



What You Should Know About Chromebooks

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Chromebooks work in “the cloud” and utilize their own Operating System (Chrome).

- **Internet Connection**

Though designed to work with a constant Internet connection, some Chrome OS apps — including Gmail and Google Docs — allow you to work offline and then sync your data when an internet connection is restored. Some apps have this ability built in, but other apps require that settings be re-configured or additional extensions from the Chrome store be installed.

- **Accessibility Features**

Chromebooks have some built-in accessibility features. High contrast, speech feedback (ChromeVox), and a screen magnifier are available for individuals who are visually impaired. Accessibility features to support motor difficulties include Sticky Keys and an onscreen keyboard.

- **Producing Written Work**

In addition to Google Docs, Microsoft Word Online and Microsoft Office 365 are available for use with the Chromebook. Microsoft Word Online is an app offered for free through the Google Web Store. Microsoft Office 365 is a monthly or yearly subscription service available from Microsoft and offers more features to the user than Microsoft Word Online.

- **Saving and Storing Documents**

Chromebooks provide a limited amount of internal storage, and the amount of storage available depends on the model of Chromebook you purchase. Typically, storage begins at 16GB and is available up to 300GB of internal, local storage. All Chromebooks provide an SD card slot so you can extend storage using SD memory cards. The alternative option is using cloud-based storage options, such as Google Drive. Keep in mind that regardless of where files are kept, some students may need support to organize their files and folders.

- **Printing from a Chromebook**

Since you cannot install anything to a Chromebook, printer drivers included, you need to take a different approach to printing, such as Google Cloud Print or other online services. This makes printing a multi-step process for students, who may need support to complete this task.

- **Software**

Since installing software is not an option on a Chromebook, any accommodation software needed by a student must be purchased in a subscription format and accessed via the web. Most companies offer both individual and “organizational” levels of subscriptions.

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