



# PHF ELITE SCHOOLS

EDUCATION SKILLS FOR ALL

## Making Learning Easier

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### **What is a computer?**

A computer is an electronic device that accepts user inputs commonly known as data, process them under special programs, stores it and produces information as an output to the user.

The computer does the following for you.

- accepts information (input)
- changes the information (process)
- produces new information for you (output), and
- stores the new information (storage)

The computer completes 4 basic functions that make up the information processing cycle.

- Input - data that you put into the computer
- Process - how your data changes
- Output – data that you can take off of your computer
- Storage – where data is stored

The way that the computer processes information is kind of like the way your own brain works.

- Input = what you take in through your eyes, ears, mouth & nose
- Processing = your brain
- Output = your verbal and written reactions

- Storage = what you save and where and what you throw away

**Why should you use a computer?**

- What types of things can you do on the computer?
- What kind of things do you want to do on a computer?

Can you do these things without a computer? You probably can! But computers can help you! They give you:

- Speed: Computers can complete tasks much faster than we can.
- Accuracy: Computers do not make mistakes unless you make them first by giving bad information
- Reliability: Computers will not change their minds by how they feel about you
- Memory: Computers can work with huge amounts of information much faster than we can.

## 5 Basic Parts of the Computer

1. Input: Things we use to get information into the computer.

List as many as you can think of. ....

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2. Output: Things we use to see the results of what we do with information we work with.

List as many as you can think of. ....

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List as many devices as you can think of that are both input and output.

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3. Central Processing Unit (CPU):

- The CPU processes your instructions. It is the “traffic cop” that tells the computer what to do. It also works with numbers.

4. Memory: RAM (Random Access Memory) and ROM (Read Only Memory)

□ RAM: This is the short term memory. The computer holds information it needs while it is working. When the computer turns off, the information in RAM disappears.

- ROM: These are instructions that are a permanent part of the computer. These instructions are built on pieces of the computer called chips. These are used to start up the computer, keep time, and do other things that never change.

5. Storage: This is where the computer keeps your information. There are many types of storage:

- Hard Drive: The hard drive is inside the actual computer.
- CD/DVD: You can read information from CD's and DVD's. On some computers you can also write information on CD's and DVD's.
- USB drive: This is a small object that many people use to store data. USB drives are easy to take with you from one place to another. People call USB drives other names:
  - Thumb drive
  - Jump drive
  - Flash drive
- The Cloud: The cloud is another word for the Internet. There are many free ways to store information in the cloud. Some examples are Google Drive, Dropbox, and OneDrive.

What are advantages and disadvantages of different types of computer storage?  
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