

# Hardware Comparison

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This documentation applies to the OP Cloud environment.

## Computer VS. Tablet (iPad/Android)

Practices may desire to implement all iPad or Android tablet for many reasons. While these devices are sleek, cheap, and compact, they do have shortcomings. In general an iPad or Android tablet is meant for content consumption not productivity. What is meant by this is you will often find yourself using these devices for web browsing, email, and video watching. Very rarely will you use an iPad as a primary productivity device. Think of trying to use an iPad or Android tablet for typing up long emails, crafting presentations, creating and editing spreadsheets, creating heavily formatted word documents, or running payroll type tasks. These are typically tasks best suited for a fully fledged computer. The same could be said for Office Practicum. As a general recommendation we advise that practices do not purchase these devices with the intent of using them as the primary device for charting/seeing patients in Office Practicum. While they are certainly handy for light usage in Office Practicum we have seen that they are impractical for long term or heavy usage within the application. At the end of the day Office Practicum is a productivity application and these devices simply do not mesh well with a fully fledged productivity application.

However, there are several instances in your electronic office where an iPad or Android tablet can play a valuable role. They can be a great option for nursing/vitals stations, where the need for text entry is limited, since they offer a combination of lower cost and ease of use, along with the ability to be used as a signature capture device. They can also be used as patient portal kiosks in your waiting room, as long as an optional keyboard is provided and your IT support vendor ensures they only point to your portal (in other words, general internet access is restricted). In both instances, it's important to ensure that they are secured to the wall or to the desktop, to ensure they don't wander off.

Overall, we find that doctors and staff have the best success with Office Practicum when they learn and use the application on a fully fledged Windows/Mac computer. iPad and Android tablets are wonderful devices to have as on-call devices, or for light charting needs. For everyday, general, usage of Office Practicum get a full featured computer.

## Laptop VS. Convertible Tablet

This is the classic case of form and function versus cost. In general laptops are going to be cheaper, bigger, and more readily available than a Windows based tablet, while tablets are going to be lighter, easier to hold, but more expensive. In general, practices who purchase tablet computers use the computer in a tablet or slate mode about 10% of the time and use it as a standard laptop 90% of the time. The primary reason for this lopsided usage is due to the familiarity and ease of use that comes from using the tablet in conventional laptop mode. While easier to hold and more convenient for quick entries, the convertible tablet form factor can again be cumbersome and hard to successfully utilize in normal practice or during a patient encounter. From a hardware perspective both Windows tablets and laptops provide about the same power and functionality, with Windows tablet computers being slightly smaller in screen size. From a price perspective Windows laptops will typically be about 1/3 to 2/3 cheaper than Windows tablets. In general we see that Windows convertible tablets have a price range of \$800-\$1800, while conventional Windows laptops are generally \$700-\$1200.

Anytime you are thinking of introducing wireless devices (especially tablets) into an office setting it is important that you have excellent wireless coverage in the office. Excellent coverage can be obtained using business grade wireless access points, akin to the Cisco Aironets or Motorola WAPs. Tablets in comparison to conventional laptops are particularly touchy to weak or slow wireless. For this reason we can't stress enough the importance of dedicated/robust wireless networking hardware in all your offices.

## Windows Convertible Tablet Comparison

As a general rule any tablet that offers an Intel Core i Series processor will fit the bill in terms of running OP effectively. HP makes a convertible Elitebook that is definitely a top pick. It packs the power that is needed to run OP and the recent HP tablets have been much better on battery life than the older ones with the AMD CPUs in them. Office Practicum has personally used and tested 3 models of HP tablets and have concluded that they give you the best bang for buck while still working very well, however they are the heaviest offering in the tablet class of computers.

Several practices employ the Dell Latitude tablets or Lenovo tablets. Both Dell and Lenovo are comparable in terms of form, function, and design. Dell tablets are going to be slightly cheaper and more easily sourced by an IT vendor. In contrast the Lenovo tablets are going to be more expensive but are definitely built to take the punishment of everyday office usage.

Toshiba and Fujitsu tablets are often used in offices, these tablets are going to be the lightest and smallest tablet offerings, however these models are more likely to break or fail as a result of everyday office life. Their space saving design and usage of light weight materials is the primary reason for this. Don't be deterred by these cautionary notes, if you are a user who treats your computing device with care then these tablets can provide years of happy service.

## Apple/Mac Computers

Apple laptops and computers benefit from being developed and maintained by the same company that designs and implements the operating system running on it. As a result the user experience and ease of use of a Apple computer is hard to beat. Apple computers are typically sleek, sealed devices, as a result they are harder to field upgrade or be easily repaired by an IT professional should they break or fail. Additionally, the cost of a Apple computer when compared to similarly speced Windows computer is usually 30-50% more in cost. This can represent a huge increase in equipment costs for a practice, but on the flip side can save you costs in anti-virus licensing as Apple computers are somewhat immune to computer viruses (at least at the time of this writing).

Apple computers can be used with OP in the office, but what should be stressed is that Apple computers are typically geared towards the average consumer market, or towards markets that focus on creative design (photo, video, and music). Also keep in mind that finding an IT professional to support and supply Apple devices is much harder to find and may come at a higher cost.

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