USC Thornton
School of Music
Division of Contemporary Music

Minimum Technical Recommendations
For Screen Scoring Students

Students in the Screen Scoring program at the USC Thornton School of Music will be working towards careers in music where technology is a fundamental tool used in music-making. The following are minimum hardware and software recommendations that faculty and staff feel are necessary for students and their coursework.

We have been able to find the below prices from reliable vendors as of May 2024. Prices are subject to change.

Computer	
13" MacBook Pro laptop or larger (educational pricing available with your USC enrollment here: https://www.apple.com/us-edu/store) [i] ▪ Memory: 16 GB or greater (24+ GB recommended) ▪ Storage: 1 TB or greater (4TB recommended) ▪ Processor: Apple Silicon chip (M1, M2, M3[ii] including all variants)	$2,229.00[1]
Accessories & Misc.: ▪ External Drives: while not required, 4TB+ external SSD drives are recommended for audio and video storage.	$200.00
▪ USB-C to USB Adapter *(if needed)*	$20.00
▪ AppleCare	$99.00/year
Hardware *For students in need of multiple items, we recommend contacting our partner at Sweetwater.com to inquire about available bundles with a discount. Jim Swain at 800-222-4700 x 1228 or jim_swain@sweetwater.com*	
Audio Interface: *(one of the following or equivalent or better)* ▪ Universal Audio Volt 2	$199.00
OR ▪ Focusrite 2i2 3rd Gen (or better)	$179.00
Keyboard & Accessories: ▪ Arturia KeyLab Essential 61 (or equivalent or better) 88 key recommended	$269.00
▪ Sustain Pedal	$24.99
Microphone & Accessories: ▪ High quality large diaphragm condenser microphone o *For example Warm Audio WA-87 – discount available[iii]*	$499.00
▪ Microphone cables & stand	$100.00
Headphones: choose a high quality, studio set of headphones ▪ Sony MDR 7506	$99.00
OR ▪ Beyerdynamic DT 770	$159.00

Software *We recommend contacting our partner at Sweetwater.com to inquire about educational discounts on software. Jim Swain at 800-222-4700, x1228 or jim_swain@sweetwater.com.*	
DAW:	
▪ Logic Pro X required (*can be purchased as a part of Apple Pro Apps bundle*)	$199.99
▪ Microsoft Office Bundle *(currently provided by USC)*	$0
▪ AVID ProTools Studio required (Ultimate recommended) *(1 year education subscription, see note with education contact at Sweetwater)*	$299.00/year
Notation: pick one	
▪ Avid Sibelius Ultimate *(education – 1 year)* [2]	$99.00/year
▪ MakeMusic Finale academic	$99.00
Additional Software	
▪ Macro Software: Keyboard Maestro	$36.00
Samples: select as needed *(a full orchestral library, solo orchestral instruments, contemporary instruments, and synthesis elements are required)* **Please wait until you arrive on campus for additional USC negotiated discount codes**	
▪ Komplete Ultimate	$799.00
▪ Musio (education pricing)	$49/year
▪ EW Composer's Cloud -EDU (monthly subscription)	$9.99/month
▪ Splice EDU (monthly subscription)	$8.99/month
Effects/DSP (students should have access to equivalent plugins as listed below):	
▪ iZotope Music Production Suite[iv]	$299.00
OR	
▪ Fab Filter Mixing Plug-in Bundle[v]	$309.00
▪ Seventh Heaven	$69.00

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[i] Apple Education Pricing. When making this purchase, you will have the option to purchase the Apple Pro Apps Bundle and AppleCare at the time of customization.

[ii] Apple recently began releasing computers with their new M3 CPU chip. These computers come with Sonoma, Apple's latest macOS installed and cannot run earlier versions of the macOS. Be advised that, (1) music applications may not work on Sonoma until manufacturers release updated versions, and (2) it is important to research ports on your choice of computers to ensure that you will be able to connect hardware like audio interfaces and external drives. For compatibility research you can utilize this research:
https://www.sweetwater.com/sweetcare/articles/macos-sonoma-compatibility-guide/

[iii] 40 % discount on Warm Audio from Jim Swain at 800-222-4700 x 1228 or jim_swain@sweetwater.com

[iv] Students are eligible for a 50% discount at iZotope https://www.izotope.com/en/company/education.html

[v] Students are eligible for a 50% discount at Fab Filter https://www.fabfilter.com/shop/educational-discounts