

# CHOOSING A NEW COMPUTER

John Steele

# What do you want to do?

2

- Browse the Internet
- Email
- Word Processing
- Spreadsheets
- Photography
- Video Editing
- Play Games
- On-line Games

# Type of Computer

3

- Hardware
  - ▣ Desktop
  - ▣ Laptop
  - ▣ Netbook
- Operating System
  - ▣ Microsoft Windows 7 Home Premium
  - ▣ Linux - Ubuntu
  - ▣ MAC OS

# Networking

4

- Wired
  - ▣ Usually needed to set up Wireless network
  - ▣ More suitable for desktop computers
- Wireless
  - ▣ More appropriate for laptops
  - ▣ Several standards, uses 2,4 GHz unregulated band
    - 802.11a – rare in UK
    - 802.11b – 11 Mbit, obsolete
    - 802.11g – 55 Mbit, still common
    - 802.11n – 135 Mbit, latest standard

# 32 or 64 bit

5

- Most machines are now 64 bit
- MOST programs will run in 32 bit mode on 64 bit Operating Systems. 64 bit versions will become available but may cost more initially
- Exceptions
  - ▣ Device drivers must be Signed and this may prevent older devices running on 64 bit OS – check the Web
  - ▣ Disk Partitioning (Easeus or Partition Wizard)
    - 32 bit version is free in both cases
    - 64 bit version consider Partition Wizard as alternative

# Choosing a CPU

6

- The choices include
  - ▣ Intel or AMD
  - ▣ Numbers of cores
    - 1 core
    - 2 core
    - More cores
    - Hyperthreading
- Don't worry too much about the differences unless you are into video. This site might help:
  - ▣ <http://www.cpubenchmark.net/index.php>

# Storage

7

- Disk
  - ▣ Web and Office say 160 Gbyte
  - ▣ Photos editing 250 to 500 Gbyte
    - But could be on external drive
  - ▣ Video editing LOTS
- Random Access Memory
  - ▣ Windows 7 Home Premium
    - 32 bit 2 Gbyte
    - 64 bit 4 Gbyte

# Office Tools

- ❑ **Do not assume that your new Windows computer has any Word Processing software**
  - ▣ Many new machines come with limited use versions of Office 2010 pre-installed
    - relatively cheap upgrade to full version
  - ▣ Some machines now come with a cut-down version
  - ▣ Microsoft Office 2010 Home is about £80
  - ▣ Open Office is free alternative
    - I use Open Office



# Email

9

- Windows 7 does NOT come with any email client
- Need to download and install a client
  - ▣ Microsoft Live Mail is free and is the Outlook Express replacement. It has some Outlook features
    - You either love or hate the interface
  - ▣ Thunderbird
  - ▣ There must be others