

Buying Cheap Laser Pointers

When I was an undergrad, I always thought that cheap laser pointers were sort of a silly novelty item. I understood the thrill - after all, I had been raised on science fiction - but I couldn't really see the practical value. Why couldn't professors just point with a stick, or use a pen on the transparency?

Once I start lecturing myself, however, I began to get it. Cheap laser pointers really do make a difference. The thing is, as a professor you might find yourself in all kinds of different situations in terms of presentation. You might be in a small classroom one hour, and a large auditorium the next. You might be using a transparency one time, a chart another time, and an old-fashioned projector for a third lecture. The great thing about cheap laser pointers is that you can use them in all of these situations. Whether the room you are working in is big or small, a laser dot will be easily visible.

Of course, not all cheap laser pointers are the same. The red ones are okay. As a matter of fact, they are still the standard in many places. Nonetheless, they don't show up quite as well as some of the more expensive ones. If you are willing to spend a few extra dollars, cheap green laser pointers make a lot of sense. The bright green light is much easier to see up on the wall. You can find other colors as well, such as blue. Blue lasers actually might be the best choice, because there are some people who are red-green colorblind. A blue laser dot is likely to show up for everyone - a definite advantage.

Figuring out which cheap laser pointers are right for you all depends on what you're planning on doing with them. If you just want a novelty item, you can buy one in a drugstore or a gas station for almost nothing. These are the cheapest laser pointers available. Sometimes, the cost as little as 5 dollars. If you are going to be using your laser as a tool in the classroom, however, you might do well to invest in something a little bit more powerful. For another 20 or 30 dollars, you can buy an extremely bright, but still cheap laser.

When you are comparison-shopping cheap laser pointers, you should pay attention to the beam diffusion as well as the strength. The more concentrated the laser beam is, the more of an impact it will make. The stronger it is, the further it will be able to be seen. There's a big difference between a laser that takes a few minutes to spot and one that can be seen right away. If you want your students to pay attention, you should make it as easy for them to see what you're talking about as possible.