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Computer - Overview

Computer is an advanced electronic device that takes raw data as input from the user and processes it under the control of set of instructions (called program), gives the result (output), and saves it for the future use.

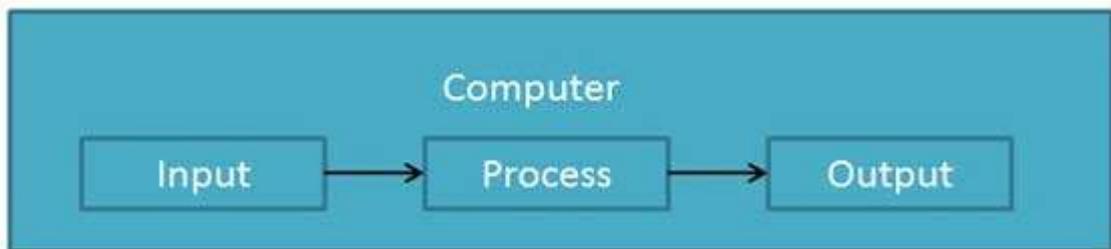
This Computer Fundamentals tutorial covers a foundational understanding of computer hardware, software, operating systems, peripherals etc. along with how to get the most value and impact from computer technology.

oday's world is an information-rich world and it has become a necessity for everyone to know about computers. Purpose of this tutorial is to introduce you about computer and its fundamentals.

Functionalities of a computer

Any digital computer carries out five functions in gross terms:

- Takes data as input.
- Stores the data/instructions in its memory and use them when required.
- Processes the data and converts it into useful information.
- Generates the output
- Controls all the above four steps.



. Definition

Computer is an electronic data processing device which

- accepts and stores data input,

- processes the data input, and
- generates the output in a required format.

Advantages

Following list demonstrates the advantages of computers in today's arena.

High Speed

- Computer is a very fast device.
- It is capable of performing calculation of very large amount of data.
- The computer has units of speed in microsecond, nanosecond, and even the picosecond.
- It can perform millions of calculations in a few seconds as compared to man who will spend many months for doing the same task.

Accuracy

- In addition to being very fast, computers are very accurate.
- The calculations are 100% error free.
- Computers perform all jobs with 100% accuracy provided that correct input has been given.

Storage Capability

- Memory is a very important characteristic of computers.
- A computer has much more storage capacity than human beings.
- It can store large amount of data.
- It can store any type of data such as images, videos, text, audio and many others.

Diligence

- Unlike human beings, a computer is free from monotony, tiredness and lack of concentration.
- It can work continuously without any error and boredom.

- It can do repeated work with same speed and accuracy.

Versatility

- A computer is a very versatile machine.
- A computer is very flexible in performing the jobs to be done.
- This machine can be used to solve the problems related to various fields.
- At one instance, it may be solving a complex scientific problem and the very next moment it may be playing a card game.

Reliability

- A computer is a reliable machine.
- Modern electronic components have long lives.
- Computers are designed to make maintenance easy.

Automation

- Computer is an automatic machine.
- Automation means ability to perform the given task automatically.
- Once a program is given to computer i.e., stored in computer memory, the program and instruction can control the program execution without human interaction.

Reduction in Paper Work

- The use of computers for data processing in an organization leads to reduction in paper work and results in speeding up a process.
- As data in electronic files can be retrieved as and when required, the problem of maintenance of large number of paper files gets reduced.

Reduction in Cost

- Though the initial investment for installing a computer is high but it substantially reduces the cost of each of its transaction.

Disadvantages

Following list demonstrates the disadvantages of computers in today's arena

No I.Q

- A computer is a machine that has no intelligence to perform any task.
- Each instruction has to be given to computer.
- A computer cannot take any decision on its own.

Dependency

- It functions as per a user's instruction, so it is fully dependent on human being

Environment

- The operating environment of computer should be dust free and suitable.

No Feeling

- Computers have no feelings or emotions.
- It cannot make judgement based on feeling, taste, experience, and knowledge unlike a human being.

Computer - Applications

Following list demonstrates various applications of computers in today's arena.

Business

A computer has high speed of calculation, diligence, accuracy, reliability, or versatility which made it an integrated part in all business organisations.

Computer is used in business organisations for:

- Payroll calculations
- Budgeting
- Sales analysis
- Financial forecasting
- Managing employees database
- Maintenance of stocks etc.



Banking

Today banking is almost totally dependent on computer.

Banks provide following facilities:

- Banks provide online accounting facility, which includes current balances, deposits, overdrafts, interest charges, shares, and trustee records.
- ATM machines are making it even easier for customers to deal with banks.



Insurance

Insurance companies are keeping all records up-to-date with the help of computers. The insurance companies, finance houses and stock broking firms are widely using computers for their concerns.

Insurance companies are maintaining a database of all clients with information showing

- procedure to continue with policies
- starting date of the policies
- next due installment of a policy
- maturity date
- interests due
- survival benefits
- bonus



Education

The computer has provided a lot of facilities in the education system.

- The computer provides a tool in the education system known as CBE (Computer Based Education).
- CBE involves control, delivery, and evaluation of learning.
- The computer education is rapidly increasing the graph of number of computer students.
- There are number of methods in which educational institutions can use computer to educate the students.
- It is used to prepare a database about performance of a student and analysis is carried out on this basis.



Marketing

In marketing, uses of computer are following:

- **Advertising** - With computers, advertising professionals create art and graphics, write and revise copy, and print and disseminate ads with the goal of selling more products.
- **At Home Shopping** - Home shopping has been made possible through use of computerised catalogues that provide access to product information and permit direct entry of orders to be filled by the customers.



Health Care

Computers have become an important part in hospitals, labs, and dispensaries. The computers are being used in hospitals to keep the record of patients and medicines. It is also used in scanning and diagnosing different diseases. ECG, EEG, Ultrasounds and CT Scans etc., are also done by computerised machines.

Some major fields of health care in which computers are used are:

- **Diagnostic System** - Computers are used to collect data and identify cause of illness.
- **Lab-diagnostic System** - All tests can be done and reports are prepared by computer.
- **Patient Monitoring System** - These are used to check patient's signs for abnormality such as in Cardiac Arrest, ECG etc.
- **Pharma Information System** - Computer checks Drug-Labels, Expiry dates, harmful drug's side effects etc.
- **Surgery** : Nowadays, computers are also used in performing surgery.

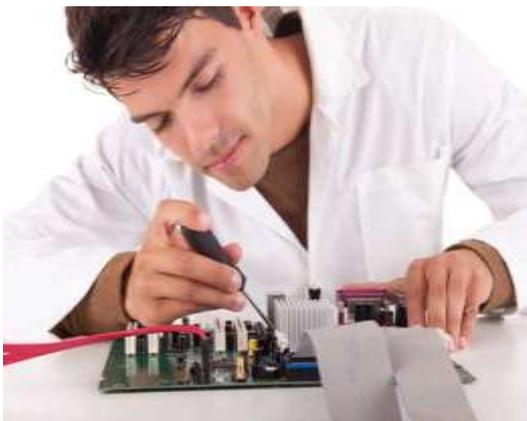


Engineering Design

Computers are widely used in Engineering purpose.

One of major areas is CAD (Computer aided design). That provides creation and modification of images. Some fields are:

- **Structural Engineering** - Requires stress and strain analysis for design of Ships, Buildings, Budgets, Airplanes etc.
- **Industrial Engineering** - Computers deal with design, implementation and improvement of integrated systems of people, materials and equipments.
- **Architectural Engineering** - Computers help in planning towns, designing buildings, determining a range of buildings on a site using both 2D and 3D drawings.



