MINIMUM SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

from TIPWORLD.COM

A lot of hardware upgraders remain confused by the minimum system requirements listed on their product boxes. Upgraders often wonder what the requirements really mean and how their own PCs match up. These product requirements become important when you're considering adding a new videoconferencing kit, CD-recording drive, or some other product to your existing system. Over the next few days I'll pass along some important info about minimum system requirements.

First, be warned. There is no standard for assigning minimum system requirements to any computer product; it's completely up to the manufacturer. Unfortunately, product makers often fudge the numbers so their products appear to be capable of running on a greater variety of PCs than is really possible. You might find your product runs intolerably slow if your system matches just the MINIMUM system requirements listed on the box.

Your best bet is to look for and follow the RECOMMENDED system requirements; ask a salesperson if you don't find them listed on the outside of the product box. When listing recommended system requirements, product makers usually provide the true facts--they want to make sure you know how their product would perform on a properly equipped PC.

When you're looking at the panel of a computer product box, the label may make misleading claims about which operating systems the new product can run on. Don't assume that when a product box states "Windows NT" in big letters, it will run on all Windows NT systems. The numbers and names of Microsoft's Windows operating systems make sense to no one. Windows 95 had three separate releases: A, B, and C. Windows 98 had two: Windows 98 original) and Windows 98 SE (Second Edition). Finally, Windows NT had six service pack releases (read "bug fixes"), called SP1 through SP6.

Look carefully for details about the operating system your new products require. The minimum system requirement list (perhaps in small print) should include the operating system version.

Never confuse a product's minimum system requirements list with its performance specifications. Sometimes upgraders believe they can improve a new product's performance by tweaking one item from the minimum system requirements list--say, by adding more RAM than the requirements call for. This approach to better performance may not work. Keep in mind that overall system performance changes (such as adding RAM) apply to your whole PC, not to a particular device on your system. To improve the performance of a particular component, read its documentation or contact the manufacturer for performance improvement tips. You may find out that some unexpected modifications (perhaps more free disk space or an OS setting) will make the product perform better.

When you inventory your PC to see if it meets a new product's minimum system requirements, make sure you also check the product manufacturer's list of compatible or certified hardware, if one exists. You can usually find this list on the company's Web site. Think of a compatible hardware list as an extension of the minimum system requirements list.

"Members Helping Members"
Since 1983

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

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2000-2001

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The LCACE News Journal is published eleven times annually. Members are encouraged to submit contributions and will be acknowledged in this newsletter.

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The News Journal is produced using an **IMaxx AMD K6-2 266mhz**, w/128Mb RAM, Hewlitt Packard 4P color scanner, using **MS Publisher 97** software. Graphics. Editing provided by *Pegasus Enterprises* using **Adobe Photoshop**, and **Hijaack Pro** and the Corkmeister using Paint Shop Pro**.** Photos taken **w/Epson Photo PC** digital camera. Printing is done on an **HP 1000c pr**inter.

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

Membership
Membership for L.C.A.C.E is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are $20.00 per individual/family. Associate membership is only $10.00 (out of state, unable to attend meetings). Membership includes a one year subscription to the L.C.A.C.E. News Journal and access to all club libraries, and functions. Applications for membership may be obtained at the monthly meeting, by request on the club Hotline and is now available on our WEB site at http://inf-net.com/lcace.

Meetings
L.C.A.C.E. meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at the Warren/Newport Public Library, 224 N. O'Plaine Road in Gurnee, Illinois. The meeting location opens at 11:30a.m, and the formal meeting begins at 12pm. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

Advertising
Ad rates per issue: Full page - $25, Half page -$15, Quarter page - $10, Business Card -$5. Discounts are available on advance purchase of multiple issues. Please send Camera-ready copy and payment to the club address by the 21st of the month preceding publication. For more information on ad pricing, please call our Hotline. Ads are **FREE** to all paid members.

