

Basic Computer Terminology - Dictionary of Computer Terms

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A dictionary of computer terms with simple definitions. A glossary of computer and Internet terms with definitions that are easy to understand.

Access Time	The time taken to retrieve data from a storage device or to obtain data from peripheral unit
Alphanumeric	Pertaining to a character set that contains letters, digits and usually other characters such as punctuation marks
Background Job	A Job in an operation system which has a lower priority than jobs being run simultaneously which involve any online activity
Binary Digit	The digit 0 to 1
Binary Number System	Number system with a base of 2
Bit	Smallest possible unit of information (Binary digit)
Bug	Any mistake or malfunction of computer (programme or system)
Bus	A line or circuit used for transmitting data or power to a large number of devices
Central Processing Unit	The computer unit that performs the execution of instructions
Character Set	A set of unique symbols arranged in a fixed order used by a device or language to denote information
Chip	The tiny bit of silicon that forms the heart of an integrated circuit
Cobol	Common Business Oriented Language
Compile	To translate a computer programme written in a higher level source language into a machine language programme
Computer System	A central processor and associated peripheral units
Data processing	The operations performed on data
Debug	To locate and correct any errors in a computer programme or to correct malfunctions in the computer or its peripheral equipment
Downtime	The period during which a computer is not operating correctly due to mechanical or electronic failure or malfunction
EDP	Electronic Data Processing; the processing of data with electronic equipment
Executive	A Programme that helps manage the operation of a computer system
Flowchart	A graphic representation of the definition analysis or solution to a problem in which symbols are used to represent operations, data flow or equipment
FORTRAN	A high level programming language for scientific and mathematical use (Formula Translation)
Hardware	Physical equipment such as mechanical, magnetic, electrical or electronic devices
Hexadecimal Number System	Number system with a base of 16
High-Level language	Developed to make the task of programming easier
Input	The actual data which must be put into the computer to accomplish some task

Label	A group of characters used as a symbol to identify an item of data, an area of memory
Machine language	Refer to instructions written in machine code which can be immediately obeyed by a computer without translation
Main Storage Memory	The store from which instruction are executed The chips in the computer where information and instructions are stored in Binary code
Micro Second	One Millionth of a second
Millisecond	One Thousandth of a second
Octal Number System	Number system with a base of 8
Offline	Not connected directly to the main computer system
Online	Refers to any equipment or process that sends information directly to the computer for immediate processing and immediate results
Operating System	An integrated collection of computer programmes which supervises the sequencing of programme by a computer
Output	The results of the computer's processing
Over Flow	A quantity of data that exceeds the memory capacity of the storage register or location which is to receive the result
Packaged Programme	Programmes and subroutines written and supplied by the computer manufacturers to their customers
Processing	A general term for any device capable of carrying out operation on data; sometimes used as a synonym for central processor
Programme	A sequence of instructions written in computer language
Programmer	A person who prepares problem solving