Military

Computers are largely used in defence. Modern tanks, missiles, weapons etc. Military also employs computerised control systems. Some military areas where a computer has been used are:

- Missile Control
- Military Communication
- Military Operation and Planning
- Smart Weapons



Communication

Communication means to convey a message, an idea, a picture or speech that is received and understood clearly and correctly by the person for whom it is meant for. Some main areas in this category are:

- E-mail
- Chatting
- Usenet
- FTP
- Telnet
- Video-conferencing



Government

Computers play an important role in government. Some major fields in this category are:

- Budgets
- Sales tax department
- Income tax department
- Male/Female ratio
- Computerization of voters lists
- Computerization of driving licensing system
- Computerization of PAN card
- Weather forecasting



Computer Generations

Generation in computer terminology is a change in technology a computer is/was being used. Initially, the generation term was used to distinguish between varying hardware technologies. But nowadays,

generation includes both hardware and software, which together make up an entire computer system.

There are totally five computer generations known till date. Each generation has been discussed in detail along with their time period and characteristics. Here approximate dates against each generations have been mentioned which are normally accepted.

Following are the main five generations of computers

S.N.	Generation & Description
1	First Generation The period of first generation: 1946-1959. Vacuum tube based.
2	Second Generation The period of second generation: 1959-1965. Transistor based.
3	Third Generation The period of third generation: 1965-1971. Integrated Circuit based.
4	Fourth Generation The period of fourth generation: 1971-1980. VLSI microprocessor based.
5	Fifth Generation The period of fifth generation: 1980-onwards. ULSI microprocessor based

Computer - Types

computers can be broadly classified by their speed and computing power.

Sr.No.	Type	Specifications
1	PC (Personal Computer)	It is a single user computer system having moderately powerful microprocessor
2	WorkStation	It is also a single user computer system which is similar to personal computer but have more powerful microprocessor.
3	Mini Computer	It is a multi-user computer system which is capable of supporting hundreds of users simultaneously.
4	Main Frame	It is a multi-user computer system which is capable of supporting hundreds of users simultaneously. Software technology is different from minicomputer.
5	Supercomputer	It is an extremely fast computer which can execute hundreds of millions of instructions per second.

PC (Personal Computer)

A PC can be defined as a small, relatively inexpensive computer designed for an individual user. PCs are based on the microprocessor technology that enables manufacturers to put an entire CPU on one chip. Businesses use personal computers for word processing, accounting, desktop publishing, and for running spreadsheet and database management applications. At home, the most popular use for personal computers is playing games and surfing Internet.

Although personal computers are designed as single-user systems, these systems are normally linked together to form a network. In terms of power, now-a-days High-end models of the Macintosh and PC offer the same computing power and graphics capability as low-end workstations by Sun Microsystems, Hewlett-Packard, and Dell.



Workstation

Workstation is a computer used for engineering applications (CAD/CAM), desktop publishing, software development, and other such types of applications which require a moderate amount of computing power and relatively high quality graphics capabilities.

Workstations generally come with a large, high-resolution graphics screen, large amount of RAM, inbuilt network support, and a graphical user interface. Most workstations also have a mass storage device such as a disk drive, but a special type of workstation, called a diskless workstation, comes without a disk drive.

Common operating systems for workstations are UNIX and Windows NT. Like PC, Workstations are also single-user computers like PC but are typically linked together to form a local-area network, although they can also be used as stand-alone systems.



Minicomputer

It is a midsize multi-processing system capable of supporting up to 250 users simultaneously.



Mainframe

Mainframe is very large in size and is an expensive computer capable of supporting hundreds or even thousands of users simultaneously. Mainframe executes many programs concurrently and supports many simultaneous execution of programs



Supercomputer

Supercomputers are one of the fastest computers currently available. Supercomputers are very expensive and are employed for specialized applications that require immense amount of mathematical calculations (number crunching). For example, weather forecasting, scientific simulations, (animated) graphics, fluid dynamic calculations, nuclear

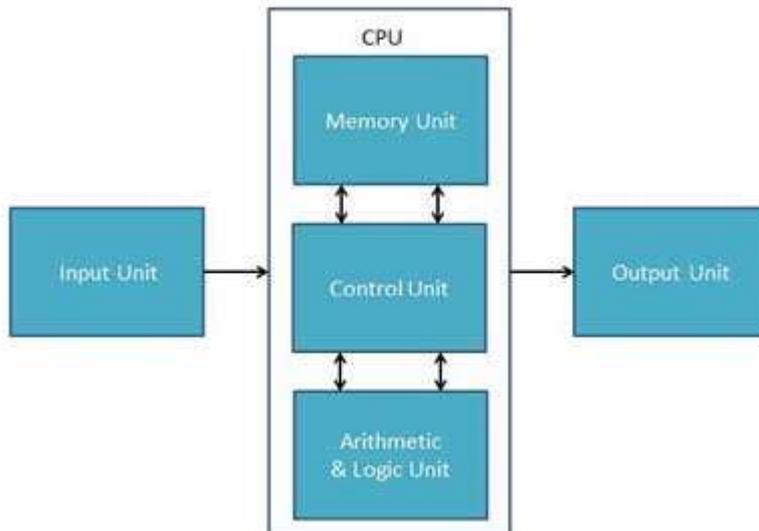
energy research, electronic design, and analysis of geological data (e.g. in petrochemical prospecting).



Computer - Components

All types of computers follow a same basic logical structure and perform the following five basic operations for converting raw input data into information useful to their users.

Sr.No.	Operation	Description
1	Take Input	The process of entering data and instructions into the computer system
2	Store Data	Saving data and instructions so that they are available for processing as and when required.
3	Processing Data	Performing arithmetic, and logical operations on data in order to convert them into useful information.
4	Output Information	The process of producing useful information or results for the user, such as a printed report or visual display.
5	Control the workflow	Directs the manner and sequence in which all of the above operations are performed.



Input Unit

This unit contains devices with the help of which we enter data into computer. This unit makes link between user and computer. The input devices translate the information into the form understandable by computer.

CPU (Central Processing Unit)

CPU is considered as the brain of the computer. CPU performs all types of data processing operations. It stores data, intermediate results and instructions(program). It controls the operation of all parts of computer.

CPU itself has following three components

- ALU(Arithmetic Logic Unit)
- Memory Unit
- Control Unit

Output Unit

Output unit consists of devices with the help of which we get the information from computer. This unit is a link between computer and users. Output devices translate the computer's output into the form understandable by users.

Computer - CPU(Central Processing Unit)

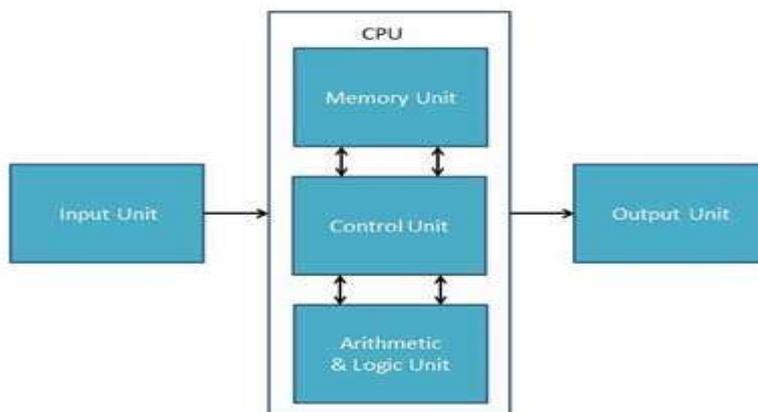
CPU consists of the following features:

- CPU is considered as the brain of the computer.
- CPU performs all types of data processing operations.
- It stores data, intermediate results and instructions(program).
- It controls the operation of all parts of computer.



CPU itself has following three components.

- Memory or Storage Unit
- Control Unit
- ALU(Arithmetic Logic Unit)



Memory or Storage Unit

This unit can store instructions, data and intermediate results. This unit supplies information to the other units of the computer when needed. It is also known as internal storage unit or main memory or primary storage or Random access memory(RAM).

Its size affects speed, power and capability. Primary memory and secondary memory are two types of memories in the computer. Functions of memory unit are:

- It stores all the data and the instructions required for processing.
- It stores intermediate results of processing.
- It stores final results of processing before these results are released to an output device.
- All inputs and outputs are transmitted through main memory.

