



Guidance on devices and connectivity

Which device is for you and how to help it perform well?

The aim of this document

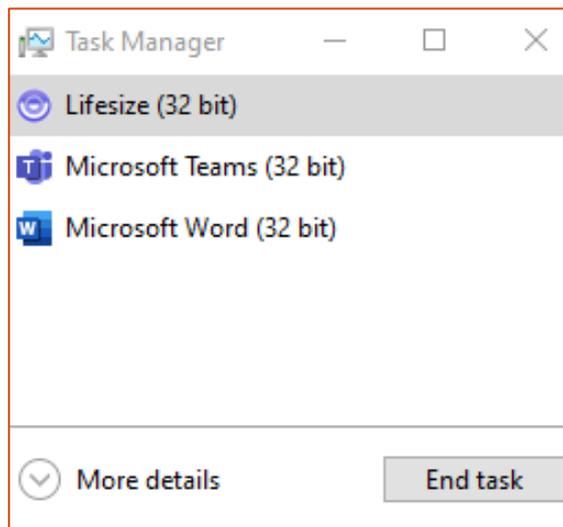
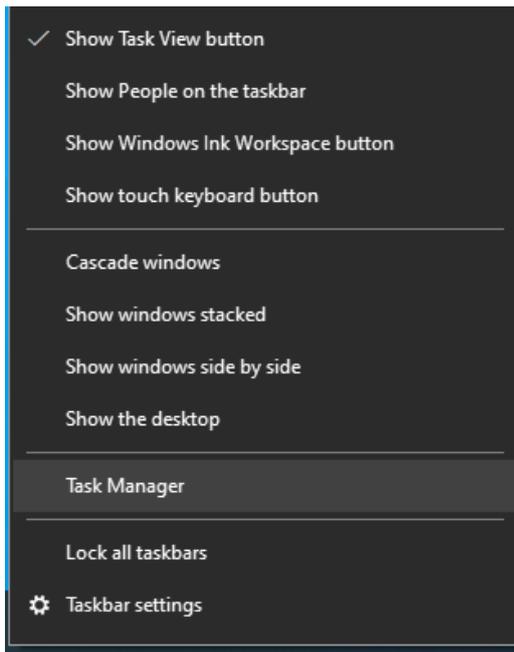
- Instructions - how to check the Memory on your Laptop or Desktop?
- Other device options such as Tablets, Netbooks and Mobile Phones
- Tips for improving connectivity
- Further help around – will my device meet my learning needs?

How to check the Memory (RAM) on your Laptop or Desktop?

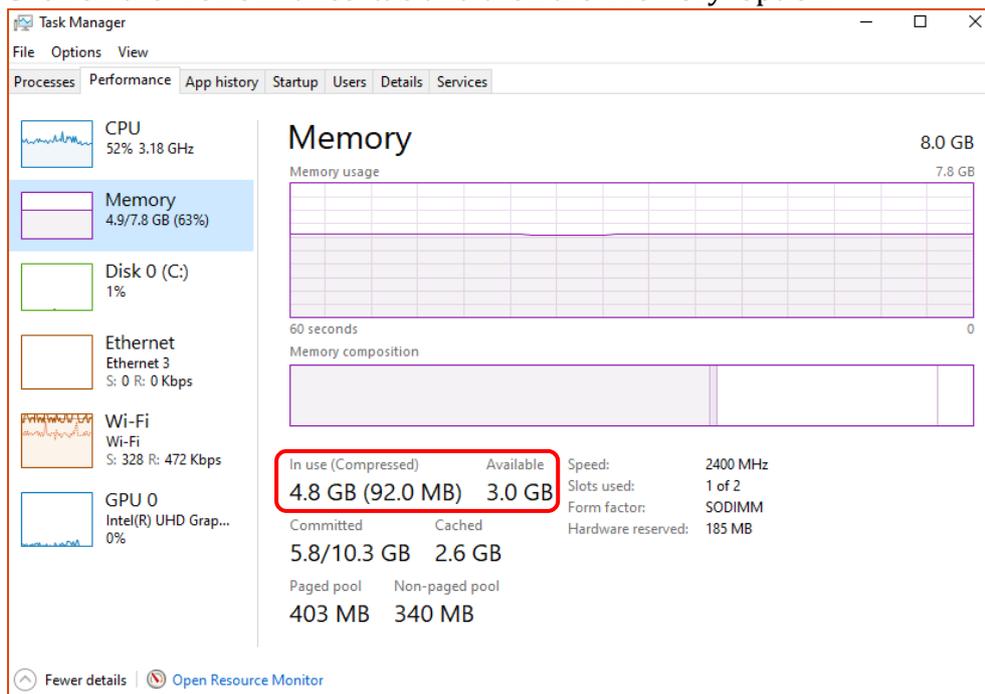
These instructions help you to understand

