SUPPLY LIST - SOFA

CAD Tech Student Managers - 2026-06-26 - Hardware and Software Recommendations & Information

School of Film and Animation (SOFA)

2026 First-Year Equipment Guide

PROGRAMS: Animation, Production, Motion Picture Science

Congratulations and Welcome to the School of Film and Animation!

The following is a list of equipment that you may find helpful throughout your time as a School of Film and Animation student. This list is not a shopping list, but rather suggestions for items you may want to consider bringing with you or obtaining during your time at RIT.

Again, you do not need to purchase any of the items cited below by the first day of classes, or even during the first year. We have a fully equipped cage and lab areas where much of this equipment and software is available to you.

After your first semester, or your first year, you'll be better prepared to decide on specific equipment you might want to personally own depending on your studies. Feel free to reach out to faculty or cage staff for recommendations on equipment that will be relevant at the time.

There is, however, one exception: Prior to arriving or soon after, students WILL need to purchase flash drives and external storage, as backing up their work regularly is extremely important.

Minimal recommendations for storage media as of 6/2026:

SD: Camera media

Flash Drive: USB Flash

SSD Drive: SSD

(Preferred audio and video **editing format** is APFS and Mac OS Extended)

STUDENT INSURANCE

As an accompaniment to any equipment purchase, all students are **strongly encouraged to acquire insurance** for their personal gear and any gear they check out from the rental facility known as the "Cage." An instant quote may be obtained at http://www.collegestudentinsurance.com/

Select "**New York**" and "**Rochester Institute of Technology**". We advise $8,000 as the average amount of insurance needed for first year SOFA students borrowing resources. For Film Production Students that coverage may increase to $25,000 in years two, three and four with "All Risk" endorsement provision.

COMPUTER OPTIONS

The School of Film and Animation does not require the purchase of a laptop or desktop computer as students have access to computer labs, equipment and software. However, if you are contemplating a computer purchase, personal preference and affordability may be determining factors.

Hardware

Laptops are portable and flexible in contrast to desktop computers. Apple computers are primarily used throughout the college labs, but if your preference is Windows-based computers, please know the operating system/platform is also perfectly viable and suitable too.

While either a mac or a pc laptop is suitable for any animation technique, we find Windows based pc's to be more suitable for 3D animation and Macs more suitable for audio and video editing, 2D, and stop motion animation.

Software

Purchasing software or subscribing to a cloud service will prove beneficial throughout your time at RIT.

1. **Adobe Creative Cloud** – RIT is an Adobe Creative Campus, and College of Art and Design students will gain access to the complete Adobe Creative Cloud for academic purposes. Specific details regarding access will be communicated upon your arrival at RIT.
2. **Toon Boom Harmony -** The School of Film and Animation is a Center of Excellence Campus, providing students with comprehensive access to the entire animation software suite for academic purposes. Detailed information regarding access will be disseminated upon your arrival**.**
3. **Microsoft Office** – A full software compilation for written communication, reports and presentations.
4. **Avid Media Composer and Pro Tools –** industry standard

Windows computer owners:

We suggest you install a driver to properly read Mac-formatted external drives. Helps to ensure compatibility with personal computer and editing lab computers.

Example: https://macdrive.com/

Recommendations for Motion Picture Science Students

Motion Picture Science students take a collection of courses from both the production and animation tracks during their time at RIT. As such, you may find benefit in owning some of the hardware and software listed in both of the previous sections. However, we suggest you wait until you arrive on campus to decide how much emphasis in either track you anticipate during your time in the School of Film and Animation. This will help you determine what, if any, of the equipment you would like to invest in moving forward.

Recommendations for Transfers/Second Year + Students

Depending on your options, you may find other software meets your needs. Please discuss software purchases with your faculty once you are at RIT.

Questions?

Should you have any inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact Bill Landers at bill.landers@rit.edu or (585) 475-5682. Bill will be delighted to assist you in identifying the most suitable equipment that aligns with your budget and educational goals.