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ARTICLE DEADLINE
The deadline for all articles being submitted for the News Journal is the 20th of each month. Send your articles via E-Mail to Corky Bell at corky@foxvalley.net or Vic Falkner at rvf@se-iowa.net or the Club's E-mail at lcace@inf-net.com

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Voice: 847.623.3815
Fax: 847.623.9570
E-Mail: LCACE@inf-net.com
Web Page: www.inf-net.com/lcace

E-Mail Addresses

The following is a listing of available LCACE members' E-Mail addresses:

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Donna Bell	Donnabell@post.com
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As much as we try, we do make errors. Please advise us if there is a mistake in your E-Mail address or if it is not incuded in this listing. Send E-Mail to lcace@inf-net.com with the additions and/or corrections. Thank you.

This listing last updated - April 23, 2000

Members Web Sites

Corky Bell
http://users/foxvalley.net/~corky

Phil Grimm
http://public.surfree.com/pgrimm

JJ
http://easyfoto.com/jj_johnson

Time to Renew

The following members need to renew their membership. This information will be published in the News Journal and will be posted on our WEB site which is:

http://www.inf-net.com/lcace

If it is time for you to renew your membership, please fill out a new Application and a Member's Profile Sheet. These forms can be obtained at the meetings or downloaded from our WEB site.

**The following Member(s)
need to submit renewal applications:**

Rich & Pat Crocker 06/00
LeRoy & Bernice Long 06/00

Vic Falkner 08/00

If you have already filed an application, please disregard this notice.

See the CLUB PICTURES at:

www.easyphoto.com/lcace

Take a look, you may be in there!

FREE PC TIPS

We've all heard about the elusive "free" PC. The truth is that many of the original companies offering no-cost systems have since gone out of business. However, several companies still offer ALMOST free PCs, and these offers might catch your attention the next time you go shopping for a new PC. Over the next few days, I'll pass along some tips to help you decide whether a PC deal is a good one.

First, perhaps the most important section of the contract you sign for a "free" PC concerns your ISP. Most of these deals require that you sign up for a multiyear service agreement with a particular ISP. If you compare the monthly service charge against those of other ISP companies, you'll likely find your deal isn't a very good one. Of course, you must balance the price of the contract with the fact that the "free" PC offer includes some hardware a standard ISP doesn't give you.

Always check for hidden cost in a "free" PC offer in addition to researching the full cost of any required ISP contract (we covered this in the last tip). The types of hidden costs you could find include exorbitant shipping costs for sending you the hardware, the fee for including a monitor, and a startup fee for initiating the ISP service. Look around for a deal that doesn't include any of these costs. You should really only pay some nominal fee for hardware (it's supposedly free, anyway), plus your monthly ISP bill.

What kind of horsepower are you getting with your "free" PC deal? Typically, these cheap PCs come configured with midrange components for the processor and modem, and midsize RAM and hard drive. Depending on what purpose you have for the PC, these slower-performing components might work just fine. However, if you plan on crunching spreadsheets, querying databases, or running high-end graphics, your new system's performance might disappoint you.

You should definitely decide whether the PC's performance matches your needs before you sign up for the deal. Many of these offers restrict you in how you can upgrade or expand your system once it arrives. If you can't find a cheap PC with the right performance for your needs, you're probably better off purchasing a standard PC from a known vendor.

Do you typically rely on technical support when you use a computer? If so, beware the "free" PC offer. Often, technical support is the lowest priority for companies that offer super-discounted systems. In fact, some owners of the original "free" PC offers now find themselves without any technical support because the company they signed up with has gone out of business. You might also encounter a fee for technical support. Once again, try to avoid deals with such hidden costs.

DUMP THE CACHE

Here's a great trick from TipWorld subscriber Ronald Gordon, a handy guy to have around if you need to save space:

"This tip will help people like myself who use an old computer with a very small hard drive. Mine is a 486 DX2 with a 575MB hard drive.

"To remove your cache files from Internet Explorer 5, select Tools, Internet Options. Then click the Delete Files button. (IE 4 users should click View, Internet Options.) This does not remove all your cache files; a series of folders contain downloaded files hidden in the Temporary Internet Files folder. These may hold many megabytes of files and don't get deleted when you clean your IE 5 cache files.

