Components

Processor or chip — The brain

- **Intel i3, i5, i7, i9** — the bigger the number, the faster.
- **Intel Core Ultra 5, 7, 9** — Intel's new name for the same class of chips (2024 and newer); same idea, bigger number = faster.
- **AMD Ryzen 3, 5, 7, 9** — same idea as Intel's i3, i5, i7, i9.
- **Apple M1, M2, M3, M4** — higher number means newer and faster; any of them is plenty.

For everyday use (email, photos, video calls, browsing), an i5, a Ryzen 5, or any Apple M chip is plenty.

Screens — TVs and monitors

- **LED** — the common, affordable kind in most TVs and monitors. Good.
- **QLED** — a brighter LED — great for sunny rooms. Brighter.
- **OLED** — the richest picture with the deepest blacks, and costs the most. Best.

Ports and USB-C

- **USB-C** — the small rounded oval on newer devices. Plugs in either way, charges much faster, and moves photos and files much faster.
- **USB-A** — the classic flat rectangle. Still on most computers for flash drives, printers, and mice.
- **HDMI** — the wide plug that connects a computer to a TV or monitor.
- **Ethernet** — the wide phone-jack-looking plug for wired internet.

Smart TV platform — The TV menu

Roku, Google TV, Fire TV, and Apple TV are the common ones.

Battery — Power and charging

If your old device dies at 40%, the battery is worn — a new battery is often cheaper than a new device.

Memory or RAM — The workspace

Good target: 16GB on a computer · 8GB on a tablet. DDR5 is newer and faster; DDR4 is older but still fine.

Storage — The filing cabinet

- **Solid state drive (SSD)** — no moving parts, like a giant USB stick.

Bottom line: when you buy a computer today, get one with an SSD — a spinning hard drive will feel slow.

Wi-Fi — The wireless connection

Wi-Fi 6 or Wi-Fi 6E is current and fine.

Operating system

- **Windows** — Runs on most brands of computers — Dell, HP, Lenovo, and more.
- **iPadOS and iOS** — Run Apple's iPads and iPhones.
- **Android** — Runs most non-Apple phones and tablets, including Samsung and Google Pixel.