Control Unit

This unit controls the operations of all parts of computer but does not carry out any actual data processing operations.

Functions of this unit are:

- It is responsible for controlling the transfer of data and instructions among other units of a computer.
- It manages and coordinates all the units of the computer.
- It obtains the instructions from the memory, interprets them, and directs the operation of the computer.
- It communicates with Input/Output devices for transfer of data or results from storage.
- It does not process or store data.

ALU(Arithmetic Logic Unit)

This unit consists of two subsections namely

- Arithmetic section
- Logic Section

Arithmetic Section

Function of arithmetic section is to perform arithmetic operations like addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. All complex operations are done by making repetitive use of above operations.

Logic Section

Function of logic section is to perform logic operations such as comparing, selecting, matching and merging of data

Computer - Input Devices

Following are few of the important input devices which are used in a computer:

- Keyboard
- Mouse
- Joy Stick
- Light pen
- Track Ball
- Scanner
- Graphic Tablet
- Microphone
- Magnetic Ink Card Reader(MICR)
- Optical Character Reader(OCR)
- Bar Code Reader
- Optical Mark Reader(OMR)

Keyboard

Keyboard is the most common and very popular input device which helps in inputting data to the computer. The layout of the keyboard is like that of traditional typewriter, although there are some additional keys provided for performing additional functions.

Keyboards are of two sizes 84 keys or 101/102 keys, but now keyboards with 104 keys or 108 keys are also available for Windows and Internet.

The keys on the keyboard are as follows:

Sr.No	Keys	Description
1	Typing Keys	These keys include the letter keys (A-Z) and digit keys (0-9) which generally give same layout as

		that of typewriters.
2	Numeric Keypad	It is used to enter numeric data or cursor movement. Generally, it consists of a set of 17 keys that are laid out in the same configuration used by most adding machines and calculators.
3	Function Keys	The twelve function keys are present on the keyboard which are arranged in a row at the top of the keyboard. Each function key has unique meaning and is used for some specific purpose.
4	Control keys	These keys provide cursor and screen control. It includes four directional arrow keys. Control keys also include Home, End, Insert, Delete, Page Up, Page Down, Control(Ctrl), Alternate(Alt), Escape(Esc).
5	Special Purpose Keys	Keyboard also contains some special purpose keys such as Enter, Shift, Caps Lock, Num Lock, Space bar, Tab, and Print Screen.



Mouse

Mouse is most popular pointing device. It is a very famous cursor-control device having a small palm size box with a round ball at its base which senses the movement of mouse and sends corresponding signals to CPU when the mouse buttons are pressed.

Generally it has two buttons called left and right button and a wheel is present between the buttons. Mouse can be used to control the position

of cursor on screen, but it cannot be used to enter text into the computer.

Advantages

- Easy to use
- Not very expensive
- Moves the cursor faster than the arrow keys of keyboard.



Joystick

Joystick is also a pointing device which is used to move cursor position on a monitor screen. It is a stick having a spherical ball at its both lower and upper ends. The lower spherical ball moves in a socket. The joystick can be moved in all four directions.

The function of joystick is similar to that of a mouse. It is mainly used in Computer Aided Designing(CAD) and playing computer games.



Light Pen

Light pen is a pointing device which is similar to a pen. It is used to select a displayed menu item or draw pictures on the monitor screen. It consists of a photocell and an optical system placed in a small tube. When the tip of a light pen is moved over the monitor screen and pen button is pressed, its photocell sensing element detects the screen location and sends the corresponding signal to the CPU.



Track Ball

Track ball is an input device that is mostly used in notebook or laptop computer, instead of a mouse. This is a ball which is half inserted and by moving fingers on ball, pointer can be moved. Since the whole device is not moved, a track ball requires less space than a mouse. A track ball comes in various shapes like a ball, a button and a square.



Scanner

Scanner is an input device which works more like a photocopy machine. It is used when some information is available on a paper and it is to be transferred to the hard disc of the computer for further manipulation. Scanner captures images from the source which are then converted into the digital form that can be stored on the disc. These images can be edited before they are printed.



Digitizer

Digitizer is an input device which converts analog information into digital form. Digitizer can convert a signal from the television or camera into a series of numbers that could be stored in a computer. They can be used by the computer to create a picture of whatever the camera had been pointed at. Digitizer is also known as Tablet or Graphics Tablet because it converts graphics and pictorial data into binary inputs. A graphic tablet as digitizer is used for doing fine works of drawing and image manipulation applications.



Microphone

Microphone is an input device to input sound that is then stored in digital form. The microphone is used for various applications like adding sound to a multimedia presentation or for mixing music.



Magnetic Ink Card Reader(MICR)

MICR input device is generally used in banks because of a large number of cheques to be processed every day. The bank's code number and cheque number are printed on the cheques with a special type of ink that contains particles of magnetic material that are machine readable. This reading process is called Magnetic Ink Character Recognition (MICR). The main advantages of MICR is that it is fast and less error prone.



Optical Character Reader(OCR)

OCR is an input device used to read a printed text. OCR scans text optically character by character, converts them into a machine readable code and stores the text on the system memory.



Bar Code Readers

Bar Code Reader is a device used for reading bar coded data (data in form of light and dark lines). Bar coded data is generally used in labelling goods, numbering the books etc. It may be a hand held scanner or may be embedded in a stationary scanner. Bar Code Reader scans a bar code image, converts it into an alphanumeric value which is then fed to the computer to which bar code reader is connected.



Optical Mark Reader(OMR)

OMR is a special type of optical scanner used to recognize the type of mark made by pen or pencil. It is used where one out of a few alternatives is to be selected and marked. It is specially used for checking the answer sheets of examinations having multiple choice questions.



Computer - Output Devices

Following are few of the important output devices which are used in a computer.

- Monitors
- Graphic Plotter
- Printer

Monitors

Monitors, commonly called as Visual Display Unit (VDU), are the main output device of a computer. It forms images from tiny dots, called pixels that are arranged in a rectangular form. The sharpness of the image depends upon the number of pixels.

There are two kinds of viewing screen used for monitors.

- Cathode-Ray Tube (CRT)
- Flat- Panel Display

Cathode-Ray Tube (CRT) Monitor

The CRT display is made up of small picture elements called pixels. The smaller the pixels, the better the image clarity, or resolution. It takes more than one illuminated pixel to form whole character, such as the letter 'e' in the word help.

A finite number of characters can be displayed on a screen at once. The screen can be divided into a series of character boxes - fixed location on the screen where a standard character can be placed. Most screens are capable of displaying 80 characters of data horizontally and 25 lines vertically. There are some disadvantages of CRT:

- Large in Size
- High power consumption



Flat-Panel Display Monitor

The flat-panel display refers to a class of video devices that have reduced volume, weight and power requirement in comparison to the CRT. You can hang them on walls or wear them on your wrists. Current uses of flat-panel displays include calculators, video games, monitors, laptop computer, graphics display.

The flat-panel display is divided into two categories:

- **Emissive Displays** - The emissive displays are devices that convert electrical energy into light. Example are plasma panel and LED(Light-Emitting Diodes).

- **Non-Emissive Displays** - The Non-emissive displays use optical effects to convert sunlight or light from some other source into graphics patterns. Example is LCD(Liquid-Crystal Device)



Printers

Printer is an output device, which is used to print information on paper.

There are two types of printers:

- Impact Printers
- Non-Impact Printers

Impact Printers

The impact printers print the characters by striking them on the ribbon which is then pressed on the paper.

Characteristics of Impact Printers are the following:

- Very low consumable costs
- Very noisy
- Useful for bulk printing due to low cost
- There is physical contact with the paper to produce an image

These printers are of two types

- Character printers
- Line printers

Character Printers

Character printers are the printers which print one character at a time.

