

**GETTING THE MOST FOR YOUR TECH DOLLAR**

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**OVERVIEW**

**1. FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU NEED**

Do you really need the latest/greatest technology?

Do you need it now?

What do you currently have?

Would a tune-up help?

Should you upgrade?

Should you buy locally or online?

Figure out what you need!

**DO YOU REALLY NEED THE LATEST/GREATEST TECHNOLOGY?**

There is often a high premium for the highest performance

Source: <http://www.cpubenchmark.net/cpu.php?cpu=intel+Core+i7+980X+%40+3.33GHz>

**DO YOU NEED IT NOW?**

Wait until you need it to buy it.  
It will be cheaper then!

Source: <http://www.cpubenchmark.net/cpu.php?cpu=AMD+Phenom+II+X6+1100T>

**WHAT ARE THE BEST TECH VALUES?**

Second tier performers

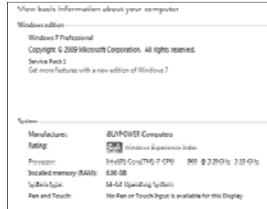
Very popular products

Products that are being phased out

### WOULD AN UPGRADE OR TUNE-UP HELP?

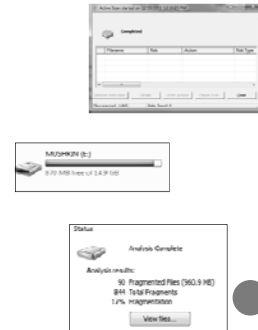
Check basic info about your computer to see:

- If it should be fast, but isn't
- If it could benefit from an easy upgrade, like increasing the amount of RAM



### A QUICK TUNE-UP

- Scan your computer for viruses, spyware, and other threats
- Make sure your hard drive has at least 10% free space
- Defragment your hard drive



### IS THERE AN EASY UPGRADE?

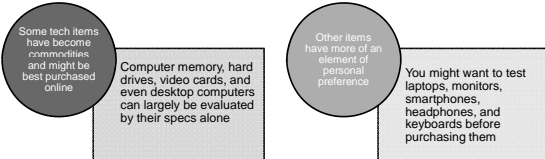
Good Candidates:

- Increasing RAM
- Increasing storage space
- Adding or upgrading via USB



Source: <http://www.crucial.com>

### SHOULD YOU BUY ONLINE OR LOCALLY?



### 2. FIND THE BEST ITEM FOR YOUR NEEDS

Finding information you can trust:

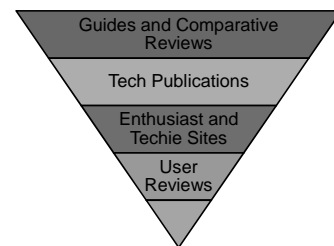
Knowledgeable friends and colleagues

Students

Online guides and reviews



### NARROWING DOWN YOUR TECH CHOICES



## GUIDES AND COMPARATIVE REVIEWS

Often the best place to start

- Especially if you are unfamiliar the item
- The comparative reviews are especially helpful
- Be sure to check the date!
- May be as far as you need to go

Consumer Search  
<http://www.consumersearch.com>

TopTenREVIEWS  
<http://www.toptenreviews.com>

Guides and Comparative Reviews

## TECH REVIEWS AND FORUMS

Useful for narrowing down your choices

- Best for popular items when you have some idea of what you want
- Include comparative, individual product, and user reviews
- Be sure to check the date!
- Usually as far as you need to go

PCWorld  
<http://www.pcworld.com/reviews.html>

PCMag  
<http://www.pcmag.com/reviews>

Macworld  
<http://www.macworld.com/reviews.html>

Computer Shopper  
<http://computershopper.com/reviews>

CNET  
<http://reviews.cnet.com>

Tech Publications

## ENTHUSIAST AND TECHIE REVIEWS

Getting Down to the Nitty Gritty

- Best for high-end items or when you're looking for specific features
- Look here for the details or to find the highest performers
- View the "Conclusion" or "Final Thoughts" first
- Use the "Print view" to ease navigation

Anandtech  
<http://www.anandtech.com>

TomsHardware  
<http://www.tomshardware.com>

ExtremeTech  
<http://www.extremetech.com>

Benchmark Reviews  
<http://benchmarkreviews.com>

Enthusiast and Techie Sites

## FORUMS, USER REVIEWS, AND VENDOR AND MANUFACTURER SITES

Will it work for ME?

