CAT Glossary 2019

This glossary is provided by Study Opportunities. All descriptions/definitions are based on the Second Editions of the *Computers, part of your life* series.

It can be used to look up terms, and for study purposes.

1: System Technologies

2: Networks and the internet

3: Social Implications

4: Information Management

5: Word, Excel, Access, HTML

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
1	**3D Printer**	Printer that allows one to create physical three-dimensional objects from designs created on a computer using CAD or 3D modelling software.
1	**Accelerometer**	Input device in smartphones and tablets, used to detect which way around the device is held or how it is being moved. This allows it to change the orientation of the screen depending on how you hold it.
1	**Access control**	The operating system asks for your permission before any software can be installed. The purpose is to try to make it impossible for malware to be installed on your computer without your knowledge.
1	**Algorithm**	Step-by-step solution used to solve a problem (used in programming).
1	**Application software**	A group of programs that perform specific tasks for us as users, for example word processing programs.
1	**Archiving (files)**	Making copies of files, where the copies are not meant to be accessed regularly but are kept for reference when needed.
1	**Aspect ratio**	The relationship between the width and height of the display, e.g. 16:9.
1	**Backup**	Making copies of files with the aim of having extra copies of the files in case the originals get lost or become damaged for one or another reason.
1	**Beta software**	Preliminary (pre-sale) versions of software, released by developers to be tested by the general public. Programmers try to fix all the reported errors before the final version of the software is released.
1	**Biometric identification**	The use of technology that measures/scans something biologically unique to each person, such as a fingerprint or the pattern of the iris of an eye, for identification purposes.
1	**Bluetooth**	A wireless technology that allows devices such as mice, printers and smartphones to communicate over a relatively short distance,
1	**Blu-ray**	An optical disc format designed to enable recording, rewriting and playback of high-definition video (HD), as well as storing large amounts of data (more than DVD).
1	**Boot**	The term used to describe a computer's start-up process. Restarting a computer is called 'rebooting' it.
1	**Bug (software)**	Mistake made by accident when the programmers wrote the software. (Not a virus.)
1	**Byte**	Each single character we store, such as '4' or 'A' or '%', takes up space which we refer to as a byte.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
1	**Cache memory**	A high-speed memory used to hold recently or frequently accessed data, in order to be able to retrieve that data faster.
1	**Card reader**	Device into which a memory card is inserted. Data can then be transferred between the memory card and the computing device attached to the card reader.
1	**Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS)**	A painful compression of the nerves in the wrist caused by repetitive manual action such as typing.
1	**Clipboard**	Area in memory (RAM) where copied or moved objects – both text and graphics – are temporarily stored. They are kept there until they are pasted somewhere (or until the program is closed or the computer is shut down).
1	**Cloud computing**	A general term that refers to the sharing and use of resources and applications offered as services over the internet.
1	**Cloud storage**	The online storage of files.
1	**Colour depth**	The number of bits used to represent the colour of each pixel in an image.
1	**Contrast ratio**	The relationship between the darkest black and the brightest white that a display device can produce. Higher values are better.
1	**Convergence**	The trend where separate technologies and functions that required different devices in the past are combined into one single device, e.g. the smartphone and the tablet.
1	**Core**	A single physical processor. Chips that are 'dual core' have 2 processors, 'quad core' have 4 processors, etc.
1	**CPU**	Central Processing Unit – hardware component that processes all data and carries out all instructions.
1	**Dedicated device**	Devices that are designed to perform just one specific task, such as Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs), GPS devices and household appliances like microwave ovens and washing machines.
1	**Default printer**	The printer that printing will be sent to unless otherwise specified by the user.
1	**Defragmentation**	The process of using a defragmentation utility program to reverse the process of fragmentation. The defragmenter utility program rearranges and consolidates the scatted parts of files on disk so that they can be retrieved more quickly.
1	**DIMM**	Dual Inline Memory Module – a standardized 'stick' of RAM designed to fit into a DIMM slot on the motherboard.
1	**Disk Cleanup**	A utility that can be used to make more storage space available by deleting unnecessary files.
1	**Disk scanner**	A utility that comes with all operating systems. It can be used to check a drive for errors and bad sectors on the disk, and try to fix them.
1	**Dongle**	Device plugged into a USB port to enable a wireless keyboard or mouse. Also a 3G or 4G dongle used on a desktop computer or laptop to connect it to a cellular network for internet access.
1	**Downward / backward compatibility**	Ability of software to open and use files created in previous (or older) versions of the software.
1	**Driver**	Software that allows a computer to communicate with hardware or devices. The operating system comes with a large set of drivers, and in general drivers are installed automatically.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
1	**DSLR camera**	Digital Single Lens Reflex – a type of camera designed for professional use. It lets you change lenses and allows more control over technical settings.
1	**Entry-level computer**	A computer that is cheapest to purchase in its range (e.g. desktop PC), with fairly low hardware specifications.
1	**Ergonomics**	The study and design of the workplace and the equipment used in the workplace for the comfort and safety of people in their work environments.
1	**EULA**	End User Licence Agreement – a legally binding contract between a user and a software company. It describes what one may and may not do with the software.
1	**File attribute**	A property of a file that can be set. The most common attributes are the Hidden and Read-Only file attributes.