These are further divided into two types:

- Dot Matrix Printer(DMP)
- Daisy Wheel

DOT MATRIX PRINTER

In the market one of the most popular printers is Dot Matrix Printer. These printers are popular because of their ease of printing and economical price. Each character printed is in form of pattern of dots and head consists of a Matrix of Pins of size (5*7, 7*9, 9*7 or 9*9) which come out to form a character that is why it is called Dot Matrix Printer.

Advantages

- Inexpensive
- Widely Used
- Other language characters can be printed

Disadvantages

- Slow Speed
- Poor Quality



DAISY WHEEL

Head is lying on a wheel and pins corresponding to characters are like petals of Daisy (flower name) that is why it is called Daisy Wheel Printer. These printers are generally used for word-processing in offices which require a few letters to be sent here and there with very nice quality.

Advantages

- More reliable than DMP
- Better quality
- The fonts of character can be easily changed

Disadvantages

- Slower than DMP
- Noisy
- More expensive than DMP



Line Printers

Line printers are the printers which print one line at a time.



These are of further two types

- Drum Printer
- Chain Printer

DRUM PRINTER

This printer is like a drum in shape so it is called drum printer. The surface of drum is divided into number of tracks. Total tracks are equal to size of paper i.e. for a paper width of 132 characters, drum will have 132 tracks. A character set is embossed on track. The different character sets available in the market are 48 character set, 64 and 96 characters set. One rotation of drum prints one line. Drum printers are fast in speed and can print 300 to 2000 lines per minute.

Advantages

- Very high speed

Disadvantages

- Very expensive
- Characters fonts cannot be changed

CHAIN PRINTER

In this printer, chain of character sets are used so it is called Chain Printer. A standard character set may have 48, 64, or 96 characters.

Advantages

- Character fonts can easily be changed.
- Different languages can be used with the same printer.

Disadvantages

- Noisy

Non-impact Printers

Non-impact printers print the characters without using ribbon. These printers print a complete page at a time so they are also called as Page Printers.

These printers are of two types

- Laser Printers
- Inkjet Printers

Characteristics of Non-impact Printers

- Faster than impact printers.
- They are not noisy.
- High quality.
- Support many fonts and different character size.

Laser Printers

These are non-impact page printers. They use laser lights to produce the dots needed to form the characters to be printed on a page.

ADVANTAGES

- Very high speed
- Very high quality output
- Give good graphics quality

- Support many fonts and different character size

DISADVANTAGES

- Expensive.
- Cannot be used to produce multiple copies of a document in a single printing.



Inkjet Printers

Inkjet printers are non-impact character printers based on a relatively new technology. They print characters by spraying small drops of ink onto paper. Inkjet printers produce high quality output with presentable features.

They make less noise because no hammering is done and these have many styles of printing modes available. Colour printing is also possible. Some models of Inkjet printers can produce multiple copies of printing also.

ADVANTAGES

- High quality printing
- More reliable

DISADVANTAGES

- Expensive as cost per page is high
- Slow as compared to laser printer



Computer - Memory

A memory is just like a human brain. It is used to store data and instructions. Computer memory is the storage space in computer where data is to be processed and instructions required for processing are stored. The memory is divided into large number of small parts called cells. Each location or cell has a unique address which varies from zero to memory size minus one. For example if computer has 64k words, then this memory unit has $64 * 1024 = 65536$ memory locations. The address of these locations varies from 0 to 65535.

Memory is primarily of three types

- Cache Memory
- Primary Memory/Main Memory
- Secondary Memory

Cache Memory

Cache memory is a very high speed semiconductor memory which can speed up CPU. It acts as a buffer between the CPU and main memory. It is used to hold those parts of data and program which are most frequently used by CPU. The parts of data and programs are transferred from disk to cache memory by operating system, from where CPU can access them.

Advantages

The advantages of cache memory are as follows:

- Cache memory is faster than main memory.
- It consumes less access time as compared to main memory.
- It stores the program that can be executed within a short period of time.

- It stores data for temporary use.

Disadvantages

The disadvantages of cache memory are as follows:

- Cache memory has limited capacity.
- It is very expensive.



Primary Memory (Main Memory)

Primary memory holds only those data and instructions on which computer is currently working. It has limited capacity and data is lost when power is switched off. It is generally made up of semiconductor device. These memories are not as fast as registers. The data and instruction required to be processed reside in main memory. It is divided into two subcategories RAM and ROM.

Characteristics of Main Memory

- These are semiconductor memories
- It is known as main memory.
- Usually volatile memory.
- Data is lost in case power is switched off.
- It is working memory of the computer.
- Faster than secondary memories.
- A computer cannot run without primary memory.



Secondary Memory

This type of memory is also known as external memory or non-volatile. It is slower than main memory. These are used for storing data/Information permanently. CPU directly does not access these memories instead they are accessed via input-output routines. Contents of secondary memories are first transferred to main memory, and then CPU can access it. For example : disk, CD-ROM, DVD etc.

Characteristic of Secondary Memory

- These are magnetic and optical memories
- It is known as backup memory.
- It is non-volatile memory.
- Data is permanently stored even if power is switched off.
- It is used for storage of data in a computer.
- Computer may run without secondary memory.
- Slower than primary memories.



Computer - Random Access Memory

RAM(Random Access Memory) is the internal memory of the CPU for storing data, program and program result. It is read/write memory which stores data until the machine is working. As soon as the machine is switched off, data is erased.

Access time in RAM is independent of the address that is, each storage location inside the memory is as easy to reach as other locations and takes the same amount of time. Data in the RAM can be accessed randomly but it is very expensive.

RAM is volatile, i.e. data stored in it is lost when we switch off the computer or if there is a power failure. Hence a backup uninterruptible power system(UPS) is often used with computers. RAM is small, both in terms of its physical size and in the amount of data it can hold.

RAM is of two types

- Static RAM (SRAM)
- Dynamic RAM (DRAM)



Static RAM (SRAM)

The word **static** indicates that the memory retains its contents as long as power is being supplied. However, data is lost when the power gets down due to volatile nature. SRAM chips use a matrix of 6-transistors and no capacitors. Transistors do not require power to prevent leakage, so SRAM need not have to be refreshed on a regular basis.

Because of the extra space in the matrix, SRAM uses more chips than DRAM for the same amount of storage space, thus making the manufacturing costs higher. So SRAM is used as cache memory and has very fast access.

Characteristic of the Static RAM

- It has long life
- There is no need to refresh
- Faster
- Used as cache memory
- Large size
- Expensive
- High power consumption

Dynamic RAM (DRAM)

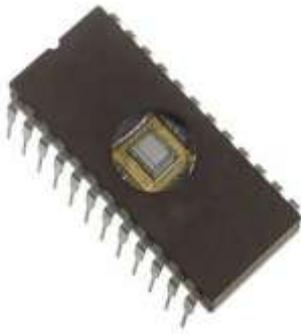
DRAM, unlike SRAM, must be continually **refreshed** in order to maintain the data. This is done by placing the memory on a refresh circuit that rewrites the data several hundred times per second. DRAM is used for most system memory because it is cheap and small. All DRAMs are made up of memory cells which are composed of one capacitor and one transistor.

Characteristics of the Dynamic RAM

- It has short data lifetime
- Need to be refreshed continuously
- Slower as compared to SRAM
- Used as RAM
- Lesser in size
- Less expensive
- Less power consumption

Computer - Read Only Memory

ROM stands for Read Only Memory. The memory from which we can only read but cannot write on it. This type of memory is non-volatile. The information is stored permanently in such memories during manufacture. A ROM, stores such instructions that are required to start a computer. This operation is referred to as bootstrap. ROM chips are not only used in the computer but also in other electronic items like washing machine and microwave oven.



Following are the various types of ROM

MROM (Masked ROM)

The very first ROMs were hard-wired devices that contained a pre-programmed set of data or instructions. These kind of ROMs are known as masked ROMs which are inexpensive.

