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How to Choose a Video Card

Want to know what piece of technology is changing most rapidly in the world of computer? That's right - video cards.

The rate at which video cards come out is simply mind boggling. We're looking at a whole plethora of video cards based on graphics processors from ATI and Nvidia.

Which card should you choose? Will it be good enough to run your most complex business applications and the latest 3D games?



Some video cards available in the market

Well, this article will help you make some sense of this fast changing technology and enable you to choose the best video card for your computing needs.

The best way to see what video card to buy is to consider how you're using your computer now. There are several categories:

There are several categories:

- Server
- Simple Applications
- Complex Applications
- General Gaming
- Hard-Core Gaming

Ok, let's look at these in turn.

Server

If you're using your computer as a mail server, FTP server, print server, or even a game server, you definitely do not need a high-end video card. What you need is a simple, no-frills low-end video card.

Simple Applications

Say you're using the PC for simple applications only, for example, word processing, email or web surfing. Again, you do not need the best video card out there. A cheap and decent one will do the trick.

Complex Applications

If you need to perform more complex tasks like 3D computer aided design or video editing, it will make more sense to go for a heavy duty card. Screen resolution and image quality tend to be important factors for this type of work. Look for a video card whose processor which supports a high screen resolution, with ample graphics memory.

General Games

If you'll only play simple games like Minesweeper, Reversi or Backgammon, then my advice is to save your money and just get a simple video card. No need for the latest 3D graphics gizmo.

Hard-Core Gaming

On the other hand, if you live on intense, real-time 3D games like Unreal Tournament and Battlefield 2, you'll want to get the latest 3D graphics card. These games require extremely powerful cards which support a variety of graphics effects like anti-aliasing, Z-buffering, vertex shaders, etc.

Conclusion

In summary, you should always consider your needs first before going out to buy that video card. Video cards, especially the latest models, tend to be prohibitively expensive. If you only need to do general computer stuff, then don't shell out cash for the high-end cards. Go for some of the cheaper video cards instead. Do your homework, read up the manufacturer's online manuals before making your purchase decision.

Want To Upgrade to A 19" LCD Monitor?



The [Planar PE1901](#) is a 19 inch LCD monitor that features an ultra-thin design and exceptional visual performance. If you're thinking of stepping up to a 19-incher, the Planar PE1901 stands above the rest in image quality and value. This monitor also includes the eTrust Internet Security Suite software which provides protection against viruses and other online threats.

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