1	**File extension**	A set of characters (usually 3-5) added to the end of a file name that identifies the type of file, e.g. docx is a *Word* file.
1	**File property**	The basic information about a file such as its name, size and date modified.
1	**Formatting (a disk)**	Preparing a disk to store data. Most disks are pre-formatted. Formatting a disk will erase all the data that is on the disk.
1	**Fragmentation**	The more you use your computer, the more the files (and parts of files) get scattered on the disk. The more scattered the files' parts are, the slower your computer becomes, as the files take longer to retrieve.
1	**Freeware**	Software that is fully functioning and that can be used and copied without any restrictions.
1	**Geo-tagging**	Process whereby the location (in terms of latitude and longitude co-ordinates) at which a photo was taken by a digital camera, is stored in the metadata of the file.
1	**GHz**	Gigahertz – the unit in which the speed of the CPU is measured. Higher is better.
1	**GPS device**	A Global Positioning System device that calculates where you are on the earth's surface (latitude and longitude) based on signals it obtains from at least three GPS satellites.
1	**GPU**	Graphics Processing Unit – processing chip on a video card (analogous to the CPU on the motherboard), which can improve computer performance with certain types of software (CAD, 3D graphics, gaming, etc.).
1	**Hard copy**	Output on paper (as opposed to soft copy – visual output on a screen).
1	**HDMI**	High-Definition Multimedia Interface – an interface that transmits high definition video and sound via a single cable. It provides better quality images because the signals are digital.
1	**Hidden (attribute)**	A file attribute that indicates if a file is visible or not. The only difference between a hidden file and a visible file, is that a hidden file will by default not appear in the list of files and folders you see in File Explorer.
1	**Hybrid computer**	Laptop / tablet with a reversible or detachable screen and a normal keyboard. The screen is touch- or pen-sensitive. This machine can be used either as a normal laptop or as a tablet.
1	**Inkjet printer**	Type of printer that sprays microscopic dots of ink onto the paper and is relatively cheap to buy but is comparatively expensive to run. Good for high-quality graphics such as photographs.
1	**ISO rating**	A digital camera's sensitivity to light. Higher ISO ratings are better.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
1	**Laser printer**	Type of printer that works like a photocopier, using toner instead of ink cartridges. Relatively expensive to buy compared to inkjet printers but cheaper to run and, of the two, best suited for higher volume printing.
1	**Linux**	An open source operating system.
1	**Lumen**	This measures the brightness of the image projected by a data projector. The higher the lumen rating, the more effective the projector will be.
1	**Memory (RAM)**	Temporary storage area for programs and data being processed in the computer. Memory loses its contents when the power is switched off.
1	**Memory card**	Electronic storage media used in digital cameras and smartphones.
1	**Metadata**	Additional data stored about a file that describes the contents of the file, such as the author and title of the file.
1	**Micro-USB**	A smaller type of USB port, usually found on mobile devices such as smartphones.
1	**Mobile user**	User (not necessarily a separate category) who wants and needs to have their technology with them wherever they are, e.g. sales people and consultants.
1	**Motherboard**	Large rectangular board inside the computer case, containing circuitry with slots and connectors for the CPU, RAM, storage devices and peripherals to connect to it. It allows all the parts of a computer to communicate with each other.
1	**Multi-function printer**	An all-in-one input/output device which can typically print, scan, photocopy and fax.
1	**Multitasking**	The ability of the operating system to load and process multiple tasks or processes at the same time.
1	**Multitasking**	The ability of an operating system to load and process multiple tasks or processes at the same time.
1	**Multi-touch (touch screen)**	A screen that allows for two or more fingers to be detected and used on it at one time, e.g. for pinching actions.
1	**Multi-user operating system**	An operating system that allows multiple users to access a computer system at the same time. It is often used in networks where the same single operating system deals with multiple users that are *simultaneously* logged on.
1	**OCR**	Optical Character Recognition – converts text in an image into editable text.
1	**Online storage**	Disk space that is allocated to you on a server on the internet. Accessible wherever you can log into the server.
1	**Open source software (OSS)**	Software that may be freely used, modified and distributed. It may, however, not be sold.
1	**Operating system**	System software that controls all activities that take place in a computer. Examples include the Windows range, Linux, macOS, iOS and Android.
1	**Patch**	Downloadable update to an operating system – especially one that fixes bugs or security vulnerabilities.
1	**Path**	The succession of folders, starting from the drive letter and separated by \ , that lead to the location of a specific file, e.g. U:\Documents\Finance\2019
1	**PDF**	Portable Document Format – a file format used to distribute document files, as it does not require the program in which the document was created in order for it to be read. You just need a free utility program called Adobe Reader to read it.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
1	**Pen input**	A pen (or stylus) is an input device used together with a pressure-sensitive digitising tablet.
1	**Phablet**	A smartphone with a screen size larger than 5" (midway in size between a smartphone and a tablet).
1	**Pixel density**	Also known as dpi – how many pixels the display fits into a 1" horizontal line. A higher pixel density is better.
1	**Plain text file**	A text file that contains lines of plain text with no formatting. The file extension .txt is associated with text files.
1	**Platform**	A type of operating system, e.g. Linux, Android, Windows.
1	**Plug-and-play**	A series of technologies where the operating system automatically detects and configures a device that has been plugged into the computer, so that the device can be used almost immediately.
