

Hardware Requirements

These requirements refer specifically to your computer hardware. “Minimum requirements” are meant for basic use of Blackboard. It is OK if you satisfy or exceed the “Recommended” settings. If you require any additional plug-in software applications, always check with the appropriate vendors as the “minimum requirements” may change. Check with your instructor for any other hardware/software requirements specific to your course. Remember; always be prepared for your online class before it begins for the best learning experience!

Hardware/Platform	Microsoft Windows		Apple Macintosh	
	Minimum	Recommended	Minimum	Recommended
Operating System	Windows XP	Windows XP or Vista	MacOS 10.4	MacOS 10.4, 10.5
Processor Speed/Type	800 MHz Intel Pentium III, or comparable	2.33 GHz Intel Core 2 Duo, or comparable	1.06 GHz Intel Core Duo	2.33 GHz Intel Core 2 Duo
CPU Memory	1 G of RAM	2 G of RAM	1 G of RAM	2 G of RAM
Monitor Resolution	800 x 600	1024 x 768	800 x 600	1024 x 768
Internet Connection	56 kbps Dialup Modem	Any high-speed connection (e.g. Cable Broadband or DSL)	56 kbps Dialup Modem	Any high-speed connection (e.g. Cable Broadband or DSL)
Free Hard Disk Space	1.5 GB	15 GB or greater	3 GB	9 GB or greater
Audio (Sound) Card	16-bit sound card	24-bit sound card	16-bit sound card	24-bit sound card
Video Card	16 MB VRAM with 65,000 colors or 16-bit	64 MB VRAM with True Color (24-bit or 32-bit)	Virtual memory turned on and allocated to at least 64 MB	Virtual memory turned on and allocated to at least 128 MB

Software Applications

Students can purchase software at a reduced rate through the Wisconsin Integrated Software Catalog, e.g. *MS Office 2007 Suite* (includes *Word*, *Excel*, *Access*, and *PowerPoint*) for only \$72 by going to this [website](#). You will need to have your student ID to qualify for the purchase.

Microsoft Office Viewers and PDF Converter

Microsoft offers free viewers for users to view documents created by the Microsoft Office product suite (i.e. Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint). Below are just a few:

- [Microsoft Word Viewer 2007 for Windows](#)
- [Microsoft PowerPoint Viewer 2007 for Windows](#)
- [Microsoft Excel Viewer 2007 for Windows](#)
- [Microsoft PowerPoint Viewer for Macintosh](#)
- [Microsoft Office Add-in 2007: Microsoft Save as PDF](#)

Microsoft Office Online offers a complete list for [Microsoft Office Viewers & Converters](#),

Browser Requirements & Settings

You need a web browser to access Blackboard. With the upgrade to Version 9, the supported configurations have changed. We recommend an up-to-date, popular browser, such as Microsoft Internet Explorer (MSIE), Mozilla Firefox, Netscape Navigator, or Safari.

Key to Support Status

Term	Definition
Certified	Fully tested and supported
Compatible	Key application areas tested
Provisional	Future technologies considered supported by Blackboard Support
Not Supported	Specified browser is not supported for the Operating System

Web Browsers: Windows

Browser	XP	Vista – 32 bit	Vista – 64 bit
IE 8	Compatible	Certified	Compatible
IE 7	Compatible	Compatible	Compatible
Firefox 3.5x	Provisional	Provisional	Provisional
Firefox 3.0x	Certified	Certified	Compatible

NOTE: The main differences between the 32-bit versions of Windows Vista and the 64-bit relate to memory accessibility, memory management and enhanced security features. To determine the platform version:

1. Click **Start**, right-click **Computer**, and then click **Properties**.
2. The operating system appears and will be indicated “64-bit Operating System” or “32-bit Operating System” as system type under **System**.