"To clean up these files, try this: Open Windows Explorer. Then navigate to the Temporary Internet Files folder, probably in the folderC:\Windows\Temporary Internet Files (C is the drive where you should have IE 5 installed).

"Open the Temporary Internet Files folder and look for folders within it that have odd names like 9jkLv13og or D2337xxm. Select and open the first folder. Press Ctrl-A or click and drag to select all the files.

"Deselect any file named desktop.ini, as this is a system file, and delete the rest (Shift-Delete to bypass the waste basket.) Press the Delete key on your keyboard. Repeat this procedure for each folder." Thanks, Ronald!

Windows 95 Tips

RECYCLE BIN WARNS YOU WHEN IT'S FULL

Do you feel as though you never get around to emptying your Recycle Bin? Fortunately, Windows 95 has a built-in reminder. If the total size of files in the Recycle Bin exceeds a set limit (by default, 10 percent of your hard drive's total storage space), a message pops up letting you know you should take out the trash.

If you're low on disk space and have a hard time remembering to take out the trash, you may want to adjust this percentage to a smaller number, so that Windows 95 reminds you to empty the Recycle Bin sooner.

Right-click the Recycle Bin icon on your desktop, and then select Properties. In the resulting dialog box, adjust the lever to the desired percentage, such as 1 percent, and click OK.

DOS and Screen Savers

Some DOS programs won't run if you have a Windows 95 Screen Saver. How can you tell? Try this when that DOS program just won't run no matter what else you try:

1. In Explorer, right-click the DOS program's icon.
2. Choose Properties and then click the Misc tab.
3. In the dialog box, click the Allow screen saver option.

Close the dialog box.

MOUSE POINTER INDICATES MOVE OR COPY

Can't seem to remember whether holding down Shift (or Ctrl) while you drag and drop an icon moves or copies that item? Keep your eye on the mouse pointer. If you see a little white box with a plus sign (+) attached to your mouse pointer, you're about to copy the item(s) you're dragging. If you see no symbol attached, you're about to move the item(s). (If you see a shortcut arrow, as in the case of dragging an icon down to the Start button, you're about to create a shortcut.)

CREATE EMERGENCY RECOVERY DISK

To keep yourself safe from disaster, create an Emergency Recovery disk. Once you do, you'll have a complete inventory of your system and configuration files, as well as the Emergency Recovery Utility (the program that restores these files to your system) close at hand.

Insert your Windows 95 installation CD in your CD-ROM drive, select Browse This CD, and navigate your way to the OTHER\MISC\ERU folder. Inside, double-click ERU.EXE, then follow along as Windows 95 walks you through the disk creation process. (You can save the recovery files on a disk or a drive, such as on a network.) You'll even see a preview of the files that will be copied. When all the files have been copied to the destination, you'll see a message telling you the operation was a success, along with instructions on how to use the disk in the event of a disaster.

DriveSpace is Picky

If you installed any DriveSpace drives, don't use any other company's programs for checking your hard Drive files. Only ScanDisk is sure to be fully compatible with DriveSpace drives. And don't run any other programs while ScanDisk isrunning.

SHORTCUT FOR RESTARTING WINDOWS

Looking for a quick way to restart Windows 95 without a time-consuming "cold" or "warm" reboot? Select Start, Shut Down (or place the focus on the desktop and press Alt-F4). In the resulting dialog box, select Restart The Computer, then hold down the Shift key while clicking the Yes button. Windows 95 restarts without shutting down and rebooting the entire system.

WINDOWS 98 TIPS

EXPLORER WINDOWS HAVE TOOLBARS, TOO

The next time you're going about your business in an Explorer window--single or double-paned--take notice of the often-overlooked Toolbar. (If you don't see it, select View, Toolbars, Standard Buttons.) It has buttons for a lot of the commands you might otherwise use your right-mouse button for. Funny thing, too, because a button only takes one click.

See the button with the blue curved arrow? That's Undo. The "X" button mimics Delete. Clicking the hand holding the paper is the same as choosing Properties. On the right, you'll find your View options-- Large Icons, Small Icons, List, or Details. Hold the cursor over any button on the Toolbar, and you'll see a box telling you what it does.