1	**Pointing stick**	An alternative to a mouse, used with laptops. It takes the form of a small button between the keys of the keyboard. You move the pointing stick to move the pointer, and press it down to click.
1	**POS**	Point Of Sale system – designed to speed up the sale of goods and services in the marketplace.
1	**Power user**	Category of user who has computing needs that make the top-of-the-range hardware and software indispensable, e.g. architects and engineers. They typically also use all the advanced functions of the software they use.
1	**ppm**	Pages per minute – the number of pages that a printer can print in a minute, i.e. the 'speed' of a printer
1	**Printer queue**	Temporary storage area on the hard drive where print tasks are sent and where they wait until the printer is ready to print them. Each printer has its own queue.
1	**Program files**	Actual programs, not data files, that run (execute) when opened. They normally have a .com or .exe file extension. .
1	**Proprietary software**	Proprietary software (purchased from an owner) is software that is licensed, so users may only use the software under certain conditions. They may not change it or distribute it.
1	**QR code**	Quick Response Code – a two dimensional square type of 'barcode' that can store much more data than a conventional barcode. QR codes can be scanned using the camera on a mobile device.
1	**RAM**	(See under Memory)
1	**Read-only**	A file attribute that indicates if a file is read only or not. A read-only file cannot be modified and saved under the same name within the same folder.
1	**Refresh rate**	How often or quickly the screen display is refreshed. The higher the refresh rate, the better.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
1	**Resolution**	<u>Display</u>: The maximum resolution is the highest number of pixels that the display supports, given by the number of horizontal pixels multiplied by the number of vertical pixels (e.g. 1920 x 1080). <u>Scanner</u>: The number of dots it can scan per inch – so its resolution is stated as *dpi* (dots per inch). <u>Digital camera</u>: The total number of pixels that make up the picture. <u>Printer</u>: the number of dots the printer can create along a horizontal line; measured in dots per inch (dpi).
1	**RFID**	Radio Frequency Identification – uses small radio devices (smaller than a grain of rice) to store and transmit data.
1	**Rich Text Format (rtf)**	A file format that supports text formatting such as bold, font sizes, tab settings and even images. Widely used and supported by most word processors.
1	**ROM**	Read Only Memory – a special chip on the motherboard that holds the instructions needed to start the computer and load the operating system when you switch it on.
1	**rpm**	Revolutions per minute – unit in which the rotational speed of a hard drive is measured, e.g. 7200 rpm.
1	**Safe Mode**	A mode in which a computer can be booted in order to help fix various software problems. In Safe Mode, only essential system programs and services are loaded.
1	**SATA**	The internal hard drive interface or connection – the way the drive is connected to the motherboard.
1	**Scanner**	An input device that scans images into a computer, e.g. printed text, graphics, barcodes, QR codes – even parts of the human body.
1	**Scheduler**	A program that is used to run certain programs at specific times.
1	**Screen lock pattern**	A way of locking a mobile device by setting up a pattern you must 'draw' on the screen with your finger to unlock the device.
1	**Sensor size**	The size of the sensor in a digital camera. The bigger the size, the better the quality of the image.
1	**Server**	A computer that provide services or resources to other computers (clients) that are linked in the network.
1	**Service Pack**	A collection of all the previous software updates for the last period of time (6 months to a year). It is meant to help people who are behind in their updates fix their software all at once. Service packs are pretty much a thing of the past. Most software companies create software so that it will regularly check for updates and then automatically download and install those updates.
1	**Shareware**	Software that you can use for a trial period (usually 30 days). You can download and try out shareware for free. Shareware usually stops working when the trial period has expired, and the trial version sometimes does not include all the features of the 'full' version. After the trial period, or should you wish to get the 'full' version, you will need to pay for it.
1	**Single-user Licence**	A licence under which you may only install one copy of the software. You may not install it on other computers.
1	**Single-user operating system**	An operating system that can only be used by a single user at a time.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
1	**Site licence**	A licence agreement that allows a company or organisation an unrestricted number of installations of the software within the company or organisation.
1	**Soft copy**	Visual output on a computer screen (as opposed to hard copy – output on paper).
1	**SOHO user**	Category of user (Small Office Home Office) who uses a computer for a business that the user runs.
1	**Speech recognition**	Software that 'listens' to what you say and 'understands' it as a command or turns it into text (instead of the user typing the text).
1	**Spooling**	The process of sending print tasks temporarily to disk (hard drive) until the printer is ready to print them.
1	**SSD**	Solid State Drive – a completely electronic alternative to the traditional hard drive. It uses the same technology as flash drives, making for very fast disk access.
1	**Subscription-based software**	Software where the user pays a monthly or yearly subscription for the use of the software, e.g. Office 365.
1	**System requirements**	The minimum requirements (such as storage space, processing power and memory) needed to run a piece of software. When software requirements are indicated, this usually relates to the operating system needed.
1	**System software**	Software that is intended to control, support or operate the computer.
1	**Tablet**	A portable computer with a touch- or pen-sensitive screen. Similar to smartphones, with advantages of a larger screen and a longer battery life. It cannot however make cellphone calls or send / receive SMS messages.
1	**Task Manager**	Provides information about the computer's performance and applications and processes. Most often used to end non-responding tasks or programs.