PROM (Programmable Read only Memory)

PROM is read-only memory that can be modified only once by a user. The user buys a blank PROM and enters the desired contents using a PROM program. Inside the PROM chip there are small fuses which are burnt open during programming. It can be programmed only once and is not erasable.

EPROM(Erasable and Programmable Read Only Memory)

The EPROM can be erased by exposing it to ultra-violet light for a duration of up to 40 minutes. Usually, an EPROM eraser achieves this function. During programming, an electrical charge is trapped in an insulated gate region. The charge is retained for more than ten years

because the charge has no leakage path. For erasing this charge, ultra-violet light is passed through a quartz crystal window(lid). This exposure to ultra-violet light dissipates the charge. During normal use the quartz lid is sealed with a sticker.

EEPROM(Electrically Erasable and Programmable Read Only Memory)

The EEPROM is programmed and erased electrically. It can be erased and reprogrammed about ten thousand times. Both erasing and programming take about 4 to 10 ms (milli second). In EEPROM, any location can be selectively erased and programmed. EEPROMs can be erased one byte at a time, rather than erasing the entire chip. Hence, the process of re-programming is flexible but slow.

Advantages of ROM

The advantages of ROM are as follows:

- Non-volatile in nature
- These cannot be accidentally changed
- Cheaper than RAMs
- Easy to test
- More reliable than RAMs
- These are static and do not require refreshing
- Its contents are always known and can be verified

Computer - Motherboard

The motherboard serves as a single platform to connect all of the parts of a computer together. A motherboard connects CPU, memory, hard drives, optical drives, video card, sound card, and other ports and expansion cards directly or via cables. It can be considered as the backbone of a computer.



Features of Motherboard

A motherboard comes with following features:

- Motherboard varies greatly in supporting various types of components.
- Normally a motherboard supports a single type of CPU and few types of memories.
- Video Cards, Hard disks, Sound Cards have to be compatible with motherboard to function properly
- Motherboards, cases and power supplies must be compatible to work properly together.

Popular Manufacturers

- Intel
- ASUS
- AOpen
- ABIT
- Biostar
- Gigabyte
- MSI

Description of Motherboard

The motherboard is mounted inside the case and is securely attached via small screws through pre-drilled holes. Motherboard contains ports to connect all of the internal components. It provides a single socket for CPU whereas for memory, normally one or more slots are available. Motherboards provide ports to attach floppy drive, hard drive, and optical

drives via ribbon cables. Motherboard carries fans and a special port designed for power supply.

There is a peripheral card slot in front of the motherboard using which video cards, sound cards and other expansion cards can be connected to motherboard.

On the left side, motherboards carry a number of ports to connect monitor, printer, mouse, keyboard, speaker, and network cables. Motherboards also provide USB ports which allow compatible devices to be connected in plug-in/plug-out fashion for example, pen drive, digital cameras etc.

Computer - Memory Units

Memory unit is:

- the amount of data that can be stored in the storage unit.
- that in which storage capacity is expressed in terms of Bytes.

Following are the main memory storage units:

Sr.No.	Unit	Description
1	Bit (Binary Digit)	A binary digit is logical 0 and 1 representing a passive or an active state of a component in an electric circuit.
2	Nibble	A group of 4 bits is called nibble.
3	Byte	A group of 8 bits is called byte. A byte is the smallest unit which can represent a data item or a character.
4	Word	<p>A computer word, like a byte, is a group of fixed number of bits processed as a unit which varies from computer to computer but is fixed for each computer.</p> <p>The length of a computer word is called word-size or word length and it may be as small as 8 bits or may</p>

be as long as 96 bits. A computer stores the information in the form of computer words.



Few higher storage units are following

Sr.No.	Unit	Description
1	Kilobyte (KB)	1 KB = 1024 Bytes
2	Megabyte (MB)	1 MB = 1024 KB
3	GigaByte (GB)	1 GB = 1024 MB
4	TeraByte (TB)	1 TB = 1024 GB
5	PetaByte (PB)	1 PB = 1024 TB

Computer - Ports

What is a Port?

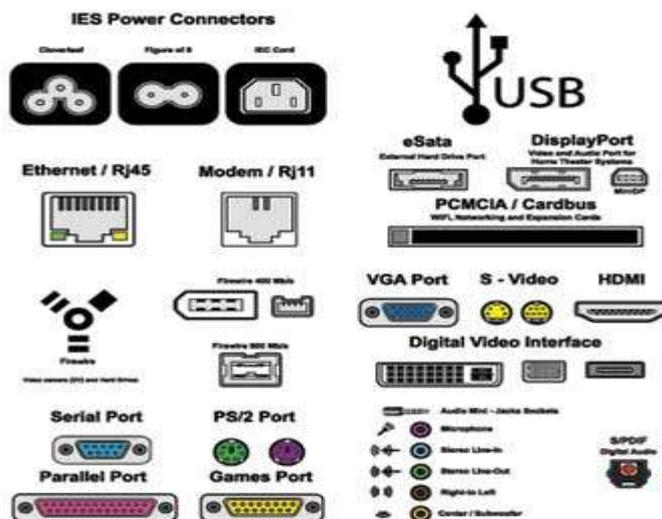
A port:

- is a physical docking point using which an external device can be connected to the computer.
- can also be programmatic docking point through which information flows from a program to computer or over the internet.

Characteristics

A port has the following characteristics:

- External devices are connected to a computer using cables and ports.
- Ports are slots on the motherboard into which a cable of external device is plugged in.
- Examples of external devices attached via ports are mouse, keyboard, monitor, microphone, speakers etc.



Following are few important types of ports:

Serial Port

- Used for external modems and older computer mouse
- Two versions : 9 pin, 25 pin model
- Data travels at 115 kilobits per second

Parallel Port

- Used for scanners and printers
- Also called printer port
- 25 pin model
- Also known as IEEE 1284-compliant Centronics port

PS/2 Port

- Used for old computer keyboard and mouse

- Also called mouse port
- Most of the old computers provide two PS/2 port, each for mouse and keyboard
- Also known as IEEE 1284-compliant Centronics port

Universal Serial Bus (or USB) Port

- It can connect all kinds of external USB devices such as external hard disk, printer, scanner, mouse, keyboard etc.
- It was introduced in 1997.
- Most of the computers provide two USB ports as minimum.
- Data travels at 12 megabits per seconds
- USB compliant devices can get power from a USB port

VGA Port

- Connects monitor to a computer's video card.
- Has 15 holes.
- Similar to serial port connector but serial port connector has pins, it has holes.

Power Connector

- Three-pronged plug
- Connects to the computer's power cable that plugs into a power bar or wall socket

Firewire Port

- Transfers large amount of data at very fast speed.
- Connects camcorders and video equipments to the computer
- Data travels at 400 to 800 megabits per seconds
- Invented by Apple

- Three variants : 4-Pin FireWire 400 connector, 6-Pin FireWire 400 connector and 9-Pin FireWire 800 connector

Modem Port

- Connects a PC's modem to the telephone network

Ethernet Port

- Connects to a network and high speed Internet.
- Connect network cable to a computer.
- This port resides on an Ethernet Card.
- Data travels at 10 megabits to 1000 megabits per seconds depending upon the network bandwidth.

Game Port

- Connect a joystick to a PC
- Now replaced by USB.

Digital Video Interface, DVI port

- Connects Flat panel LCD monitor to the computer's high end video graphic cards.
- Very popular among video card manufacturers.

Sockets

- Connect microphone, speakers to sound card of the computer

Computer - Hardware

Hardware represents the physical and tangible components of a computer i.e. the components that can be seen and touched.

Examples of Hardware are following:

- **Input devices** -- keyboard, mouse etc.
- **Output devices** -- printer, monitor etc.
- **Secondary storage devices** -- Hard disk, CD, DVD etc.
- **Internal components** -- CPU, motherboard, RAM etc.