REARRANGE PAINT TOOLS AND COLORS

Not happy with the placement of Paint's tools and colors? Then move them. You can turn them into floating palettes, for placement anywhere on screen, or stick them to the edge of the Paint window.

Open Paint by selecting Start, Programs, Accessories, Paint. Click a blank area around the edge of the tools or colors, and a black box will appear to let you know they're selected. Now just drag the palette where you want it, along its existing edge or anywhere on screen.

Don't like floating palettes? Just like the Taskbar, they'll snap into place at the edge of the Paint window. Tools stick to the side edges; colors stick to the top or bottom.

NOTEPAD LOG FILES

Notepad is a small, can't-even-really-call-it-a-word-processor program that comes with Windows 98. It isn't fancy, but it does have one unique feature: log files.

Type .LOG at the top of a Notepad file, and it becomes a log file, just like a journal. From then on, every time you make an entry in the file, Notepad adds a time and date stamp. You'll see the stamp the next time you open the file.

EDIT BACKGROUND PATTERNS

Want to make your own background pattern for your desktop? Click the desktop with the right mouse button, choose Properties, and take a look at the Patterns list on the Background tab. Pick one that looks like it might be fun to change, such as Scottie, and click the Edit Pattern button. Two things first, though: Make sure (None) is selected for Wallpaper, and if your desktop has a black background, you'll need to switch it to another color by clicking the Display Properties' Appearance tab and changing it in the Color dropdown menu.

The pattern is nothing more than a grid of black or colored boxes. Click a box, and it toggles between black and your desktop's background color. The nice thing is that you get to see your changes right in the Sample box as you work. When you're done, give the pattern a new name (unless you want to overwrite the old one), click Add, then click Done.

Is your favorite dog a Doberman instead of a Scottie? Make the tail and legs longer, and you've got a whole new look!

INCREASE SCROLLBAR SIZE

Do you find the scrollbars in your applications and dialog boxes too small to grab onto? Windows 98 lets you make them as big (or as small) as you want.

Right-click the desktop, select Properties, and click the Appearance tab. Under Item, select Scrollbar, adjust the Size using the up arrow, and watch your change in the preview. When you like what you see, click OK to keep the change.

Next meeting is at the Grant Township Meeting Hall in Ingleside on Saturday, June 10th.

The PRESIDENT's RAM

I only have a few subjects to talk about this month. The first is that Donna, the membership Chairperson, has gone through the membership roster and updated it. Now that we are all caught up, members will be notified about their memberships expiration using the following methods.

1. The Web Site **http://www.inf-net.com/lcace** will reflect each member's expiration date in the MEMBER'S SECTION. Those members whose membership will be expiring as of the upcoming meeting month will be highlighted in yellow. Those memberships expiring two meetings later will be highlighted in turquoise blue.

2. A News Journal with a yellow highlighted mailing label, an application form, member's profile form and a reminder letter included, will be mailed to those members whose membership will expire as of the next meeting month.

3. An E-Mail notice will be sent to those having a valid E-Mail address with an attachment of the application form and member's profile form.

4. An announcement will be made at the meeting about those members whose membership will be expiring in the future.

Donna and I have discussed these procedures and can't think of any other ways to notify you of your pending membership expiration. I hope this helps you remember to renew on time. Also, for those of you who choose to allow us to print your member profile in the News Journal and on the Web Site, please have JJ take a new picture of you.

The Warren/Newport Library has notified us that we cannot use their facilities during the summer months. Therefore we will be meeting at the Grant Township Meeting Hall in Ingleside, Illinois for the June and August Meetings. **Remember there will not be a meeting in July.** An application will be sent to the library, so at this time I cannot give you a location for any future meetings, except the Christmas party which will be held at the University of Illinois Auditorium in Grayslake on December 9th. As soon as we receive the dates from the library, they will be posted on the Web Site and in the News Journal.