1	**Tooltip**	A tip or information that pops up when you rest the pointer on an icon or object.
1	**Touch screen**	A screen used as both an input and an output device, and found in devices such as smartphones and tablets. Some touch screens respond to finger touch, others are designed to work with a stylus.
1	**Touchpad**	A pressure-sensitive surface built into laptops. It is an input device that can be used instead of a mouse.
1	**Trackball**	An input device with a large ball on it. You move the pointer on the screen by rolling the ball with your thumb.
1	**Update (of software)**	Either the latest fix for bugs in the current version of the software, or the addition of new, additional features to the software.
1	**Upgrade**	A new version of the software, which means installing a new program with major changes / new features. Upgrades usually have to be paid for.
1	**UPS**	Uninterruptible Power Supply – a device used to protect a computer against power surges, spikes, and outages. It only provides power for a limited duration – enough time to save one's work and shut the computer down properly.
1	**USB port**	Standard port commonly used to connect devices such as keyboards, mice and printers to a computer. USB ports and standards are evolving and becoming faster.
1	**Utility programs**	System software used to help the user to perform maintenance tasks related to managing a computer.
1	**VGA port**	Port used to connect the monitor to the computer. Largely replaced today by other connection types, such as HDMI.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
1	**Video card**	A separate circuit board that plugs into a special slot on the motherboard. It has its own video memory and a graphics processing unit (GPU) that improves video processing.
1	**Virtual Assistant**	Software that allows you to speak to your phone (or tablet) and have it 'understand' and respond to what you say, e.g. 'turn off the lights'.
1	**Virtual memory**	Free disk space on a hard drive that allows the operating system to work as if it has access to more RAM than the amount of RAM that is physically present in the computer. This allows the computer to run more programs at the same time.
1	**Voice recognition software**	Software that allows the computer to 'understand' you when you talk to it. There are two basic categories: giving the computer commands and dictating text, and the so-called 'virtual assistants'.
1	**Volatile memory**	Memory (RAM) does not keep its contents when the power is switched off and this means that it is volatile. Storage (and ROM) keeps its contents at all times – therefore it is non-volatile.
1	**Webcam**	A low resolution camera that is quick and easy to set up (or is built into many laptops). It feeds video images to the computer in real time and is used for video conferencing, security and other instances where a live video feed is required.
1	**Zoom (digital)**	As you 'get closer' to the object being photographed and the picture gets larger, it also gets blurrier and eventually pixelated.
1	**Zoom (optical)**	Uses lenses on the camera to 'get closer' to the object being photographed. Use optical zoom for better quality images.
2	**3G / 4G (LTE)**	Generations of mobile (cellular) phone technology that consists of a high-tech infrastructure of networks and web 3G/4G-enabled handsets such as smartphones. 4G is also known as LTE.
2	**802.11 a/b/g/n**	Specification used to indicate whether a device has a wireless adapter (for WiFi). The letters indicate the speed that the wireless network is capable of.
2	**Add-on / Extension (browser)**	A third-party app that can be downloaded to extend the functionality of a browser beyond browsing, e.g. translator utilities and ad blockers. Also known as a browser extension.
2	**ADSL**	Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line – a permanent digital connection to the internet using a normal landline or telephone line.
2	**Archiving (email)**	Moving messages from your inbox to an archive folder without deleting them.
2	**AUP**	Acceptable Use Policy – a policy which outlines the rights and responsibilities of its users, especially in networked environments.
2	**Backbone**	In networking, a cable connecting different LANs.
2	**Bandwidth**	The total amount of data that can be transferred from one point to another in a given period of time. Normally measured in Kilobits per second (Kbps) or Megabits per second (Mbps).
2	**Bookmarks (web browser)**	An option that allows a user to store shortcuts to the web pages they frequently visit. Also known as Favorites.
2	**Botnet**	A group of compromised or infected computers connected to a network such as the internet and controlled remotely to attack other machines by infecting them with malware, sending spam, etc.
2	**Broadband**	A high-speed, high-bandwidth connection to the internet.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
2	**BYOD**	Bring Your Own Device – a policy where people are allowed to bring their own computing device (laptop, phone or tablet) to school or work and use it instead of relying on equipment owned or supplied by the school or company. They connect to the school or company network using WiFi.
2	**Caching (web)**	Temporarily storing recently accessed web pages on disk so that they can be loaded more quickly the next time they are requested.
2	**Cap**	The limited amount of data that can be downloaded and uploaded in a month without having to pay extra.
2	**CAPTCHA**	A test to determine whether it is a human being interacting with the computer. It usually takes the form of distorted letters and/or words that no computer software can recognise, but which humans can recognise with ease.
2	**Clients**	Computers connected to a network that use services and resources from the servers.
2	**Distributed processing**	A type of processing where the processing that is necessary to solve a problem is distributed amongst computers (multiple servers in different data centres), which increases the total processing power. (See also Grid computing.)
2	**Distribution list (email)**	(See under Mailing list)
2	**E-commerce**	The general term for any type of business transaction done via the internet.
2	**EFT**	Electronic Funds Transfer – transferring money from one account to another using the internet and internet banking.
2	**Email**	Electronic mail – the composing, sending and receiving of messages electronically over a network including the internet.
2	**Fibre cable**	A type of network cable that uses light to send data and is therefore very fast.
