

Computer Standards for IHCC Courses

Indian Hills Community College

Students who take courses at Indian Hills Community College (IHCC) are required to have reliable access to computers that meet the following minimum hardware and software specifications. When available, students may use the on-campus computer labs provided by IHCC. However, students are encouraged to have their own computers for greater access, especially those taking online or hybrid courses.

These are *minimum* standards that are sufficient to complete most courses. However, as technology changes and our courses continue to develop, these standards may have to be updated. Therefore, it may be beneficial to invest in a computer that surpasses the minimum standards, if affordable.

While these standards represent the general requirements for courses at Indian Hills Community College, specific programs or courses may have additional hardware or software requirements. For more information, consult the director of your specific academic program or the instructor of your specific course.

Hardware

Processor: Intel Core i5 or a comparable AMD processor (or above) is recommended. However, most standard computers purchased within the last three years will likely have a sufficient processor. ¹

Memory (RAM): 4GB or higher ²

Hard Drive: Hard disk space needs vary by user, especially as cloud storage becomes more popular. However, it is often more convenient to buy a larger hard drive, especially when purchasing a notebook/laptop computer, than to attempt an upgrade later, if you run out of space.

DVD Drive: Some courses may require the ability to read/write to DVD/CD, therefore, access to a DVD+/-RW optical drive (internal or external) may be required. **USB Flash Drive:** Available in various sizes (8GB to 64GB).

Audio and Video: If you are able to hear and view the multimedia in the [Online Learning Educast](#), then these should be fine. Computers that meet the specifications above will likely have sufficient sound/video capabilities.

Display: 13" – set screen resolution as follows:

Standard Screen: 1280 x 1024 or higher | *Wide Screen:* 1280 x 800 or higher

Webcam: Most online and hybrid courses, as well as many face-to-face courses, use MyHills for exams. A webcam is **required** for **all** quizzes/tests/exams taken within MyHills. Additionally, a webcam may be required in some courses for online interaction. Often, a webcam comes built into notebook/laptop computers and desktop monitors. However, webcams are available for purchase through the [IHCC Bookstore](#), if needed.

¹ Unlike other components, upgrading a processor, after you purchase your computer, can be costly and difficult. Because of this, it is wise to purchase a processor with enough power to meet both current and future needs.

² The price of computer memory continues to drop, making memory upgrades increasingly affordable. Students should consider exceeding the minimum listed above. Increasing RAM is a relatively inexpensive way to significantly increase the speed of a computer.

Internet Access: High-speed, Wi-Fi networking capability (example: 802.11a/b/g/n).

Audio Headphones with built-in Microphone: Used for online interaction with instructors and students.

Software

Operating System: Windows 7 (or later) | Mac OS X (10.8/Mountain Lion or later)

Note: Chromebooks are not fully supported and are not recommended.

Web Browsers: We recommend students have multiple web browsers installed, as browser updates occur regularly and can cause one browser to work better than another, depending on the update. Windows users, please install the latest version of [Firefox](#) and/or [Chrome](#). Mac users should have the latest version of [Firefox](#) and/or [Safari](#). It is also recommended that students install [Respondus LockDown Browser](#) (see next), as it is required for taking tests within MyHills.

Respondus LockDown Browser and Webcam: When taking a quiz/test/exam through MyHills, you will be required to use the *free* Respondus LockDown Browser. In addition to the browser, a webcam will be needed to monitor your activity as you take the test. Please watch the video below for an overview of how it all works. Next, read and follow the instructions. Then, download and install the free LockDown Browser (**Note:** Only this version of the browser will work with our college).

(1) [Watch Video](#) (2 min)

(2) [Read Instructions \(PDF\)](#)

(3) [Download LockDown Browser](#)

IMPORTANT: Chromebooks are *not* compatible with Respondus LockDown Browser.

Email: When interacting with faculty members, fellow students, and college offices, IHCC students are expected to use their Indian Hills Community College email accounts (Student WebMail), which end in @stu.indianhills.edu. For more details on how to use this service, please read this tutorial: www.indianhills.edu/studentwebmailtutorial.

Microsoft Office: The latest version of Microsoft Office (Office 365) is required. This includes MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint, and MS Access. This software is provided at no cost for students attending Indian Hills Community College. The software download can be accessed from MyHills, and is located in the 'My Organizations' section. Click 'Downloads for Students' or 'Office Download' for instructions. Please note that MS Access is not currently available for Macs. Mac users, who are required in their courses to use MS Access, will need to either use on-campus computer labs, make other arrangements to access a PC, or use Apple's Boot Camp solution (www.apple.com/support/bootcamp) to install Windows on a Mac. Note: Boot Camp Support is not provided by the Indian Hills IT Help Desk.

Free Software: A number of additional software programs, available for **free** download via the Internet, are required. Please be sure you have the latest versions of these programs installed on your computer to ensure you can open/view the files (examples: Adobe Reader, Windows Media Player, etc.). See "Before You Begin" (www.indianhills.edu/beforeyoubegin) for links and details.

MyHills: MyHills is the Internet-based program that Indian Hills Community College uses to provide course content to students and to enable interaction among students and faculty in online, hybrid, and many on-campus courses. See the Computer Tutorials page for details: www.indianhills.edu/tutorials.

Additional Notes

- A reliable Internet connection is required, and high-speed Internet access (e.g., cable, DSL, etc.) is **strongly recommended**, as it can make interacting, downloading and viewing course materials, and doing research online much faster.
- Students are expected to check their Indian Hills Student WebMail **daily**. Otherwise, they may miss important emails from their instructors and other college staff. Students are responsible for all information sent to their IHCC Student WebMail accounts, regardless of problems they may have with forwarding to an alternate account or Internet access.
- Students are to become familiar with how to use the necessary hardware and software well in advance of assignment due dates to ensure successful completion and submission of assignments. Computer Tutorials are provided to assist students with this: www.indianhills.edu/tutorials.

If you have questions or are unclear about anything in these computer standards, please feel free to contact the Indian Hills IT Help Desk for assistance: www.indianhills.edu/helpdesk.