Web Browsers: Mac

Browser	10.4	10.5	10.6
Firefox 3.5x	Provisional	Provisional	Provisional
Firefox 3.0x	Certified	Certified	Not Supported
Safari 4	Compatible	Compatible	Provisional
Safari 3	Certified	Certified	Not Supported
Safari 2	Compatible	Compatible	Not Supported

NOTE: Browsers not supported for Blackboard Learn 9.0 version are Internet Explorer 6, Firefox 1.5 and 2.0. The Mac OS 10.3 is not supported.

Your Web Browser Settings








Java	Enabled
JavaScript	Enabled Not detected
Cookies	Enabled <i>Note: For Netscape browsers, cookies are enabled only if 'cookies=true'</i>

Blackboard requires the **Java Virtual Machine Standard Edition 5, 32-bit (1.5x)** and later from Sun Microsystems. You can obtain this free software from Sun's [Java web site](#).

Conduct a [browser test for Java](#) to determine what version of the Java VM you currently have on your system. (Clicking on this link opens a new window for the Sun Java test site. You may need to scroll down and bit, and look for "Test your JVM." More information is given on that page.) If this test does not execute, you probably do not have the current version of the Java VM or need to change your Web Browser's Security settings.

Browser Plug-ins

For some courses, you may be required to have one or more of these plug-in application programs. Generally, plug-in software should already be present on your computer. However, we recommend that you verify that (1) you have these plug-ins installed & configured on your web browser, and (2) you have at least the minimum required version for each plug-in.

Vendor	Plug-in Name	Test	What you should see	Download Link
Adobe	Acrobat Reader	Test PDF	A PDF document, "Testing Tips for Blackboard Students" will open. If you do not have the plug-in, the file may download, but will not open. You may be asked to select an application to open the document.	
Apple	Quicktime	Test QuickTime	A movie about Koko the gorilla will open in a new window or QuickTime Player. If you do not have the plug-in, the file may download, but will not open. You may be asked to select an application to open the document.	
Macromedia	Flash Player	Test Flash	The Macromedia web site will open in a new window. Read the instructions on that page to see if the Shockwave and Flash players are installed. You may be asked automatically to install the plug-ins.	
Microsoft	Windows Media Player	Test Windows Media Player	A funny commercial in a bar, with great expectations. If you do not have the plug-in, you will receive an error or a download window will appear. Follow the instructions to install, if necessary.	
			<p>Note to Macintosh users: Microsoft will continue to offer Windows Media Player 9 as a free download for Macintosh users, but has no plans to provide future updates or product support for Windows Media Player for Mac.</p> <p>As an alternative, Microsoft has teamed up with Telestream to make its popular Flip4Mac program available to Macintosh users. Flip4Mac provides Windows Media video and audio playback in the QuickTime Player for Mac OS X. See http://www.microsoft.com/mac/otherproducts/otherproducts.aspx?pid=windowsmedia for more information.</p> <p>Once installed, use the "Test Windows Media Player" above.</p>	
RealNetworks	RealPlayer	Test RAM	A video of Douglas Engelbart giving the first public demonstration of the computer mouse concept in 1968. If you do not have the plug-in, an error message will appear, or you may be asked to download the software.	
Sun	Java VM	Test Java	The Sun Java test site will open in a new window.	

Pop-Up/Spam Blockers/Download Accelerators

If you have installed pop-up/cookie/spam blockers or a download accelerator (such as RealDownload) on your computer, you may experience difficulties connecting to Blackboard resources. Please contact the appropriate software manufacturer or the Help Desk to determine if such software could be the cause of your difficulties.

Virus Scanners

You should have anti-virus software installed & running on your computer when connecting to any online learning resources. Some of the most popular virus scanners include McAfee VirusScan, Symantec (Norton) AntiVirus, TREND, AVG, and Kaspersky.

There are thousands of computer viruses today. An effective way to reduce any possible damage/harm to your files is to have a virus scanner configured on your computer to constantly perform background system scans. This requirement is for your own protection and for the protection of all Blackboard users. Also, one of the most common methods of passing a virus is through the sharing of files (e.g. via web sites, emails, floppy disks, ZIP disks, or CD-ROMs). Always be cautious of whom you are downloading files from, and verify downloaded files are safe first before opening them.