2	**Firewall**	A firewall acts as a barrier between your computer and the internet. It checks which programs are trying to access your computer via the internet or are trying to access the internet from your computer. It can consist of hardware or software or a combination of both.
2	**FTP**	File Transfer Protocol – the protocol (rule for communication) used for the fast, easy transfer of files between remote computers that have an internet connection.
2	**Grid computing**	A system whereby the resources of different computers are shared and used at the same time to solve a single problem.
2	**HAN**	Home Area Network – a small network within a home environment that connects devices such as computers, printers, tablets, smartphones, smart TVs and gaming devices.
2	**History (web browser)**	An option that allows a user to find the web pages they have previously visited. When you click this option, it shows a list of sites you have visited.
2	**Home page**	The first page of a website, which contains information about the website's purpose and content. It also provides links to other web pages and resources in the site.
2	**Hotspot**	The area in which a WiFi signal can be detected and used.
2	**Hyperlink**	A built-in connection to another place in a document (web page, resource), often indicated as text underlined in blue.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
2	Instant Messaging (IM)	Live electronic communication usually between two people using computers or other devices such as smartphones. IM apps can share not only text, but images and video, and can make both voice and video calls using VoIP technology.
2	Internet	A worldwide computer network, consisting of computers, devices and networks that are linked using some form of communication media.
2	Intranet	An organisation's private network which is an internet-like environment consisting of web pages relating to the organisation's business. The information stored on the intranet is only available to the organisation's employees.
2	IP address	Internet Protocol Address – a numerical address that uniquely identifies a computer or device, either on a network or on the internet.
2	ISP	Internet Service Provider – a company that has a permanent, fast connection to the internet. They sell internet access and services to individuals or organisations for a monthly fee.
2	ISP-based email	When using ISP-based email, you access your email by using software such as Microsoft Outlook on the device where your account settings have been configured.
2	LAN	Local Area Network – a network which connects computers in a small area such as a school, university campus or company offices in one building.
2	LTE	The next generation of high-speed cellular connectivity after 3G, also known as 4G.
2	Mailing list	A list of email addresses grouped under a single name. An email sent to this mailing list will be sent to all the email addresses on that list. Also known as a d*istribution list* or a c*ontact group*.
2	NFC	Near Field Communication – a standard or technology that allows electronic devices to connect wirelessly and exchange data, simply by touching them together or bringing them close together. NFC is mainly used for payment processing.
2	NIC	Network Interface Controller – a controller that connects the computer to a cabled network, allowing the computer to communicate with the network.
2	PAN	Personal area network – a network organised around an individual or a couple of individuals with a range of a few metres.
2	Plug-in (browser)	A third-party app that the browser can call on to display specialised content such as a Flash video.
2	Podcast	An audio file (often in an MP3 format) that is made available to download for free or to purchase from the internet. A video podcast (vodcast) includes video clips or photos.
2	Pop-up (web browser)	A small web browser window that appears on top of the website you are viewing. They are usually created by advertisers and often open as soon as you visit a website.
2	Real-time messaging	Online exchange of messages (also images, video and voice) in real time. It includes IM (e.g. WhatsApp) and chat.
2	Router	A network device that enables devices to connect in a network and to allow internet connectivity, using either a fixed line (telephone line or fibre optic cable) or wireless means such as WiFi.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
2	RSS	Really Simple Syndication – a technology that automatically provides users with updated content, such as new blog entries, feeds from websites and news headlines – all from many different sites.
2	Search engine	A program that is used to search for documents located on the web by using keywords or phrases entered by the user.
2	Secure URL	A URL that begins with https:// or has a small closed lock displayed somewhere on the page, often next to the URL. It means that the site is encrypted for security.
2	Shaped connection (network tuning)	An internet connection where preference is given to certain services on the internet, such as email, downloading and browsing. Other services, such as online gaming and VoIP, are given less preference and are slower.
2	Skype	A popular software package that allows people to communicate using VoIP. Skype also allows you to make video calls if you have a webcam attached to your computer.
2	Social networking site	A site where individuals and organisations can post their likes, dislikes, interests, comments, photographs and activities.
2	Spam	The electronic equivalent of 'junk mail' – email advertisements sent to you that you did not request.
2	Switch	A device used to connect computers in a network (e.g. a LAN) with cables so that communication can occur between the computers. It is not used for internet access.
2	Synching	A feature of online storage, where changes made to a file will be updated on all devices that share that file. In this way you can ensure that you always work with the latest version of the file.
2	Tabbed browsing	Allows you to have several web pages open on separate tabs of a single web browser, allowing you to quickly and easily jump between web pages.
2	Thin client	A special (cheaper) type of computer that doesn't have its own hard drive and has limited memory and CPU power. It relies on a server for resources.
2	Throttling	When your ISP slow down your internet connection, because the ISP believes you are downloading excessively. Each ISP has an acceptable use policy (AUP) which specifies how this is determined and done.
2	Twitter	A microblogging service ('micro' is used to describe the service because messages in Twitter can't be longer than 280 characters). Twitter allows people to send messages (tweets) to their 'followers'.
2	Unshaped connection	An internet connection that gives all the internet services the same priority.
2	URL	Uniform Resource Locator – a unique alphanumeric address used to identify resources such as websites, web pages, documents and files stored on web servers on the web. It is entered in the address bar of a web browser.
