School of Photographic Arts and Sciences (SPAS) Supply List

The following pages detail required and recommended equipment and supplies for first year and transferring student. These items are available at the RIT’s Digital Den, RIT’s on-campus store for photography equipment and supplies. Beginning in July 2018, The Digital Den will be located on the first floor of Monroe Hall next to the Student Alumni Union (SAU). Prior to July, the Digital Den can be reached at 585-424-6766. Ext. 204. After their move, the number will be 585-475-2505.

For more information and/or pricing of any of the required or recommended items mentioned below, please go to https://www.rit.edu/fa/digitalden/. Their professional staff is well versed in the photography curriculum and they work closely with the School’s faculty and staff.

Please note that this list is segmented into several sections. The first section applies to ALL students attending the School of Photographic Arts and Sciences (SPAS). The second consists of additional items for students pursuing a BFA. The third is additional equipment for students pursuing a BS. There is also information regarding computers, suggested software, and insurance. NOTE: Items that are in bold are required on the first day of classes; all other required items may be purchased as needed throughout the year.

I. Required for all SPAS students:
   1. You will need to own a DSLR digital camera that allows for operation in manual and automatic modes. We do not recommend purchasing what is commonly referred to as a “camera kit,” which includes camera body and lens, see Sections II and III for lens requirements.
      a. The camera must be at least 12 megapixels and be able to be remotely fired. The camera should also be able to shoot in RAW file format, be capable to be custom white balanced, and have HD video capability.
      b. Your camera should have the ability to use an off-camera flash that has a sync cord port (PC in) and should be able to be operated with a remote electronic release.
      c. If interested in learning more about the variety of digital cameras, you may wish to visit www.dpreview.com. This site is great for comparison-shopping.
   2. Camera bag (waterproof recommended)
   3. The remote device, iClicker. The iClicker is available for purchase at Barnes & Noble, located at Park Point adjacent to the RIT campus.
   4. Two portable hard drives, bus-powered preferred for easy storage and accessibility. One drive will be the ‘working drive’ the other will be used for your archive. One of the hard drives should be 1 TB and the other 2TB.
   5. A moderately priced hand-held exposure meter is recommended.
      a. Any meter of professional quality that can measure incident and reflected light, as well as electronic flash, is sufficient.
      b. Corded/cordless flash meter capability is also recommended.
      c. Some excellent meters are the Sekonic L-758DR, Sekonic L-308S, or L-358.
6. Capture media (ex: compact flash cards) for your camera should be a minimum of 8 GB. You will need at least two.
7. Card Reader with either a USB2 or Firewire support
8. Professional grade tripod (Manfrotto and Bogen are good brands)
9. XRite Passport color reference checker (http://xritephoto.com/)
10. Lens cleaner
11. Basic scientific calculator
12. Two USB Thumb/Jump Drives, 8 GB or larger

II. Additional required items for BFA students
1. A fixed focal length lens—a 24, 35, or 50 mm single, non-zoom lens.
2. Electronic flash with off-camera cable of 3 to 5 foot extension
3. Hot Shoe Adapter (if your camera does not have a flash sync plug)
4. Remote Electronic Trigger specific to your camera’s preferences
5. Extension cord for photographing tethered to a computer (USB 2.0 A to Mini-B Cable, 6 foot minimum)

III. Additional required items for BS students
1. A “normal” 50mm – 55mm lens at minimum
2. Lens hood/shade for your lens(es)
3. Polarizing filter for your lens(es)
4. Remote trigger/release for your camera
5. Good ruler (clear with metric measurements)
6. Tool or tackle box to carry printing & studio gear
7. A macro lens is required for the second year, but is not necessary for the first year courses. Note: this lens is not the same as a macro-zoom lens, i.e. 20 – 170mm macro; this is a “prime” macro lens that should be able to focus down to a 1:2 reproduction ratio or make images at ½ life-size.
8. ≥6-foot USB tether cable for connecting your camera body to a computer

IV. Computers:
The School of Photographic Arts and Sciences does not require the purchase of a laptop or desktop computer. Students have access to multiple computer labs, equipment and software while at RIT. Barnes & Noble offers special pricing and/or manufacturers’ discounted offers on computers and software packages. If you are arriving on-campus with a computer or considering a computer purchase, the following may be helpful in your thought process:

1. The question of laptop or desktop computer often boils down to personal preference and affordability. Will you need the advantage of portability and flexibility of a laptop affords or will a desktop unit best serve your needs? You may wish to wait until you arrive on campus and experience your first semester of study before making a final decision.
2. Mac-based computers are largely utilized in image-based educational programs and careers, such as photography. However, if your preference is for a PC, please know this is a perfectly acceptable product applicable to your studies at RIT.

3. Install as much RAM (memory) as feasible in order to best handle large image digital files.

4. Like memory, a large computer hard drive is essential for digital imaging processing and storage.

V. Educational Software:
Educational software packages will prove beneficial throughout your four years of study at RIT. The following cross-platform (both MAC and PC compatible) packages are recommended, not required purchases. However, if you plan to purchase any of the recommended software mentioned below, please wait until you are on campus. Barnes & Noble’s The Digital Den offers “rock bottom” prices for software with manufacturers’ rebates, discounts and incentives targeted at the university market.

For those interested in what software packages are most readily used at RIT, the recommended programs include:

1. The most current Adobe Photoshop Lightroom. This program is introduced in the first year of academic study and guides a student’s formative work (and beyond) with their digital images.

2. Current Adobe Creative Suite, a full compilation of software programs relevant to photography, design, etc. The Suite, especially the software program Photoshop, is introduced in first year of study but gains substantial use in subsequent years.

3. Microsoft Office Suite, a full compilation of programs for word processing, spreadsheets, etc.

VI. Insurance
While it is not required, it is highly recommended that you have some type of insurance coverage for your equipment, as well as equipment borrowed from our school’s equipment cage. You might be able to get a rider on your homeowner’s policy or renter’s insurance to cover this. To learn more about insurance programs offered at RIT, please visit: https://www.rit.edu/fa/grms/film_and_photo_student_general_liability_insurance.html