

# Computer recommendations for use with a Tecan Spark<sup>®</sup> microplate reader.

Congratulations on your purchase of a new Spark multimode microplate reader from Tecan. To help you prepare for the installation of your new reader, here are our recommendations for obtaining a typical third-party desktop-PC, which is needed for controlling the Spark reader.

## Hardware recommendations:

- Tecan recommends the use of a typical desktop tower-PC in combination with an USB 3.0 PCI Express plug-in card for operating the Spark reader.
- Using notebook computers or all-in-one mini-PCs is not recommended.
- We recommend the installation of all of the latest BIOS updates (as recommended by the PC manufacturer).
- Ensure that the PC allows installation of “low profile” PCIe expansion cards (for an additional USB 3.0 PCI Express plug-in card).

## PC configuration recommendations and specifications:

	Recommendations	Comments
PC	2.4 GHz (Quad Core)	
Operating System	Windows <sup>®</sup> 10 (64-bit) Editions: Pro, Enterprise, Windows 10 LTSC 2021	Windows RT NOT supported! Windows 11 NOT supported!
Memory	Windows 10 (64-bit): 16 GB RAM	
Free Hard Disk Space	10 GB For cell counting measurements: 160 GB For cell confluence measurements, 1000 GB is recommended.	
Monitor	Super VGA Graphics	
Resolution	1680 x 1050, 1920 x 1080	
Mouse	Microsoft <sup>®</sup> mouse or compatible pointing device	
Communication	USB 2.0 (instrument) USB 3.0 (camera)	The dedicated cable for the Cell Module must be plugged into a USB 3.0 port, ideally on a separate USB host controller, to ensure optimal performance. Alternatively, USB 3.1 or 3.2 Gen 1 ports can be used. Note: Spark requires USB Type-A™ connectors.
Devices	Windows 10: DirectX 9 graphics device with WDDM 1.0 or higher driver	
.NET	Microsoft <sup>®</sup> .NET Framework 4.6 (4.6.2) The required .NET version is installed automatically alongside any existing versions.	
Microsoft Excel <sup>®</sup>	2019, Office <sup>®</sup> 365 The export mechanism writes files according to the Office Open XML file format (.xlsx)	Office 365: Please note that a local installation of Office 356 (Excel) is required on the PC.

**Further recommendations:**

- Tecan recommends using only the high-quality USB cable provided to connect the Spark reader to the PC.
- For the installation of the SparkControl™ or the SparkControl Magellan software, **full** local Windows® admin rights are required. Please contact your IT administrator to grant these rights.
- If you're planning to perform kinetic measurements over several hours, or measurements with high data transfer requirements on a regular basis, we highly recommend installing a USB plugin-card such as the one below to connect the Spark instrument:  
Startech – Product ID: PEXUSB3S25  
<https://www.startech.com/en-us/cards-adapters/pexusb3s25>

For the next steps, please refer to the document:  
**“Recommendations for Spark software installation”**



**For tips and tricks, troubleshooting and additional information, please refer to [www.tecan.com/knowledge-portal/microplate-reader](http://www.tecan.com/knowledge-portal/microplate-reader)**

Spark microplate readers and the SparkControl software are for Research Use Only. Not for use in diagnostic procedures.

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