Relationship between Hardware and Software

- Hardware and software are mutually dependent on each other. Both of them must work together to make a computer produce a useful output.
- Software cannot be utilized without supporting hardware.
- Hardware without set of programs to operate upon cannot be utilized and is useless.
- To get a particular job done on the computer, relevant software should be loaded into the hardware
- Hardware is a one-time expense.
- Software development is very expensive and is a continuing expense.
- Different software applications can be loaded on a hardware to run different jobs.
- A software acts as an interface between the user and the hardware.
- If hardware is the 'heart' of a computer system, then software is its 'soul'. Both are complimentary to each other.

Computer - Software

Software is a set of programs, which is designed to perform a well-defined function. A program is a sequence of instructions written to solve a particular problem.

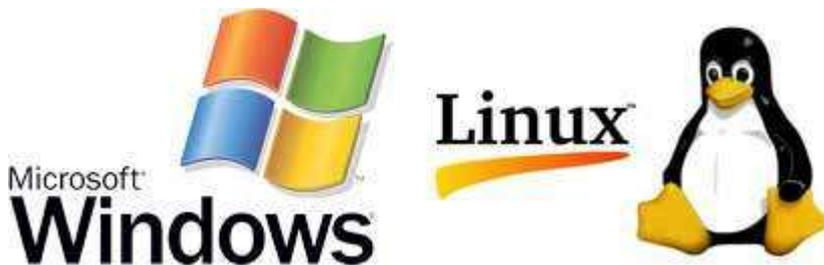
There are two types of software

- System Software
- Application Software

System Software

The system software is collection of programs designed to operate, control, and extend the processing capabilities of the computer itself. System software are generally prepared by computer manufactures. These software products comprise of programs written in low-level languages which interact with the hardware at a very basic level. System software serves as the interface between hardware and the end users.

Some examples of system software are Operating System, Compilers, Interpreter, Assemblers etc.



Features of system software are as follows:

- Close to system
- Fast in speed
- Difficult to design
- Difficult to understand
- Less interactive
- Smaller in size
- Difficult to manipulate
- Generally written in low-level language

Application Software

Application software products are designed to satisfy a particular need of a particular environment. All software applications prepared in the computer lab can come under the category of Application software.

Application software may consist of a single program, such as a Microsoft's notepad for writing and editing simple text. It may also consist of a collection of programs, often called a software package, which work together to accomplish a task, such as a spreadsheet package.

Examples of Application software are following:

- Payroll Software
- Student Record Software
- Inventory Management Software
- Income Tax Software
- Railways Reservation Software
- Microsoft Office Suite Software
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Microsoft Powerpoint



Features of application software are as follows:

- Close to user
- Easy to design
- More interactive
- Slow in speed
- Generally written in high-level language
- Easy to understand
- Easy to manipulate and use

- Bigger in size and requires large storage space

Computer - Number System

When we type some letters or words, the computer translates them in numbers as computers can understand only numbers. A computer can understand positional number system where there are only a few symbols called digits and these symbols represent different values depending on the position they occupy in the number.

A value of each digit in a number can be determined using

- The digit
- The position of the digit in the number
- The base of the number system (where base is defined as the total number of digits available in the number system).

Decimal Number System

The number system that we use in our day-to-day life is the decimal number system. Decimal number system has base 10 as it uses 10 digits from 0 to 9. In decimal number system, the successive positions to the left of the decimal point represent units, tens, hundreds, thousands and so on.

Each position represents a specific power of the base (10). For example, the decimal number 1234 consists of the digit 4 in the units position, 3 in the tens position, 2 in the hundreds position, and 1 in the thousands position, and its value can be written as

$$\begin{aligned} & (1 \times 1000) + (2 \times 100) + (3 \times 10) + (4 \times 1) \\ & (1 \times 10^3) + (2 \times 10^2) + (3 \times 10^1) + (4 \times 10^0) \\ & 1000 + 200 + 30 + 4 \\ & 1234 \end{aligned}$$

As a computer programmer or an IT professional, you should understand the following number systems which are frequently used in computers.

S.N.	Number System and Description
------	-------------------------------

1	<p>Binary Number System</p> <p>Base 2. Digits used : 0, 1</p>
2	<p>Octal Number System</p> <p>Base 8. Digits used : 0 to 7</p>
3	<p>Hexa Decimal Number System</p> <p>Base 16. Digits used : 0 to 9, Letters used : A- F</p>

Binary Number System

Characteristics of binary number system are as follows:

- Uses two digits, 0 and 1.
- Also called base 2 number system
- Each position in a binary number represents a 0 power of the base (2).
Example 2^0
- Last position in a binary number represents a x power of the base (2).
Example 2^x where x represents the last position - 1.

Example

Binary Number : 10101_2

Calculating Decimal Equivalent:

Step	Binary Number	Decimal Number
Step 1	10101_2	$((1 \times 2^4) + (0 \times 2^3) + (1 \times 2^2) + (0 \times 2^1) + (1 \times 2^0))_{10}$
Step 2	10101_2	$(16 + 0 + 4 + 0 + 1)_{10}$
Step 3	10101_2	21_{10}

Note : 10101_2 is normally written as 10101.

Octal Number System

Characteristics of octal number system are as follows:

- Uses eight digits, 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7.
- Also called base 8 number system
- Each position in an octal number represents a 0 power of the base (8).
Example 8^0
- Last position in an octal number represents a x power of the base (8).
Example 8^x where x represents the last position - 1.

Example

Octal Number : 12570_8

Calculating Decimal Equivalent:

Step	Octal Number	Decimal Number
Step 1	12570_8	$((1 \times 8^4) + (2 \times 8^3) + (5 \times 8^2) + (7 \times 8^1) + (0 \times 8^0))_{10}$
Step 2	12570_8	$(4096 + 1024 + 320 + 56 + 0)_{10}$
Step 3	12570_8	5496_{10}

Note : 12570_8 is normally written as 12570.

Hexadecimal Number System

Characteristics of hexadecimal number system are as follows:

- Uses 10 digits and 6 letters, 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,A,B,C,D,E,F.
- Letters represents numbers starting from 10. A = 10. B = 11, C = 12, D = 13, E = 14, F = 15.
- Also called base 16 number system

- Each position in a hexadecimal number represents a 0 power of the base (16). Example 16^0
- Last position in a hexadecimal number represents a x power of the base (16). Example 16^x where x represents the last position - 1.

Example

Hexadecimal Number : $19FDE_{16}$

Calculating Decimal Equivalent:

Step	Binary Number	Decimal Number
Step 1	$19FDE_{16}$	$((1 \times 16^4) + (9 \times 16^3) + (F \times 16^2) + (D \times 16^1) + (E \times 16^0))_{10}$
Step 2	$19FDE_{16}$	$((1 \times 16^4) + (9 \times 16^3) + (15 \times 16^2) + (13 \times 16^1) + (14 \times 16^0))_{10}$
Step 3	$19FDE_{16}$	$(65536 + 36864 + 3840 + 208 + 14)_{10}$
Step 4	$19FDE_{16}$	106462_{10}

Note : $19FDE_{16}$ is normally written as 19FDE.

Computer - Number Conversion

There are many methods or techniques which can be used to convert numbers from one base to another. We'll demonstrate here the following:

- Decimal to Other Base System
- Other Base System to Decimal
- Other Base System to Non-Decimal
- Shortcut method - Binary to Octal
- Shortcut method - Octal to Binary
- Shortcut method - Binary to Hexadecimal

- Shortcut method - Hexadecimal to Binary

Decimal to Other Base System

steps

- **Step 1** - Divide the decimal number to be converted by the value of the new base.
- **Step 2** - Get the remainder from Step 1 as the rightmost digit (least significant digit) of new base number.
- **Step 3** - Divide the quotient of the previous divide by the new base.
- **Step 4** - Record the remainder from Step 3 as the next digit (to the left) of the new base number.

Repeat Steps 3 and 4, getting remainders from right to left, until the quotient becomes zero in Step 3.

The last remainder thus obtained will be the most significant digit (MSD) of the new base number.

