

# Things to know about touchpads on laptops

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**If you enter a retail store and ask a sales representative to explain a laptop to you, chances are you'll get a long list of hardware information focusing on what's inside.** You will get information about the processor (CPU), hard drive size and the amount of RAM installed.



However, when RAM and CPU are getting cheaper, the speed is not much different between product lines, one touchpad is the mystery that many people do not notice. Although existed for many years, not every company has designed the same touchpad.

## The basics of Touchpad

Touchpad first appeared in 1990 and is one of the answers to the problem of providing an input solution for a mobile laptop (trackpointers and balls all towards common needs). The first laptop with a touchpad or trackpad at the time was the Apple PowerBook 500.

The modern touchpad uses a technology called capacitive touch. It is also a technology used in most touch screens and works by detecting the electrical currents of a human finger when exposed to the touchpad surface. This allows it to easily navigate smoothly without relying on physical pressure.

However, capacitive touch is not so without a slight disadvantage, it is not possible to detect inanimate objects or human hands with gloves. A special touchpad also adds the ability to work with the stylus.

## The difference between the touchpad

While almost all touchpads use the same basic technology to detect input, there are many ways to use this technology, there are many different touchpad sizes and textures.

The key feature of a touchpad is its ability to support multi-touch. Although this has become an important extra feature but that is not popular. For example, an MSI GT680R gaming laptop for about \$ 1,500 does not support multitouch. If the laptop supports this feature, you can use it easily with your fingers, just try to scroll down a web page with your finger while you still control the item with another finger.

If a laptop does not have a multitouch, the moving space has been moved to another location. This is a small vertical area, usually on the right side of the touchpad designed to move fingers to hover up / down.

Material quality is also a very important issue. Most inexpensive laptops simply build plastic-like plastic touchpads that cover the laptop, which doesn't feel smooth. Expensive laptops like the MacBook use a glass surface because it provides a much smoother feel. Meanwhile the Asus Bamboo series using bamboo touchpad material is also quite impressive.

Finally, the touchpad buttons are quite important. The best option is a touchpad that provides two separate buttons but many touchpads use a button with a 'rocker-style' style. This means that there is a middle rocker button that can operate both left and right mouse button functions. This rocker button looks pretty sexy, but it can be annoying when you use it, you have to click near the rocker button and love a stronger button.

A perfect touchpad should provide multi-touch support, a smooth surface and two buttons with good tactile response. These features are not difficult to find, but for inexpensive laptops, this seems impossible.

## The importance of software support

Although your touchpad is very important for hardware, the software used also has an impact on the touchpad when done.

For example, Windows does not support multitouch until Windows 7 appears (although there is a method to hack to enable this feature), even though the hardware is capable of working. Multitouch is really attractive compared to laptops to respond immediately and clearly, currently navigating Windows with the touchpad is much easier than before.

However, there are still clear differences between Windows 7 and Mac OS X, which offer incredible multi-touch support. Much of the difference is between the ability to navigate Windows and Mac OS X on laptops. Meanwhile, Ubuntu also goes into multi-touch support since version 10.10.

It's easy to forget the touchpad when the sales person introduced the product, but remember that the touchpad is pretty much used for a laptop, and it can't be replaced or upgraded, so you need to be sure when buying a laptop with a touchpad I want.

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