- Usually best to start elsewhere, but can be invaluable
- Best place to see if it will work in a particular context
- Often the only place to find reviews for less popular products
- Go to sites with savvy users or sort reviews by "Most Helpful"
- If you need the final word, view the owner's manual

Buzzillions  
<http://www.buzzillions.com/computer-reviews>

NewEgg  
<http://www.newegg.com>

B&H PhotoVideo  
<http://www.bhphotovideo.com>

TigerDirect  
<http://www.tigerdirect.com>

Amazon.com  
<http://www.amazon.com>

User Reviews

## ANOTHER TACT: FOCUSED REVIEWS ON SPECIFIC PRODUCTS

Many of the best reviews are produced by enthusiasts that are only interested in one particular product

Imaging Resource  
<http://www.imaging-resource.com/camera-reviews>

DCResource.com  
<http://www.dcresource.com/buyersguide>

DPreview.com  
<http://www.dpreview.com/reviews>

Laptop Magazine  
<http://www.laptopmag.com/laptops/default.aspx>

Notebook Review  
<http://www.notebookreview.com/reviews>

SmallNetBuilder  
<http://www.smallnetbuilder.com>

Focused Reviews on Specific Products

## 3. FIND THE BEST PRICE FROM A VENDOR YOU CAN TRUST

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Finding the Best Price

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Finding a Vendor You Can Trust

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Making Your Purchase

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    graph LR
      A((Figure out what you need)) --> B((Find the best item for your needs))
      B --> C((Find the best price from a reputable vendor))
    
```

### FINDING THE BEST PRICE

- Use more than one search tool
- Sort by lowest total price for new items
- Don't forget shipping and tax

Google Product Search  
<http://www.google.com/prdhp>

Bing Shopping  
<http://www.bing.com/shopping>

PriceGrabber  
<http://www.pricegrabber.com>

NexTag  
<http://www.nextag.com/>

### KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GETTING

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Search for specific models, not for product names

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Make sure that the product is the same one you searched for

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Be sure that everything included

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Make sure that the item has a full warranty

### HOW TO FIND A VENDOR YOU CAN TRUST

- Ask folks who buy a lot of tech stuff
- Look for positive reviews
- Check ratings agencies
- Consider shopping at "Virtual Malls"

Better Business Bureau  
<http://www.bbb.org/us/Find-Business-Reviews/>

ResellerRatings.com  
<http://www.resellerratings.com/>

PriceGrabber  
[http://www.pricegrabber.com/rating\\_summary.php](http://www.pricegrabber.com/rating_summary.php)

### OTHER WAYS TO FIND GREAT DEALS

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Subscribe to email lists

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Set Price Alerts

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Discount and coupon/promo code sites

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Smartphone shopping apps

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Rebates

### MAKING YOUR PURCHASE

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Use a credit card

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Ship to the billing address of the card

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Order from a secure site

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Get a tracking number

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Know the return policy

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Open it like you're going to return it

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Keep track of all the details

### ACADEMIC, INSTITUTIONAL, AND VOLUME PRICING

Academic institutions often get special pricing

Institutional volume pricing is often even cheaper

Often available at a campus bookstore

If your institution has a site license it may be free to you!

### GOOD CANDIDATES FOR DISCOUNTS

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Software

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Computers and peripherals

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Instructional tools

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Software services

### SOFTWARE: YOU CAN SAVE A LOT!

Item	Retail	Academic	Institutional / Volume
Software Title 1	\$100	\$100	\$42
Software Title 2	\$2600	\$1000	\$550
Software Title 3	\$500	\$100	\$0

### MORE HINTS FOR SAVING ON SOFTWARE

One time it might be worth reading the license

- You may also be able to install it on a laptop or home computer

Save even more by buying software maintenance

- Receive free updates, upgrades, and premium support
- Never have to buy the full product again

Don't forget the programs and documentation

- The price you pay is usually just for the license
- Actual program available for purchase or download

### ACCESSING INSTITUTIONAL PRICING

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Talk to your tech folks or classroom support services

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Contact your bookstore or tech center

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Talk to other people who have done what you want to do

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Find educational and volume pricing information on company websites or contact them directly

### IT'S A WRAP

Figure out what you need → Find the best item for your needs → Find the best price from a reputable vendor → Access education and volume pricing → Get the most for your tech dollar!

Be sure to check out the resources accompanying this presentation. Get the latest information and resources and join the ongoing conversation at: <http://depts.washington.edu/triolive/wordpress/tt/archives/category/purchasing>