2	URL shortener	A tool or service, such as TinyURL.com, which converts a long URL to a shorter version. This shorter version of the URL will take a user to the same web address, but is easier to remember and/or type out.
2	UTP cable	Unshielded Twisted Pair – the type of cable most commonly used to connect computers in a LAN, and also in a HAN.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
2	**Video blog (vlog)**	A form of blog which uses video as the medium. Entries on the vlog normally consist of video supported by text and images.
2	**Video conference**	An online conference between two or more people at different locations, using a computer network to transmit audio and video data, as if all the people were in the same room.
2	**Virtual community**	A group of people who gather online to share ideas and interests.
2	**Virus signature (definition)**	The pattern that uniquely identifies the malware.
2	**Vlog**	(See under Video blog)
2	**Vodcast**	(See under Podcast)
2	**VoIP**	Voice over Internet Protocol – a technology that allows telephone calls to be made over LANs, WANs and the internet, allowing you to talk to anyone who also has a VoIP system anywhere in the world.
2	**WAN**	Wide Area Network – a network that is spread over a wide geographical area, such as a city, country or even continents.
2	**Web application / Online software**	Software that runs on servers on the internet. You view the interface in a web browser.
2	**Web page**	A document on the web which can be viewed in a web browser, and created in languages such as HTML, JavaScript, PHP and Python.
2	**Web-based email**	A service that allows you to access an email account through a web browser from any location that has internet access.
2	**Weblog / blog**	Website updated often with news and events in chronological or sequential order. A blog reads like a journal with the most recent entry at the top.
2	**WiFi**	A way of connecting to an existing ADSL or fibre connection wirelessly, within a fairly small area of coverage known as a hotspot.
2	**Wiki**	A website where different people can work together by contributing or making a few changes to the content, e.g. Wikipedia.
2	**WiMAX**	An upgrade on WiFi and a more secure wireless networking technology, that allows wireless devices to communicate with one another over a much wider area than WiFi.
2	**WLAN**	Wireless LAN – a term used to indicate that at least part of the network is linked wirelessly.
2	**World Wide Web (WWW)**	A service that runs on the internet and consists of a vast collection of interlinked, interactive documents stored on computers all over the world.
3	**Adware**	Software that downloads adverts and bombards you with adverts that pop up whenever you are connected to the internet.
3	**Augmented Reality**	Similar to Virtual Reality, except that it does not create a totally new virtual world, but augments ('adds to') the real world you are viewing, by displaying computer-created things like images and 3D objects on top of your view of the real world.
3	**Big Data**	Very large structured and unstructured data sets that are analysed using computers to reveal trends and associations.
3	**Bitcoin**	A form of digital currency – it is electronic so there are no physical notes or coins. It is not controlled by any bank or country.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
3	**Bot (robot)**	A computer that has been compromised (or infected) and can be controlled remotely when it is on and connected to the internet. A bot can also be called a 'zombie'.
3	**Card skimmer**	Device that reads the magnetic data from a bank card.
3	**Click-jacking**	An attack in which a site appears to do one thing but your clicks are actually redirected to do something else: e.g. a button on a web page that seems to be a free download of a desktop wallpaper but that actually makes you 'like' a different page on Facebook.
3	**Computer virus**	A program that is written to disrupt the normal functioning of a person's computer without their knowledge or consent.
3	**Computer worm**	Malware that is able to distribute itself over a network, normally via email, without a person having run an infected program.
3	**Crowdfunding**	The practice of funding someone's business idea or project through small amounts contributed by a large number of people, usually before the project is started. Examples of crowdfunding platforms are Kickstarter and Indiegogo.
3	**Cyber-bullying**	The spreading of rumours, gossip and the general bullying of another person using digital communication methods.
3	**Cyber-stalking**	Using the internet to stalk or harass someone.
3	**Cyberterrorism**	A type of internet attack that attacks parts of a country's IT infrastructure.
3	**Digital Divide**	Large sections of the populations of developing countries (such as South Africa) and poorer communities have limited access to technology and limited knowledge of it.
3	**Digital migration (digitisation of media)**	Digital migration is the process of changing TV signals so that they are broadcast in a digital format instead of an analogue format.
3	**DoS attack**	Denial of Service attack, that uses thousands of compromised computers (bots) to flood a server with requests for information. The attack is successful if the server becomes so overwhelmed that normal users cannot access the system.
3	**E-mail spoofing**	The forgery of an email header so that the email appears to be from a different origin (or person).
3	**Green computing**	Term used to describe using computers in a way that is sensitive to the environment.
3	**Hackers and crackers**	Computer criminals who break into computer systems, either for prestige and recognition (hackers) or with criminal intent (crackers).
3	**Hoax (internet)**	A message or article intended to deceive or defraud others. It can be sent via email, SMS, WhatsApp messages or Facebook and Twitter posts.
3	**Identity theft**	When criminals steal your identity and do things such as apply for credit in your name.
3	**Information overload**	What happens when people can't cope with the amount of information they are exposed to every day. It can make them feel helpless, unable to cope and can lead to unproductive behaviour.
3	**IoT**	Internet of Things – the trend for all sorts of things (e.g. your lights and your front door lock) to connect to the internet, so that they can be monitored and controlled remotely from wherever you are.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
3	**Keylogger**	A type of spyware that records your keystrokes as you type (and possibly even the movements of your mouse and screenshots of what is being displayed) in an attempt to discover your usernames and passwords.