1. how much memory the machine came with
2. how much is being used and
3. what is still available

Right click on the search bar and choose 'Task Manager'. If the 2nd screen shot below is returned, click on the 'More details' arrow at the bottom left.



Click on the 'Performance' tab and then the 'Memory' option.



This illustration shows the device is using 4.8GB with 3GB available. This device came with just under 8GB of memory (RAM). The more applications you have and are using, the greater the usage figures. While RAM is upgradable on some machines, this is not guaranteed.

Other device options such as Tablets, Netbooks and Mobile Phones

To run and browse applications (apps) such as 'My SRUC', Moodle and Panopto, these devices will work well. Most though, will not be able to run software like a laptop or desktop (e.g. you won't be able to use all Excel functionality such as Macros or run mapping software).

Tablets, Netbooks and mobile phones are designed to watch videos, run specific apps, browse the Internet, read e-mails, but not much more. Most come with between 16 GB and 128 GB of built-in storage. In some cases, you can purchase an expansion slot or additional memory chip for additional removable storage. They have less storage capacity than a computer and limited modification options.

A note about Chromebooks –

There are some limitations to the apps you can run on Chromebooks. It's important to be aware of this and seek advice if needed.

To improve performance and alleviate space issues you can try the following steps;

- Transfer photos, videos etc. to online storage
- Look to see what apps are running in the background or draining your battery. Updating the app can help otherwise close or even remove from the device.
- Delete or move files
- Turn off the sync option from running automatically. Disable settings such as push notifications, ping or local services.
- Make sure you are running the most up to date firmware and security. In most cases you can access these via Settings, About Device or Software Update.
- Restart your device regularly

Tips for improving connectivity

We've detailed some key tips below but the [BTS Chartered Institute for IT website](#) is a good referencing point for the most up to date advice.

- Wi-Fi and 4G connections are all about location. The further you are from your router, the more likely you are to experience signal interference.
- Think about a wireless booster if you can't get near the router. These take your wi-fi signal and amplify it to other areas of the house. Alternatively, a powerline adapter transfers the signal through your home electrical wiring.
- Most Wi-Fi routers can connect via an ethernet cable, the best connection possible.
- Telephone line connection - Make sure your router is close to the master telephone socket, check with your provider that your phone socket is filtered.
- Run broadband speed tests (<https://broadbandtest.which.co.uk/>). If you're getting poor speeds, talk to your broadband provider. Ask them to test the line, there could be a fault. They might even offer you a new, faster, router.
- Password protect your Wi-Fi with a secure password to prevent neighbours using your service.
- Water absorbs Wi-Fi signals, make sure your router is not behind the fish tank!
- Switch off non-essential devices using your router. A PC, phone or I-pad updating its software, or a family member using you tube can really spoil your experience. Smart TVs may use a broadband connection without you even knowing.
- Some electrical devices can interfere with wi-fi signals. Make sure your router is plugged directly into a wall power socket rather than an extension cable. Long extension leads all coiled up can cause interference.

Will my device meet my learning needs?

If you access your course work through the Student Desktop or the Virtual Classroom, then a minimum laptop specification of 4Gb RAM (and connectivity of minimum 3Mbps), is needed. This is a minimum and ideally, 8Gb RAM would help 'future proof' the device. MAC books and Chromebooks will work through the Student Desktop or the Virtual Classroom.

Always check your course requirements to ensure you know if your device is compatible.



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