

## Verdict on Chromebook?

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Wondering if anyone pulled the trigger on a Chromebook and what their long term opinion on it is? I just noticed they are letting these things go for somewhere between \$199 and \$349 depending on model.

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I wrote a grant application to get a few of these for my daughter's third grade class. We lost :(

My understanding is that they don't have a desktop, just a chrome browser. So all you can do is access Internet based stuff.

Joshua Smith

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My daughter (11th grade) got one a few weeks ago for school. It is basically a very large droid (minus the free quickoffice), everything is cloud based, app driven. she has no problem with it as she mostly uses google docs or surfs the net. Her biggest issue with it is printing. It seems that in order for her to print with icloud, she needs to have a regular computer on in the house at the same time she is printing from the chrome book. The good thing is that it's very light in her backpack and if she drops it or loses it, everything is stored in the cloud and she's only down \$200.

Deborah E. Kaminetzky, New York

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She can use Cloud Print from her Google account. Here's a how to: <http://goo.gl/Qd25P>. You should check out my site [thedroidlawyer.com](http://thedroidlawyer.com).

Jeffrey Taylor, Oklahoma

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Thanks, I will definitely let her know and take a look at your site - so far I am enjoying my droid (switched from blackberry about 6 months ago) but I always like learning new things.

Deborah E. Kaminetzky

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## SoloSez Popular Threads, February 2013

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I am contemplating a dedicated computer for wire transfers. Is a Chromebook suitable/secure for doing something like that? If not, any recommendations?

I just need a secure link to my banking software through a browser.

Jim Pardue, North Carolina

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Well first, they aren't "letting them go" - this is the intended price range. The whole idea here is a Google experiment to see if a pure cloud-focused operating system can apply. In a way, it's almost an operating system that ISN'T an operating system. Or put another way, the OS is the web itself. An ecosystem that uses Google Chrome - the browser - as the interface to the "Web as OS" (fulfilling the long-time prophecy incorrectly attributed to Sun Microsystems founder Scott McNeely that "the network IS the computer").

Using Chrome Apps, you can do all sorts of things in the cloud - obviously centered about Google's own web functionality. You can experience it by using Chrome as your browser and loading up on Chrome Apps.

The hardware spec is focused on low-cost, but high-quality simplicity. Low-power design for battery life, lower cost CPU because more would be a waste, enough RAM to function, a small SSD for local caching and fast boot times.

For a teen or anyone who would SOLELY use cloud apps (including Google Apps or Office 365 with web storage - Google Drive, Dropbox, Box, SpiderOak, Skydrive, etc.) this is pretty slick.

So that's the specific purpose and intent. As to success, lots of articles like this show that the concept is starting to look viable:

<http://www.pcworld.com/article/2026528/acer-reports-brisk-chromebook-sales-while-windows-8-still-lags.html>.

Does it replace a tablet or laptop? It's different . . . but really interesting and dirt cheap. I've played with the \$199 Acer model and the \$249 Samsung model. Both nice pieces of hardware - thin, light and both seem well-constructed. I'm tempted to get one for experimenting with.

HTH,  
Ross Kodner, Wisconsin

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## SoloSez Popular Threads, February 2013

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I was (and I guess still am?) a beta-tester for the Chromebooks, so I have one of the originals. I don't know about the Acer or Samsung hardware so I cannot comment on that part. I managed to do my last year of law school, and my bar study on one. It is a pretty useful computer - it starts up quickly and I can use Google Docs for most things. That said, there are some limitations - it has trouble with some MS Office formats, for example. I wouldn't make it my primary work computer, but it's a good backup/second computer.

Justin Meyer, New York

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Got one for my Mom for Christmas. She had never really been on the internet or a computer, so the intention was to get something as simple as possible to allow her to get used to emailing people, etc.

She loves it. It does what she wants, and little else.

Its limitations would drive me crazy, but if you want basically an android tablet in laptop form, it's great

Patrick W. Begos, Connecticut

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You could always use any cloud Office-compatible tools to be Word compatible. Like actual Microsoft Office 365's web apps, for example.

Ross Kodner

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No, the OS is a highly customized version of Linux. I still remember (sort of) when, probably in about 1998 or so, you called Linux a Heathkit OS, and I called you on it. '-)

An interesting niche market for Chromebooks is among journalists and activists working in certain parts of the world where saying the wrong thing really can get you jailed or killed. There are better solutions for those who are technically skilled (for example, you can't use Tor with a Chromebook), but for those who don't have the tech chops and who want some additional security over a typical laptop, Chromebook is a reasonable alternative. Automatic full disk encryption, with very little by way of attack vectors on the OS, because it is so customized.

James S. Tyre, California

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## SoloSez Popular Threads, February 2013

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Well Jim, technically, of course. Practically for regular humans, yes, it is :-)

Ross Kodner

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Being a regular human is overrated highly.

James S. Tyre

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I have always heard that Chrome os is significantly more limited than Android.

Lesley Hoenig, Mikchigan

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Yes more limited, can't say if it's significantly. I believe it runs Chrome apps, which are definitely not all Android apps, so I probably misspoke there.

It's good if you WANT real simple. It's not good if what you really want is a laptop

Patrick Begos

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