Example

Decimal Number : 29_{10}

Calculating Binary Equivalent:

Step	Operation	Result	Remainder
Step 1	$29 / 2$	14	1
Step 2	$14 / 2$	7	0
Step 3	$7 / 2$	3	1
Step 4	$3 / 2$	1	1
Step 5	$1 / 2$	0	1

As mentioned in Steps 2 and 4, the remainders have to be arranged in the reverse order so that the first remainder becomes the least significant digit (LSD) and the last remainder becomes the most significant digit (MSD).

Decimal Number : 29_{10} = Binary Number : 11101_2 .

Other base system to Decimal System

Steps

- **Step 1** - Determine the column (positional) value of each digit (this depends on the position of the digit and the base of the number system).
- **Step 2** - Multiply the obtained column values (in Step 1) by the digits in the corresponding columns.
- **Step 3** - Sum the products calculated in Step 2. The total is the equivalent value in decimal.

Example

Binary Number : 11101_2

Calculating Decimal Equivalent:

Step	Binary Number	Decimal Number
Step 1	11101_2	$((1 \times 2^4) + (1 \times 2^3) + (1 \times 2^2) + (0 \times 2^1) + (1 \times 2^0))_{10}$
Step 2	11101_2	$(16 + 8 + 4 + 0 + 1)_{10}$
Step 3	11101_2	29_{10}

Binary Number : 11101_2 = Decimal Number : 29_{10}

Other Base System to Non-Decimal System

Steps

- **Step 1** - Convert the original number to a decimal number (base 10).

- **Step 2** - Convert the decimal number so obtained to the new base number.

Example

Octal Number : 25_8

Calculating Binary Equivalent:

Step 1 : Convert to Decimal

Step	Octal Number	Decimal Number
Step 1	25_8	$((2 \times 8^1) + (5 \times 8^0))_{10}$
Step 2	25_8	$(16 + 5)_{10}$
Step 3	25_8	21_{10}

Octal Number : $25_8 =$ Decimal Number : 21_{10}

Step 2 : Convert Decimal to Binary

Step	Operation	Result	Remainder
Step 1	$21 / 2$	10	1
Step 2	$10 / 2$	5	0
Step 3	$5 / 2$	2	1
Step 4	$2 / 2$	1	0
Step 5	$1 / 2$	0	1

Decimal Number : $21_{10} =$ Binary Number : 10101_2

Octal Number : $25_8 =$ Binary Number : 10101_2

Shortcut method - Binary to Octal

Steps

- **Step 1** - Divide the binary digits into groups of three (starting from the right).
- **Step 2** - Convert each group of three binary digits to one octal digit.

Example

Binary Number : 10101_2

Calculating Octal Equivalent:

Step	Binary Number	Octal Number
Step 1	10101_2	010 101
Step 2	10101_2	$2_8 5_8$
Step 3	10101_2	25_8

Binary Number : $10101_2 =$ Octal Number : 25_8

Shortcut method - Octal to Binary

Steps

- **Step 1** - Convert each octal digit to a 3 digit binary number (the octal digits may be treated as decimal for this conversion).
- **Step 2** - Combine all the resulting binary groups (of 3 digits each) into a single binary number.

Example

Octal Number : 25_8

Calculating Binary Equivalent:

Step	Octal Number	Binary Number
------	--------------	---------------

Step 1	25_8	$2_{10} 5_{10}$
Step 2	25_8	$010_2 101_2$
Step 3	25_8	010101_2

Octal Number : $25_8 =$ Binary Number : 10101_2

Shortcut method - Binary to Hexadecimal

Steps

- **Step 1** - Divide the binary digits into groups of four (starting from the right).
- **Step 2** - Convert each group of four binary digits to one hexadecimal symbol.

Example

Binary Number : 10101_2

Calculating hexadecimal Equivalent:

Step	Binary Number	Hexadecimal Number
Step 1	10101_2	$0001 0101$
Step 2	10101_2	$1_{10} 5_{10}$
Step 3	10101_2	15_{16}

Binary Number : $10101_2 =$ Hexadecimal Number : 15_{16}

Shortcut method - Hexadecimal to Binary

steps

- **Step 1** - Convert each hexadecimal digit to a 4 digit binary number (the hexadecimal digits may be treated as decimal for this conversion).

Information is the processed data on which decisions and actions are based.

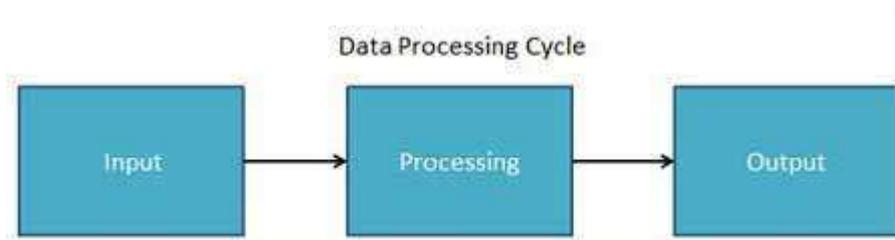
For the decision to be meaningful, the processed data must qualify for the following characteristics:

- **Timely** - Information should be available when required.
- **Accuracy** - Information should be accurate.
- **Completeness** - Information should be complete.



Data Processing Cycle

Data processing is the re-structuring or re-ordering of data by people or machine to increase their usefulness and add values for particular purpose. Data processing consists of basic steps input, processing and output. These three steps constitute the data processing cycle.



- **Input** - In this step the input data is prepared in some convenient form for processing. The form will depend on the processing machine. For example, when electronic computers are used, the input data could be recorded on any one of several types of input medium, such as magnetic disks, tapes and so on.
- **Processing** - In this step input data is changed to produce data in a more useful form. For example, pay-checks may be calculated from the time

cards, or a summary of sales for the month may be calculated from the sales orders.

- **Output** - Here the result of the proceeding processing step are collected. The particular form of the output data depends on the use of the data. For example, output data may be pay-checks for employees.



Computer - Networking

What is a Computer Network?

A computer network is a system in which multiple computers are connected to each other to share information and resources.



Characteristics of a computer network

- Share Resources from one computer to another
- Create files and store them in one computer, access those files from the other computer(s) connected over the network
- Connect a printer, scanner, or a fax machine to one computer within the network and let other computers of the network use the machines available over network.

Following is the list of hardware's required to setup a computer network.

- Network Cables

- Distributors
- Routers
- Internal Network Cards
- External Network Cards

Network Cables

Network cables are used to connect computers. The most commonly used cable is Category 5 cable RJ-45.



Distributors

A computer can be connected to another one via a serial port but if we need to connect many computers to produce a network, this serial connection will not work. The solution is to use a central body to which other computers, printers, scanners etc. can be connected and then this body will manage or distribute network traffic.



Router

A router is a type of device which acts as the central point among computers and other devices that are part of a network. A router is equipped with holes called ports and computers and other devices are connected to a router using network cables. Now-a-days router comes in wireless modes using which computers can be connected without any physical cable.



Network Card

Network card is a necessary component of a computer without which a computer cannot be connected over a network. It is also known as network adapter or Network Interface Card (NIC). Most branded computers have network card pre-installed. Network cards are of two types : Internal and External Network Cards.

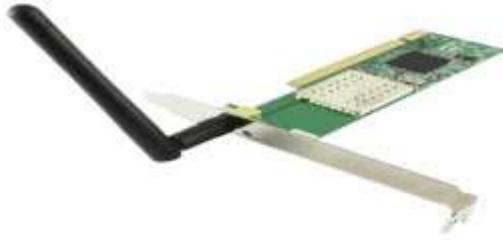
INTERNAL NETWORK CARDS

Motherboard has a slot for internal network card where it is to be inserted. Internal network cards are of two types in which first type uses Peripheral Component Interconnect (PCI) connection while the second type uses Industry Standard Architecture (ISA). Network cables are required to provide network access.