As I stated before there will not be a meeting in July. Also there will not be a News Journal for July either, so don't be alarmed if you do not recieve one or find it on the Web Site.

That's all I have for now. For those who can't make it to the June meeting, have a good summer vacation and see you in August. To everyone, Good Computing.

Corky Bell

REMINDER

NO MEETING IN JULY

If you have an article for the News Journal. please forward it to the News Journal Editor at

corky@foxvalley.net
or
lcace@inf-net.com

or deliver the article on disk to one of the officers at the Meetings.

REPAIR INTERNET EXPLORER 5

If Internet Explorer 5 starts to behave badly, try the Repair option. Note: In some cases, folks who have Windows 98 Second Edition can't find the Repair feature for IE 5.

First try this. Choose Start, Settings, Control Panel. Choose Add/Remove Programs. Select Microsoft Internet Explorer 5 and Internet Tools (the name of your IE 5 may vary slightly, but it should be pretty obvious). Select the radio button marked Repair Internet Explorer. Then click the OK button. Choose Yes when the confirmation box appears.

Good luck!

INTERESTING WEB SITES

MYSIMON

http://www.mysimon.com

Welcome to one of the great paradoxes on the Web: mySimon is really your Simon. Actually, he's not even a person at all, despite all the computer-generated caricatures of him on the site. He's actually a Virtual Learning Agent--an intelligent piece of comparison shopping software that scours the Web on your command. Just tell Simon what you're shopping for, from socks to servers, and he will search thousands of online stores carrying millions of products. The resulting list of matching items can then be sorted by price or retailer. If you don't know exactly what you're looking for, feel free to browse through thousands of items sorted into helpful categories. Simon's too smart to guarantee that he'll find the lowest price, but he's a real time saver!

PET EDUCATION

http://www.peteducation.com

Drs. Foster and Smith are two net-savvy vets who have created an excellent site covering all aspects of your pet's health (assuming, of course, that your pet is either a dog or a cat!). Read up on parasites, nutrition, and allergies. Consult the dictionary of veterinary terms, so you can actually talk to your vet. Just imagine, never having to ask what Anthelmintic means again! There's even a quiz where you can test your Pet IQ (but not your pet's IQ, unfortunately).

THE LONGEVITY GAME

http://northwesternmutual.com/games/longevity

Consider yourself warned: Depending on your age, diet, weight, and other "lifestyle" issues, this site can end up being a pleasant surprise or a terrifying agent of the grim reaper. More of an actuarial calculator than a game, this site attempts to predict how long you will live based on an initial round of questioning. Note: this site has no apparent magical powers, so don't use it just to make sure your next plane isn't going to crash. It's only apparent function is to make you aware of your need for a life insurance policy!

CELEBHOO

http://www.celebhoo.com

Can't find information about your favorite celebrity on the Web? Well, maybe you're just looking in the wrong place. Celebhoo is a Yahoo-like directory that contains Web sites about actors, models, musicians, authors, and athletes. There's even a "newswire" of celebrity gossip culled from reputable outlets like E! Online and Billboard magazine. Once you've gawked at hundreds of photos and know the celebrity's life story, then perhaps it's time to send your favorite celeb an email. Feel free to consult Celebhoo's dubious directory of email addresses, but just don't lose any sleep waiting for a reply.

CELEBRITY BABY NAME INDEX

http://www.celebnames.8m.com

It seems celebrities are a bit more adventurous than the rest of us when it comes to naming their kids. Just look at Frank Zappa, proud father of Moon Unit, Ahmet Emuukha Rodan, Dweezil, and Diva. In case you haven't guessed yet, this site contains a huge list of names of celebrity offspring. There's even a Great Expectations & New Arrivals section with up-to-the-minute news on Tinseltown pregnancies and newborns. Wacky names like Dandelion and Rumer may be the most memorable, but according to the Trends section, Jack is currently the most popular name.