3	**Malware**	Malicious software – any software that is written with negative intentions.
3	**Mobile or m-learning**	A form of education and training delivered and conducted via the internet using mobile devices.
3	**Pharming**	A scamming practice where a user is automatically redirected to another (fake) website even if he/she types in the correct URL for the official website. The criminal is then able to use any data the user enters – usually passwords and PINs.
3	**Phishing**	Attempts to con or trick the user into giving out personal, confidential details such as PIN numbers and passwords, usually by posing as a legitimate organisation, and usually via email.
3	**Quarantine (virus)**	Placing a virus in an area of the disk where it cannot infect the computer.
3	**Ransomware**	Malware that encrypts data (making it unavailable) until you pay the hacker a ransom fee.
3	**RSI**	Repetitive strain injury – name given to injuries resulting from fast, repetitive actions. Frequent text messaging is one example of where excessive use can lead to RSI.
3	**Smart home**	Home in which virtual assistant software is coupled to 'pods' that link to all the electronically controlled devices in the home.
3	**SMiShing**	When a phishing attack is done via an SMS on a smartphone. SMiShing is short for SMS phishing.
3	**Social engineering**	The use of deception to manipulate or 'con' someone into giving out confidential information or into giving criminals access to their computer or premises. This can be used to impersonate them, to install malware, or for other fraudulent purposes.
3	**Software piracy**	The illegal copying and distribution of software and CDs / DVDs.
3	**Spyware**	Any technique or software that tries to monitor and track the way you use your computer, and then to report this information to a third party.
3	**Telecommuting**	Workers communicate with one another and their employers and customers electronically, instead of travelling to a traditional office. They 'commute' to work simply by connecting to the network or internet.
3	**Trojan**	A destructive program disguised as a useful application. The program relies on you to activate it.
3	**Virtual Reality (VR)**	A technology that combines multiple inputs and outputs, so that the computer creates a whole new world for you to experience.
4	**Closed questions**	Questions that can be answered directly with facts. These questions often start with words such as What? When? Where? Who? How many? etc.
4	**Open-ended questions**	Questions that cannot be answered directly with facts and require some form of exploring, brainstorming or judgment. These questions often start with words such as Why? How? What if? etc.
4	**Sample group**	The group of people chosen to take part in a survey, whose responses are used to reflect the opinions and responses of the bigger target group. The sample group should be fairly representative of the target group.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
4	**Target audience**	The group you are trying to inform or report to. This needs to be considered in order to know at which level information should be 'pitched'.
4	**Target group**	The subset of people whose information you are trying to analyse in a survey or questionnaire. A sample group of the target group is usually chosen to administer the survey to.
5	**Absolute cell reference (*Excel*)**	A cell reference that will not change when the function or formula is copied. To make a cell reference absolute, a dollar sign ($) is inserted before the column letter and/or row number.
5	**Append (*Access*)**	Add records to an existing table in a database.
5	**Attribute (HTML)**	A name and value combination that defines a property of an element. Some elements have multiple attributes, e.g. the font size and colour of text.
5	**Bibliography**	A list of cited sources found at the end of a document and formatted according to a chosen style, e.g. APA or Chicago.
5	**Bookmark (HTML)**	A position on a web page that can be marked and stored with a specific name using HTML code. An anchor tag together with the href attribute is then used to create a link to the bookmark.
5	**Bookmark (*Word*)**	Used to mark places or specific sections of text in a document, enabling you to navigate to them quickly and easily.
5	**Caption (*Word*)**	A numbered description added to a graphic object (such as a diagram or photo) or a table.
5	**Chart Area (*Excel*)**	Includes both the Plot Area and the 'outside' part of a chart where the titles are located.
5	**Citation (*Word*)**	Reference to the source used in a specific instance and found in the text immediately after the piece of information being referred to.
5	**Column break (*Word*)**	Used if you want to shift text to the top of the next column.
5	**Combo Box (*Access*)**	A list of values from which a user can choose a value. Only one value is visible at a time, the others will appear only when the user clicks on the arrow. A Lookup Wizard is used to create the list of values.
5	**Combo chart (*Excel*)**	If a chart has more than one data series, a different chart type can be used for each series.
5	**Constant (*Excel*)**	An entry which has a specific fixed value, e.g. 3.5.
5	**Crop (*Word*)**	To remove parts of a picture that you do not need. You can also customize it, for example to fit a specific shape.
5	**Cross-reference (*Word*)**	Used to refer to related information elsewhere in the same document. One can choose what information to display about the item referred to. A hyperlink to this item is created by default.
5	**CSV file**	Comma Separated Values file – a text file which uses commas to separate the values in each line. Commonly used to import and export data between programs.
5	**Data labels (*Excel*)**	The values of the data points on a chart.
5	**Data series (*Excel*)**	A column or row of numbers in a spreadsheet that is depicted in a chart.
5	**Data validation**	The application of any technique which can prevent invalid data during input of data.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
5	**Date picker (*Access*)**	Control in *Access* that enables one to select a specific date by clicking on an on-screen calendar.
5	**Default value (*Access*)**	A value which is automatically allocated to a field in a new record.