EXTERNAL NETWORK CARDS

External network cards come in two flavours : Wireless and USB based. Wireless network card need to be inserted into the motherboard but no network cable is required to connect to network



Universal Serial Bus (USB)

USB cards are easy to use and connect via USB port. Computers automatically detect USB cards and can install the drivers required to support the USB network card automatically.

Computer - Operating System

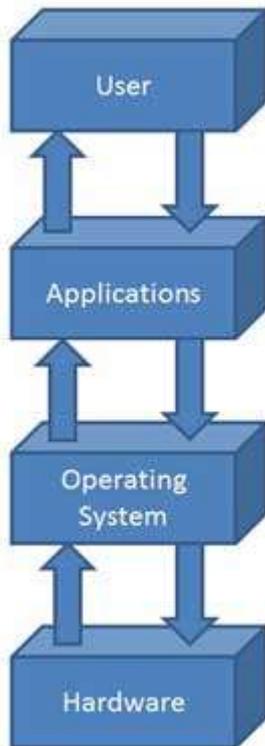
It is a program with following features:

- An operating system is a program that acts as an interface between the software and the computer hardware.
- It is an integrated set of specialised programs that are used to manage overall resources and operations of the computer.
- It is specialised software that controls and monitors the execution of all other programs that reside in the computer, including application programs and other system software.

Objectives of Operating System

- To make a computer system convenient to use in an efficient manner
- To hide the details of the hardware resources from the users
- To provide users a convenient interface to use the computer system
- To act as an intermediary between the hardware and its users and making it easier for the users to access and use other resources
- To manage the resources of a computer system
- To keep track of who is using which resource, granting resource requests, according to resource using and mediating conflicting requests from different programs and users

- To provide efficient and fair sharing of resources among users and programs



Characteristics of Operating System

- **Memory Management** -- keeps tracks of primary memory i.e. what part of it is in use by whom, what part is not in use etc. and allocates the memory when a process or program requests it.
- **Processor Management** -- allocates the processor(CPU) to a process and deallocates processor when it is no longer required.
- **Device Management** -- keeps track of all devices. This is also called I/O controller that decides which process gets the device, when, and for how much time.
- **File Management** -- allocates and de-allocates the resources and decides who gets the resources.
- **Security** -- prevents unauthorized access to programs and data by means of passwords and similar other techniques.
- **Job accounting** -- keeps track of time and resources used by various jobs and/or users.

- **Control over system performance** -- records delays between request for a service and from the system.
- **Interaction with the operators** -- The interaction may take place via the console of the computer in the form of instructions. Operating System acknowledges the same, does the corresponding action and informs the operation by a display screen.
- **Error-detecting aids** -- Production of dumps, traces, error messages and other debugging and error-detecting methods.
- **Coordination between other software and users** -- Coordination and assignment of compilers, interpreters, assemblers and other software to the various users of the computer systems.

Computer - Internet and Intranet

Internet

It is a worldwide system which has the following characteristics:

- Internet is a world-wide / global system of interconnected computer networks.
- Internet uses the standard Internet Protocol (TCP/IP)
- Every computer in internet is identified by a unique IP address.
- IP Address is a unique set of numbers (such as 110.22.33.114) which identifies a computer's location.
- A special computer DNS (Domain Name Server) is used to give name to the IP Address so that user can locate a computer by a name.
- For example, a DNS server will resolve a name **http://www.tutorialspoint.com** to a particular IP address to uniquely identify the computer on which this website is hosted.
- Internet is accessible to every user all over the world.



Intranet

- Intranet is system in which multiple PCs are connected to each other.
- PCs in intranet are not available to the world outside the intranet.
- Usually each company or organization has their own Intranet network and members/employees of that company can access the computers in their intranet.
- Each computer in Intranet is also identified by an IP Address which is unique among the computers in that Intranet.



Similarities in Internet and Intranet

- Intranet uses the internet protocols such as TCP/IP and FTP.
- Intranet sites are accessible via web browser in similar way as websites in internet. But only members of Intranet network can access intranet hosted sites.
- In Intranet, own instant messengers can be used as similar to yahoo messenger/ gtalk over the internet.

Differences in Internet and Intranet

- Internet is general to PCs all over the world whereas Intranet is specific to few PCs.
- Internet has wider access and provides a better access to websites to large population whereas Intranet is restricted.
- Internet is not as safe as Intranet as Intranet can be safely privatized as per the need.

Computer - How to Buy?

This chapter gives the following information:

- In this guide, we'll help you to buy a desktop on component by component basis.
- As desktops are highly customizable, so it is better to learn about main parts and then go to manufacturer or retailer shop or site instead of looking at some specific model directly.
- Popular desktop brands are Dell, Lenovo, HP and Apple.
- Compare the desktops based on their specifications and base price.



Monitor

- **Size** - It is the diagonal size of the LCD screen. Larger the area, bigger the picture screen. A bigger picture is preferable for movie watching and gaming. It will increase productivity as well.
- **Resolution** - This is the number of pixels on the screen. For example, 24-inch display is 1920x1200 (width by length) and 22-inch display which is

1680x1050. High resolution provides better picture quality and a nice gaming experience.

- **Inputs** - Now-a-days monitors can accept inputs from cable as well apart from computer. They also can have USB ports.
- **Stand** - Some monitors come with adjustable stands while some may not.
- **Recommended** - 24 Inch LCD.



Operating System

- Operating System is the main software of the computer as everything will run on it in one form or other.
- There are primarily three choices : **Windows, Linux, Apple OS X.**
- **Linux** is free but people generally do not use it for home purpose.
- **Apple OS X** works only on Apple Desktops.
- **Windows 7** is very popular among desktop users.
- Most of the computers come pre-equipped with Windows 7 Starter edition.
- **Windows 8** is recently introduced and is available in market.
- **Windows 7 and Windows 8** come in multiple versions from starter, home basic, home premium, professional, ultimate and enterprise editions.
- As edition version increases, their features list and price increases.
- **Recommended** - Windows 7 Home Premium.

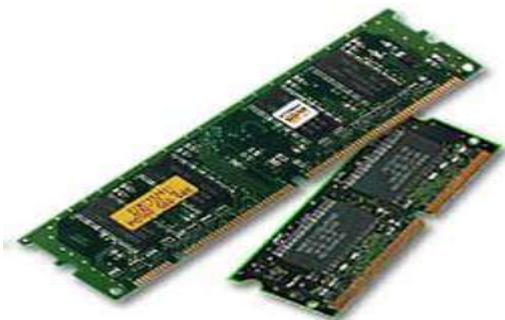
Optical Drive (CD / DVD / Blu-ray)

- Optical drive is the drive on a computer which is responsible for using CD, DVD and Blu-ray discs.
- Now-a-days, DVD burners are industry standards.
- DVD Burner can burn CD, DVD and play them.
- DVD Burner is cheaper than Blu-ray drives.
- Blu-ray drives can play HD movies but are costlier component.
- **Recommended** - DVD Burner.



Memory

- RAM is considered as Computer Memory as performance of a computer is directly proportional to its memory and processor.
- Today's software and operating system require high memory.
- Today commonly used RAM is DDR3 which operates at 1066Mhz
- As per Windows 7, 1 GB is the minimum RAM required to function properly.
- **Recommended** - 4 GB.



Hard Drive

- Hard disk is used for storage purpose. Higher the capacity, more data you can save in it.
- Now-a-days computers are equipped with 500GB hard drive which can be extended to 2TB.
- Most hard drives in desktop operate at the standard performance speed of 7200RPM.
- **Recommended** - 500GB.



CPU

- **Frequency (GHz)** - This determines speed of the processor. More the speed, better the CPU.
- **Cores** - Now-a-days CPUs come with more than one core, which is like having more than one CPU in the computer. Programs which can take advantage of multi-core environment will run faster on such machines.
- **Brand** - Intel or AMD. Both are equivalent. Intel is in lead.
- **Cache** - Higher the L1, L2 cache, better the CPU performance
- **Recommended** - Intel Core i3 i3-3225 3.30 GHz Processor.