<table>
<tr><td>

MEMBERS' PROFILE

Tom Fitzsimmons

NO PICTURE AVAILABLE

E-MAIL

TOMFITZSIMMONS@JUNO.COM

Month of Birth: July

My Job Is: Retired (Partially)

My Hometown Is: Forest Hills, NY & Lincolnshire, IL

My Family Consists of: 3 Children

For Entertainment I Like: Home Handyman & Music Arranging

My Favorite Meal Is: Chicken Kiev - Surf & Turf - Lobster & Steak

Someeone I Admire: Doc Severinsen

Something I Wish I Could Stop: Eating so Much

I Use My Computer For: Arranging and Recording Music - Publishing a Newsletter

My Favorite Computer Programs Are: Coreldraw + Band In A Box & Adobe Photoshop

</td><td>

Year 2000 Calendar

The following are the tentative dates, locations, and/or the agenda for each of the L.C.A.C.E. Meetings for the Year 2000:

June 10th
Grant Township Meeting Hall
Networking by Mike McEnery

July - NO MEETING

August 12th
Grant Township Meeting Hall
Linux - Lester Larkin

September 9th
TO BE ANNOUNCED
Scanning & Digital Cameras

October 14th
TO BE ANNOUNCED
Diamond Rio

November 11th
TO BE ANNOUNCED
CD Writers

December 9th
University of Illinois
Auditorium
Grayslake, Illinois

Annual Christmas Party
&
Swap Fest

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REMINDER

NO MEETING IN JULY

THE AUGUST MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE GRANT TOWNSHIP MEETING HALL

Is your membership up to date? Check with the Membership Chairperson, Donna Bell, to find out what you status is. Contact her at 815 344-1271 after 7:30pm daily or send E-Mail to: lcace@inf-net.com to be kept informed.

Computer Country Expo

June 24, 2000

Great prices!
Bargains galore!
Save up to 70% off retail on everything computer!

A VIRTUAL ONCE A MONTH CARNIVAL FOR COMPUTER USERS

Once a Month Thousands of Computer Users Gather at the Computer Country Expo to Shop with 80 Vendors from across the Midwest with "Everything Computer", Talk with Computer Clubs and Network with other Computer Users, Listen to Live Midi Enhanced Entertainment, Attend Workshops, Check out Demos, Have a chance to Win computer products in Hourly Raffles, Get help from A+ Technicians for computer upgrades and repairs, Pick up FREE Magazines! Come Join the Fun at the Computer Country Expo!!

We will have Certified A+ Technicians at the show who will help people as personal shoppers and take them around the show and make recommendations for what they are looking to purchase. Buyers can also have their products installed and/or tested by the technicians <u>FREE</u> of charge at the show.

Location

Lake County Fairgrounds
Route 120 (Belvidere Rd.) & Route 45
Grayslake, Illinois

Main Exhibit Hall - Building #1

20,000 sq. feet of everything Computer!

PLEASE use the Rte. 45 entrance

$6 Admission

All L.C.A.C.E. Members who present their membership card will receive a $1 discount.

See our WEB Site at
www.ccxpo.com/

Print this page, fill out the form below, bring it with you to the show, and get $1.00 off the entry fee!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zipcode: _____

Telephone # _____ FAX # _____

E-Mail: _____ WEB Site: _____

L.C.A.C.E Online
View our Site
www.inf-net.com/lcace

CLUB PHOTOS
www.easyphoto.com/lcace

- ◆ LCACE E-mail addresses
- ◆ LCACE information,
- ◆ LCACE history and pictures
- ◆ LCACE meeting location and map
- ◆ LCACE members e-mail addresses
- ◆ LCACE online membership application

Next Meeting!!!

June 10, 2000

**Grant Township Meeting Hall
411 S. Washington Avenue
Ingleside, IL 60041**

12:00pm - 2:00 p.m.

**This month's presentation is
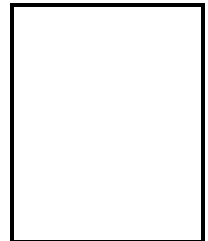Networking (continued)
by Mike McEnery & Company.**

NO MEETING IN JULY

L.C.A.C.E
Lake County Area Compuer Enthusiasts
**409 S. Elmwood Ave
Waukegan, IL 60085-5219**

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED