

BASIC COMPUTER TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Here are some basic terms & definitions that will get you familiar with computer jargon.

APPLICATION (PROGRAM): Software that allows you to perform various functions on your computer, including, but not limited to word processing

CURSOR: The graphic you move around the screen of the computer that denotes where you are.

DISK: Usually referring to any number of devices used to store information.

DOCUMENT: A file in which information is stored for later retrieval, use or editing. Documents are mostly application specific.

HARD DRIVE: Any storage device that uses rigid magnetic disks to store data. Often used to refer to the main internal disk of your computer where your operating system, applications and documents are.

HARDWARE: The physical components that make up your computer system, this includes but is not limited to the computer, keyboard, mouse, monitor, printer, etc.

KEYBOARD: The device with keys labeled with letters, numbers and symbols that allow you to input data to your computer.

MONITOR: The television like screen connected to your computer.

MOUSE: A device used to move the cursor around the screen.

OPERATING SYSTEM (A.K.A. PLATFORM): The most important program on your computer. It is required to run other programs (i.e., Windows or Macintosh).

PRINTER: A hardware device used to make hard copy prints of documents on your computer.

USB: Universal Serial Bus - an external bus standard (way of connecting other devices to your computer). A single USB port can be used to connect up to 127 devices, including keyboards, scanners, printers, etc. USB devices can be plugged in without having to restart your computer.

SCANNER: A hardware device used to convert hard copy documents into digital information that you can view on your computer. Usually used to capture photos and/or text.

SOFTWARE: Any number of combination of information and data that adds functionality to your computer system (a.k.a. application, program - i.e.. word processor).

WORD PROCESSOR: A software application used for typing and editing text on your computer.