Using a Laptop with a Projector or Display: How to, Tips and Hints

This section will help you make your laptop work with our campus projectors and displays. There are thousands of laptop configurations, models, screen sizes and screen resolutions. We cannot know how each laptop works however these instructions should fit most situations.

The information presented here is no substitute for reading your computer instruction manual, testing beforehand or a hands-on training. Spending 30 minutes testing the equipment BEFORE the semester starts can save you lost teaching time. For assistance, please contact Learning Technology at ltech@alliant.edu or 858-635-4357, option 2.

We can provide BASIC troubleshooting and configuration to allow your computer to work with our **projectors**, but you will need to:

- Know your laptop's display requirements.
- Know your laptop's resolution requirements.
- **Always** have a backup plan.

Attaching your computer to campus projectors and displays:

Whether you use the equipment in a classroom or check out a projector from the library, the hookup is the same:
   Attach a VGA cable FROM the laptop TO the projector or display.
   The cable attaches to your laptop via the EXTERNAL MONITOR port on your laptop.

Important note: Some laptops like the Sony Vaio, the Apple iBook, Powerbooks and MacBooks do not have standard VGA monitor connectors. Make sure you have any adapters or docking ports with you that will allow your laptop to connect to a standard VGA connection pictured below. The Learning Technology department does not have a variety of adapters on hand.

This is the monitor out connector on the back panel of a laptop computer

This is a standard VGA cable connector.

In general, the **order in which you do things** with computers and projectors is very important:

1. Connect the VGA cable from the laptop to the projector or display.
2. Turn on the PROJECTOR, let it warm up and select the proper COMPUTER input using the MODE or INPUT button on the remote control.
3. Turn on your computer LAST.

   Tip: Do not rely on your laptop's battery. Use your AC Adapter whenever possible.

When you turn on your computer, it checks all ports to see what devices are connected to it. Theoretically, the computer will recognize there is a projector connected and send the image that you see on the computer screen out to the projector.

What do you do when the image is not sent to the projector?

ALWAYS CHECK THIS FIRST: Is the **projector's input** set to **the correct COMPUTER input**? If it is, try the following:

For PC users: If you get an image on the laptop screen but not on the projector, check the following:

1. On your laptop's keyboard, find the key marked "Fn" (Function) usually on the lower left corner of the keyboard.
2. Then, search for a key that has either the letters "LCD/CRT" or a little monitor icon. Most often, it will be in the top row of keys marked F1 through F12, but not always.
3. When you have located both keys, press the "Fn" key and then the LCD/CRT key at the same time and then release. It might take a couple of seconds for the computer to react.

You may need to repeat step 3 as the toggle is a three way cycle like this:
Image on Laptop Screen **|** Image on Projector | Image on Both

When you press the "Fn" key sequence once, you will see an image on the projector, but your laptop screen will go black. Press the key sequence again and you'll see the image through the projector and on your laptop. (This information will be in your laptop's instruction manual.)

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