



## Entity's Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Chromebook Primer

The online version of this document with clickable links can be found at <https://bit.ly/3nDwmkU>

If your school uses Chromebooks as part of their "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD) program and you're reading this, you've got some questions. Great! The aim of this document is to answer the most commonly asked questions about Chromebooks.

### What is a Chromebook??

A Chromebook is a budget laptop that pretty much runs just the Google Chrome browser.

Chromebooks actually do more than that and it's a common misconception that Chromebooks ONLY run a browser and are useless unless they're connected to the internet. While their main purpose is to act as a gateway to the internet, they are also capable of doing more, even when the internet is not available.



Because the main focus of Chromebooks is to ONLY run the Chrome browser, they're simple, secure, reliable and fast.

They typically start up and are ready to have someone log into them in less than 10 seconds. They're also very power efficient and often have run times of 10 hours on a single charge.

Chromebooks are designed to work mainly on the internet using the Google Suite of applications; Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides and so on.

That means your child's "stuff" - their files, live online (not on their Chromebook) and are available wherever they sign in, whatever device they are on. That could be on their Chromebook, or on a laptop at home, a desktop at a friend's place or a tablet at Grandma's.

Because the files don't live on the device, the days of misplacing files or losing work in progress are gone; it's all online.

Check out [Google's Chromebook Q & A](#) for more information

## Are they easy to set up?

Yes! Chromebooks are *very* easy to set up.

We suggest that you, as the parent/guardian, create a Gmail account (or use an existing one) and log into the Chromebook for the very first time. The first person to log in to a new Chromebook becomes the owner/administrator and has a few extra settings available that aren't available to others. This also means that as your child graduates and/or moves to another school, the old school account can be removed and a new one added without needing to reset the Chromebook to factory defaults.

By default, anyone with a Google account can log in and start using a Chromebook and multiple people can use the same Chromebook by using their individual Google login.

As the owner of the Chromebook, you might want to restrict who else can sign onto your device. You can set it up by heading to Settings > Manage other users > Restrict sign-in to the following users and then filling in your child's school account details. After that is set up, only the users specified there will be able to sign on.

You may also want to disable Guest mode as most schools turn this off. From the same section above, just toggle off the "Enable Guest browsing" switch. When you do that, the "Browse as guest" button disappears from the sign-in screen and an account is needed to log into the Chromebook.

## What can my child do on a Chromebook?

Apart from surfing the web, students will mainly be using the Google Suite of applications with their Chromebook. The **main** applications used are:

- Gmail
- Google Docs (for word processing similar to Word)
- Google Sheets (for spreadsheets similar to Excel)
- Google Slides (for presentations similar to Powerpoint)

Teachers also use Teacher Dashboard (Hapara) and Google Classroom with Students as part of the workflow of "giving out" and "handing in" work.

Other web-based services such as Mathletics, Spelling City, Prodigy and Reading Eggs can also be used.

A number of other well-known companies are also making the move to having online versions of their applications. Examples of these include Adobe and Microsoft.

Devices that have launched after 2019 should all support (most) [Android Apps](#). This makes thousands of applications that run on Android phones and tablets available to run on a Chromebook.

## What happens when a Chromebook is not connected to the internet???

As mentioned above, it's a common misconception that Chromebooks are useless unless they have a connection to the internet.

While websites are (obviously!) unavailable without the internet, some of the Google applications mentioned above can be set up ahead of time to work offline. Documents that are available offline are updated once a connection to the internet is available.

## Can I run program “X” on it?

If program “X” requires Windows or Mac OS to run, then no.

As mentioned above, Google started to allow Android apps to run on some Chromebooks in 2017 and pretty much every Chromebook since 2019 can do so. Thousands of Android apps are available to use on a Chromebook.

For the more technically minded, [Google made limited Linux support available on some Chromebooks in late 2018](#) so if program “X” runs on Linux, then there’s a good chance that it will run on a Chromebook. At least 10Gb of storage is recommended for this activity, so you may find that running Linux on a Chromebook with 32Gb to be quite limiting.

## What about ChromeOS Flex?

[ChromeOS Flex](#) is a free operating system that can be downloaded and installed onto old PCs or laptops effectively turning them into Chromebooks. While Android apps cannot be installed, the Linux environment mentioned above is supported. This can breathe new life into old, slow hardware which can no longer run modern operating systems. While most things work straight out of the box, not all hardware is officially supported eg. sound, wifi or media controls may not work as expected or at all. You can try ChromeOS Flex on hardware before committing to an install to see if it’s suitable. Please note that installing Flex completely erases any existing OS.

## Where can I get a Chromebook?

Entity sells all sorts of hardware, including Chromebooks. Contact us for more information. They’re also available from pretty much any major tech supplier.

At the time of this writing, you should be looking for a Chromebook with 4Gb of RAM (8Gb is better) and a quad-core processor. Chromebooks don’t have much internal storage (typically 32Gb) but that’s fine since most of the work done will be over the internet and stored there.

Touch screens are optional but add to the price. They make sense if you’re using Android apps which rely on touch a lot, but if you don’t, we’d give it a miss and save some money.

Chromebooks vary in price greatly and you get what you pay for. It’s possible to get a Chromebook suitable for student needs for under \$500 although you can spend more for better build quality, more storage, a larger screen and faster processors.

As always, if you have any questions around any of this, please let us know. We’re here to help.

Warm regards,

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