is important, but so is the old fashioned kind. Keep your laptop safe in your room by using a security cable to tether it to an object that is not moved easily. 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 passphrase /password 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 fellow 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, 2008 (changes before August 1 should go to ug-admission@northwestern.edu).

• Course Management System — Use this class-specific tool to share files and discuss topics at <courses.northwestern.edu>.

• @u.northwestern.edu — The ultimate collaboration suite including e-mail, IM, calendaring, and more! See page 8 for more details.

• Plan-It Purple — See every event happening at Northwestern for a given day or week at <planitpurple.northwestern.edu>.

• NULink — Link to campus and Evanston-area resources on this student-managed site at <http://nulink.northwestern.edu>.
Before you come to campus:

- Set up a secure password/passphrase once you receive your NetID at <www.it.northwestern.edu/netid/index.html>.
- Use your NetID to access Northwestern e-mail via the Web at <https://u.northwestern.edu>.
- 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 at least a 25-foot Ethernet cable to connect to your high-speed Internet jack.
- Bring an inexpensive phone to connect to your residence hall phone jack if you plan to use a landline.
- Set up your computer’s VPN to connect to the NU Network at <www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/vpn/>.
- Set up a Windows XP or Vista-based laptop to connect to the on-campus wireless network, named “Northwestern”, at <www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/wireless/>. (Mac laptops do not require special set up.)
- 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/getcontrol/>.
- 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, 2008, 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.

You can also get hands-on assistance from Laptop ER, a drop-in support service from NUIT for students living on and off campus. Consultants are available at various times and locations for laptop computer technical support. Find out more about this support option at <www.it.northwestern.edu/laptoper/>.

Keep in mind that the NUIT Support Center and Laptop ER can’t fix hardware problems or do operating system reinstallations, but they can help you find a repair service for these issues.

Tell me more about NUIT

Congratulations—you read this brochure and are ready to Get Connected on campus. 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 and classrooms to research and administration.

Sounds like fun, right? NUIT is always looking for student employees to staff the Support Center, computer labs, and other roles. 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 consultant@northwestern.edu.