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Those whose jobs involve tugging a shoulder-crushing laptop from airport to airport know better than anyone that every ounce counts. So when Apple introduced its wafer-thin three-pound MacBook Air earlier this year and various PC makers followed with their own super light models, cheers echoed from LaGuardia to LAX. Here is a look at some of the lightest laptops with the speed and performance you need to work effectively on the road.

These computers are made possible by a new generation of lower-power processors, lighter batteries and solid-state hard disk drives that use the same technology as USB flash drives. As light as two pounds and as portable as a hardcover book, even the most miniscule machine is a full-fledged computer, running Microsoft's Vista operating system or, in the case of the Air, Mac OS X. However, the smallest laptops do have drawbacks.

Larger laptops average 2GHz, but smaller ones top out at that. Even at that speed, you may have trouble running big Excel files or photo-editing software efficiently. To reduce weight, manufacturers typically shave inches from the keyboard and screen. They also sacrifice battery life. Expect about two hours vs. four to six for a larger model. Light laptops tend to offer fewer ports and networking options than their heavier friends.



BRAND & DESCRIPTION	ERGONOMICS	PERFORMANCE	BOTTOM LINE
Lenovo ThinkPad X300 Price: \$2,800 and up Weight: 3.1 pounds Size: 13"x9"x1" Battery Life: 2.5 hours Speed: 1.2 GHz RAM: 2GB DVD Drive - Yes	The X300 is larger than some peers but on par with the Air in terms of weight and size. Plus, it has a big screen and a normal keyboard.	Even with a slower processor, this is pretty fast thanks to a solid-state hard drive. And it has lots of features, including cellular networking and a DVD drive.	This is one of the best thin and light business machines out there. Impressive performance and road warrior styling make it a winner.
MacBook Air Price: \$1,799 Weight: 3 pounds Size: 13"x9"x1" Battery Life: 3 hours Speed: 1.6GHz RAM: 2GB DVD Drive - No	About the same size as the Lenovo, the Air is equally easy to use. It has a huge screen, a full-size keyboard and a large touchpad.	No DVD drive and limited wired networking capability out of the box. But the processor is impressive.	The Air isn't as versatile as the Lenovo and may be harder to use for business because it doesn't run Windows as its primary operating system. Still, it's a solid runner-up.
Sony Vaio VGN-TZ250N Price: \$2,200 Weight: 2.7 pounds Size: 11"x8"x1" Battery Life: 3 hours Speed: 1.2 GHz RAM: 2GB DVD Drive - Yes	The Vaio is thin, light and generally comfortable to use, though Chiclet-size keys might turn some people off.	It's strong on wireless networking options rather than processing power. And it's expensive for what you get.	This well-designed computer is great for personal computing, but for business, not so much.
Acer Travelmate 6292 Price: \$999 Weight: 4.7 pounds Size: 12"x9"x1" Battery Life: 5 hours Speed: 2GHz RAM: 1GB DVD Drive - Yes	The Travelmate is the heaviest laptop in this category and among the biggest in inches.	With the fastest processor, the Travelmate easily runs several applications. It has the longest battery life, and it connects to the fastest wireless networks.	The Acer is relatively inexpensive plus it is more powerful and smaller than regular laptops.