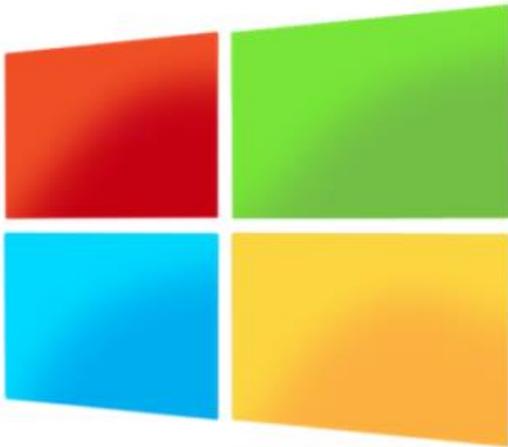**Windows vs. Chromebooks**

Windows vs. Chromebooks: School Tech Showdown

Are you an educational leader who is looking to outfit your school or district with technology but aren't sure what to choose? Don't worry, we did the heavy lifting for you and compiled the pros and cons of Windows operating system (OS) and Chrome OS. Read on to learn about how these devices differ and which one might better suit your needs.

Windows

Pros

Evolves with Students' Needs
Unlike Chromebooks with their limited system, Windows will grow alongside students as their curriculum - and technology needs - evolve.

Plays Well with Others
Windows computers work well with in-classroom technology, such as cameras, printers, projectors and more. As these hardware products are an integral part of [the modern classroom](#), incompatibility can be a source of major friction.

Powerful Machine

Windows can host hearty software programs, such as cad/cam and media editing for STEM learning. If there's an education program needed in the classroom, chances are Windows supports it.

Translates to Real Life

Windows is used in most business and higher education settings, so better utilizing the system while in elementary, middle and high school prepares students to transition after graduation. Likewise, Microsoft Office is standard on Windows devices for schools, and employers report that knowing how to use the Office suite is still one of the most sought after on-the-job skills.

Prices are Better Than Ever

Competition from lower priced devices, such as Chromebooks, has driven down the cost of Windows-operated computers. Now is the best time to buy and secure better functionality for a comparable price!

More Popular

[Business Insider reports](#) that Microsoft Windows is still the number one program chosen by schools. This may be due to the fact that Windows can be found on a very wide range of devices from inexpensive laptops for less than $200 up to the top-notch Surface Pro 4 tablet.

Cons

Flu Shot

Though the security of Windows 10 is supposed to be better than any predecessor, Windows devices are still more likely to get viruses than Chromebooks.

All Blue Skies

While there are ways to access cloud storage on Windows, it's not as easy as Chromebook's all-cloud storage. Cloud storage can be a major pro for students who begin homework on a school's computer and need to finish it at home on their family computer.

Keep It Simple

For those who prefer a simple interface and basic functionality, Windows may be too complex and may not be worth the potential viruses and other complexities. Chromebook is the king of keeping it simple in education technology.

Chromebooks

Pros

Quick Start-Up Time

No more wasting precious in-class minutes waiting for the computers to launch. Chromebooks take less than 10 seconds to boost on average and are said to not slow down with time, unlike traditional computers.

No Antivirus Necessary

Chromebooks are designed with security in mind. There is no need to buy and install separate security software, which saves schools money and time.

Compact Size

Some teachers appreciate the small nature of Chromebooks as they easily fit on school desks. Although they are smaller than even traditional laptops, Chromebooks still have a full keyboard.

Limited Setup

Outside of the printer (see below) little setup is required.

Cons

Closed System Limits Operations

Like iPads, Chromebooks are a closed system, meaning that users only have access to content available in the Chrome browser. Students and teachers are not able to download games/software from CDs or third parties. This is most detrimental for teachers, many of whom need to run school software systems such as grade books.

Incompatibility Issues

Often classroom hardware devices require custom drivers that Chromebooks can't support as these drivers have been developed for Windows, Mac and Linux.

It's in the Cloud

Chromebooks have very limited storage space - roughly that of a 16GB phone. Users will need to rely on the cloud for storage space, and not all administrators, teachers and students are comfortable with that. However, cloud storage can also be viewed as a pro, due to accessibility across multiple devices.

Will Work for WIFI

Chromebooks are WIFI-dependent, so they require WIFI to store data in the cloud. If WIFI goes down, this can cause issues for students who need to save their work, although limited local storage is available on the device. The work would have to be saved to the cloud once WIFI is restored.

Printing Problems

Without the ability to download third party software, Chromebook users must rely on Google's Cloud Print system. In this reviewer's experience, the cloud print system is unreliable and requires frequent IT support. Setting up the printer will almost assuredly require IT expertise.

Web Browsing...or Not

The Chrome browser on Chromebooks does not support Flash or several other important plugins, so students or teachers may run into compatibility issues when trying to view certain websites.

School Tech Showdown Winner: Windows!

Though we find more pros and fewer cons for Windows, that's not to say the Windows setup is best for every school. To determine the best technology fit for your student population's and teachers' needs, consult with an experienced Troxell account executive in your region. They will go over the pros and cons as they relate uniquely to you and help you choose the best investment for your school or district.