5	**Delimiter**	A character such as a comma, space or tab, used to separate each piece of data (each field) in a line in a CSV file.
5	**Drop Cap (*Word*)**	An enlarged first letter or word of a paragraph, which drops into the line or lines of text below.
5	**En dash (*Word*)**	A dash that is slightly longer than a hyphen and used mostly with number intervals and for parentheses.
5	**Endnote (*Word*)**	Similar in function to a footnote, but different in that it appears at the end of a section, or at the end of the document.
5	**Exporting**	Saving data in a format that can be read by a different version of the same application or even a totally different application.
5	**Field (*Access*)**	A single fact or the smallest unit of data in a database.
5	**Filter (*Access*)**	A criterion or rule that you set for a field to display only those records that comply with the criterion.
5	**Filter (*Excel*)**	Feature used to display only certain rows of data in a worksheet.
5	**Footnote (*Word*)**	Additional information placed at the bottom of the page in a document, and linked by a number or symbol to the relevant text in the body of the page.
5	**Gap width (*Excel*)**	The distance between the columns or bars in a chart, expressed as a percentage of the width of the columns or bars.
5	**Gridlines (*Excel* chart)**	Lines in the plot area of a chart, which make it easier to estimate visually the values of the data points.
5	**Gridlines (*Excel* worksheet)**	Set of lines forming a rectangular grid and distinguishing the individual cells in a worksheet.
5	**Hard space (*Word*)**	A space where word wrapping cannot occur. The characters / words on either side of it will remain together on a line.
5	**Header / Footer**	An area within the top and bottom margins of a page, which can contain information that appears on each page of the document or section, such as page numbers, a company logo, or the file name.
5	**HTML**	HyperText Markup Language – one of the languages in which web pages are written. It is used to structure and present content on the WWW, including text, graphics, audio and video.
5	**Importing**	Opening or 'reading' data created in a different version of the same application, or even a totally different application.
5	**Input Mask (*Access*)**	A field property which can be set for a specific field in Design View. It is a code made up of a combination of letters, digits and symbols, and is used to enforce the entering of data in a specific format.
5	**Label (*Access*)**	A control containing text, mainly used for headings and captions.
5	**Legend (*Excel*)**	The 'key' which describes (gives the names of) the different data series in the chart, by depicting the fill colours or the patterns used.
5	**List Box (*Access*)**	A list of values from which a user can select a value but not add an additional one.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
5	**Markers (*Excel*)**	Small marks (e.g. dots or crosses) used to indicate the actual data points on a line chart.
5	**Non-breaking hyphen (*Word*)**	Used to force the words or characters on both sides of the hyphen to remain on the same line. (<Shift><Ctrl><Hyphen>)
5	**OLE Object (*Access*)**	A data type that can contain graphics, sound and video in addition to other data types.
5	**Page Break**	Starts text on a new page, without creating a new section.
5	**Plot Area (*Excel*)**	The 'middle' part of a chart where the data – the bars/columns/line – is plotted.
5	**Primary key (*Access*)**	A field that identifies each record with a unique value.
5	**Record (Access)**	A group of related fields that contains the particulars of a specific entity.
5	**Relative cell reference (*Excel*)**	When a formula or function is copied from one cell to another, the cell reference is automatically adjusted relative to the original cell.
5	**Section (*Word*)**	A part of a document in which the page formatting can differ from the rest of the document. Sections are thus used to vary the page layout on one or more pages of the same document.
5	**Section Break (*Word*)**	Separates a document or page into sections, and indicates the end of one section / start of the next section. Distinguishes sections from one another, and allows different sections to be formatted differently.
5	**Stack and scale (*Excel*)**	Where a data series in a chart is filled with pictures, and each picture is used to represent a certain number of units.
5	**Stacked chart (*Excel*)**	A type of chart where data series are placed one on top of the other – useful for comparing main categories (grand totals) and sub-categories in the same chart.
5	**String (text data)**	Combinations of characters (letters, digits and symbols like @) in text data. Examples are names and surnames, as well as strings of digits such as cellphone numbers and postal codes.
5	**Style (*Word*)**	A combination of formatting attributes such as font size and type, and paragraph spacing, saved as a collection under one name.
5	**Table of contents (*Word*)**	Automatically created list of headings or chapters and the pages on which they start, placed at the beginning of a document.
5	**Template**	A blueprint or framework for a specific type of document, with a suitable layout. It is used by filling in only the missing information.
5	**Track Changes (*Word*)**	A feature of a word processor that can be used to track or mark all the changes made to a document.
5	**Trendline (*Excel*)**	A straight or curved type of 'best fit' line in a chart, that shows the general trend or direction of the values of a data series – usually over time.
5	**Valid data**	Data where the values are acceptable in terms of permissible values, the limits within which it occurs or the format in which it is entered.
5	**Validation Rule (*Access*)**	The condition(s) that the data in a specific field must meet to be accepted as valid data.
5	**Validation Text (*Access*)**	The message that must be displayed if the data entered does not meet the condition(s) in the Validation Rule.

Topic	Term	Description / Definition
5	**Watermark (*Word*)**	Text or a graphic which appears very lightly as a background on all the pages in a document.
5	**Widow/Orphan (*Word*)**	A single 'dangling' line at the top or bottom of a page of a paragraph that splits over a page.