

## 6 Top Tips when buying new Mice for Schools

When you're looking for computer mice for your school, you want them to be suitable for your needs, and you want them to be durable. There are a number of features that you need to consider:

### 1. Connection Type

Almost all computers, laptops and notebooks now have a USB connection, so any mouse with a USB connection will work with such computers.

Occasionally some very old PCs or laptops may have an older, PS2 connection (often coloured green), and if your computer or laptop only has these connections, and no USB connections, (or no spare USB connections available) then you would need a mouse with a PS2 connection.



Some USB mice also come with a PS2 converter, so are suitable for all computers.

### 2. Age of Children

Most older children, like adults, can use a standard sized mouse. However, if the computer is to be used by younger children (maybe aged 7 or younger), or if some of the time the computer is to be used by younger children, then a smaller mouse, designed for smaller hands, would be the better mouse to get. Older children and adults will easily cope with the smaller mice, but giving a young child a large, standard mouse is creating another barrier to learning for them.



### 3. Mobile Laptop, or PC?

If you are using a PC, and will be permanently attaching the mouse to it, then a standard sized mouse is likely to be best (unless being used by younger children). However, if the mouse is for a laptop, and will regularly be put into a laptop bag, then a smaller mouse, with a retractable cable, would be easier to fit into the bag, and would save the wire from getting tangled. You simply give both ends of the cable a pull, and the wire rolls up for you!

#### Mouse with retractable cable



### 4. Colour

Mice come in all sorts of colours, and for most users, the colour is more related to personal preference. However, for younger children, not only are the brighter colours of an Infant Mini Optical Mouse very appealing and child-friendly, but the two main buttons are colour coded. This helps when explaining to young children which button to press; they understand 'Press the blue button' a lot easier than telling them to 'Left-Click' - especially if they don't know their left from their right!



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### 5. Keeping a Mouse Clean and intact!

A few years ago, most mice had a small rubber ball underneath them, which turned rollers inside the mouse to track movement. Not only did you have to periodically clean these rollers to ensure the mouse worked successfully, but children often removed the rubber ball and lost it, rendering the mouse useless.

Nowadays, most mice work optically, by shining light onto the surface they are on, and don't have the rubber ball and rollers. So no more cleaning, and no more missing rubber balls!

### 6. Special Needs

Some children find that, due to poor fine-motor-skills, they are unable to control a conventional mouse. If the problem is just that the mouse moves too quickly, or the 'double-click' speed is too fast, then this can be amended by going into the computer's control panel, to amend the speed of the mouse and/or the double click speed.

However, if children are unable to use a conventional mouse at all, one alternative is a trackball mouse. A trackball mouse is a device that sits on the desk, but isn't moved around itself. It has a ball on the top of it, and by rolling the ball from left to right, or up and down, the mouse is made to move. When the child is ready to press a mouse button, then they press it on the trackball mouse, and as they are not moving the ball at the same time, the mouse stays perfectly still.



Optical Trackball Mouse

### Overall Summary - Top Tips

1. **Connection Type:** Check whether you need a USB or PS2 keyboard.
2. If the mouse is (sometimes) going to be used by children under the age of 7, consider getting a smaller mouse
3. If the mouse is to be used with a laptop and packed away regularly, consider a smaller mouse with a retractable cable
4. If children under the age of 7 will (sometimes) be using the computer, consider a colour-coded mouse, to help them to press the correct button each time
5. Ensure the mouse you buy is an 'Optical' Mouse
6. For pupils who struggle, try slowing down the mouse using the control panel, or in extreme circumstances, purchase a trackball mouse for them

Working closely with schools, we have identified a number of mice which are ideally suited to the specific needs of schools. These are shown below.



	<u>Infant Mini Optical Mouse</u>	<u>Retractable Mini Optical Mouse</u>	<u>Standard Mouse</u>	<u>Optical Trackball Mouse</u>
	  Ideal for younger pupils	 Ideal for use with laptops. Available in pink, white, black or red.		 Ideal for users with very poor fine motor skills
Product Code	MA	MC	MF	MB
Connections	USB	USB (and PS2 converter)	USB	USB (and PS2 converter)
Cable	Standard durable cable	Retractable cable	Standard durable cable	
Size of Mouse	Mini size, ideal for smaller hands, or for use with laptop		Standard Mouse	N/A
Type of Mouse	Optical Mouse Technology			
Colour	Colour-Coded and Child-Friendly	Available in pink, white, red or black	Black and Silver	
Single Unit Price	<b>£9.99</b>	<b>£5.99</b>	<b>£5.99</b>	<b>£29.99</b>
5 Pack Price	<b>£44.95</b> Save £5	<b>£24.95</b> Save £5	<b>£24.95</b> Save £5	<b>£129.95</b> Save £20
Class 30 Pack	<b>£259.70</b> Save £40	<b>£139.70</b> Save £40	<b>£139.70</b> Save £40	

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