## Custom Computers vs Pre-Built

We often get asked if it's cheaper to build a computer vs. buy one off the shelf, and generally the answer is no. Custom-built computers are generally more expensive and do end up costing more to maintain. The advantages are that you end up with higher-quality parts that are built to last longer and be more upgradeable. Custom PCs use standardized hardware, so if you want to upgrade the processor, move to a different case, add drives, get a larger power supply, etc., there are more options with custom PCs. Pre-boxed computers are generally built to cut costs wherever possible to offer them at the cheapest price points, so you often end up with very generic components with cheap power supplies, sub-par cooling, cramped components to save money. Another advantage is that most off-the-shelf computers come with 1-year warranties and retail parts (used in custom builds) often have longer warranties on the hardware items.

Custom PCs also need a little extra work in the long run, but if you want a powerhouse computer you can be proud of (like an enthusiast car), then you have go custom or build your own. It will cost more and you may need to learn more about your particular computer hardware to get the most out of it, but for gamers and other enthusiasts who get geeked about custom PCs, there's no going back to a big-box desktop.

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**Refurbished Powerhouse!**

**Dell Latitude E6540**

Intel Core i7 2.7GHz

## Tech Tip:
## Update Those Apps!

You know the messages: "A Java Update is Available", "An Adobe Flash Player Update is Available", etc. We see them on almost every computer we touch. These messages can be annoying, but keeping these plugins updated is the first step in preventing viruses or malware on your computer. The reason they update so frequently is

8GB DDR3 RAM
500GB SATA HDD
DVD-RW
AMD Radeon HD 8790M
Windows 7 Professional

15.6" LCD with webcam!

## Call for details!

that new exploits are found and fixed regularly since they are a popular target for virus creators. If you can stand to surf the web without them, even better. But if you need Java and Flash, take the time to make sure those update messages are legit and get the newest versions when prompted. If you're ever in doubt, you can go straight to the sources. https://java.com/ and https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/

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# Featured Accessory:
# Surge Protectors!

Its easy to see the benefits of being protected from random power surges and possible lightning damage. A mid-to-high-end surge protector can even protect your cable television, phone, and network! The best ones even come with a "Connected Equipment Warranty" that will repair or replace any equipment damaged (by electricity) while connected to it. If you need to connect a bunch of power bricks (wall warts) in an outlet-light part of the house, we recommend the following:

Belkin 12 Outlet w/ Rotating Outlets

- 4320 joules of protection
- 12 rotating outlets
- $300,000 warranty
- Telephone line protection

We can help you find the right surge protector for your needs!

**Always Update Your Antivirus Software**

It's good advice to keep your antivirus and / or antimalware up to date. Keeping it updated is the only way to make sure you're computer is protected against as many of the latest threats as possible. If you're using a free software, you should note if it updates and protects your system on its own or if you need to run scans or updates in order to stay protected.

# From the Blog!
## Last Week on the Blog:
### *Video Technology*

"Computer technology seems to change over night at times. One aspect of that technology that confuses many people are the video connection standards. There's a few of them and they are constantly evolving. In this post we hope to clear up a little of that confusion.." [More...]

## Next Week on the Blog:
### *Computers & Your Health*

"Computers have become a nearly inseparable part of our everyday lives. We use them in school, at work, and even for play.  What that amounts to is an incredible amount of time spent looking at digital screens, typing on keyboards, manipulating mice, swiping touch screens, and sitting.  This leads to an ever growing list of technology related health risks.. "