

COMPUTER BASICS - LAPTOP COMPUTERS

OPERATION OF DEVICES > 0.1 OPERATING COMPUTERS

TARGET GROUP	AGE GROUP	PROFICIENCY LEVEL	FORMAT	COPYRIGHT	LANGUAGE
Facilitators	N/A	Level 1	Background information, Video clip	Protected by United States and international copyright and trademark laws	English, French

This resource provides a basic introduction to laptop computers.

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General Objective	Knowledge acquisition
Preparation time for facilitator	less than 1 hour
Competence area	0 - Operation of devices
Name of author	GCFGlobal.org
Resource originally created in	English

WORKSHOP DIRECTIONS

1 What is a laptop computer?

A laptop is a personal computer that can be **easily moved** and used in a variety of locations. Most laptops are designed to have all of the functionality of a desktop computer, which means they can generally run the same **software** and open the same types of **files**. However, laptops also tend to be more expensive than comparable desktop computers.

Watch the [video](#) below to learn about laptop computers.

2 How is a laptop different to a desktop computer?

Because laptops are designed for portability, there are some important differences between them and desktop computers. A laptop has an **all-in-one design**, with a built-in **monitor**, **keyboard**, **touchpad** (which replaces the mouse), and **speakers**. This means it is fully functional, even when no peripherals are connected. A laptop is also quicker to set up, and there are fewer cables to get in the way.

You'll also have the option to connect a regular mouse, larger monitor, and other peripherals. This basically **turns your laptop into a desktop computer**, with one main difference: You can easily disconnect the peripherals and take the laptop with you wherever you go.

Here are the main differences you can expect with a laptop.

- **Touchpad:** A touchpad—also called a **trackpad**—is a touch-sensitive pad that lets you control the pointer by making a drawing motion with your finger.



- **Battery:** Every laptop has a battery, which allows you to use the laptop when it's not plugged in. Whenever you plug in the laptop, the battery **recharges**. Another benefit of having a battery is that it can provide **backup power** to the laptop if the power goes out.
- **AC adapter:** A laptop usually has a specialized power cable called an **AC adapter**, which is designed to be used with that specific type of laptop.



- **Ports:** Most laptops have the same types of ports found on desktop computers (such as **USB**), although they usually have **fewer ports** to save space. However, some ports may be different, and you may need an adapter in order to use them.
- **Price:** Generally speaking, laptops tend to be **more expensive** than a desktop computer with the same internal components. While you may find that some basic laptops cost less than desktop computers, these are usually much less powerful machines.