

Definitions

- What's an "Operating System"?

The software that tells the electronic hardware in the computer how to operate when you want something done. Typical Operating Systems in use today are: XP, Vista and Windows 7.

- What does Analog mean?

A "Continuous" action versus a Digital step. Example: An "Old Fashioned" clock versus a Digital clock.

- What does Digital mean?

A Number, like the number of fingers you have – they are referred to as your digits. The Digits 0 and 1 are used in computers. Some people still use they fingers to count (and Toes too if they have to go above 10 :-)

- What does VCR stand for?

Video Cassette Recorder. The now almost obsolete method of recording videos – replaced by CDs and DVDs.

- What does DVR stand for?

Digital Video Recorder. It's a Hard Drive used as a VCR.

- What does HDMI stand for?

High Definition Multimedia Interface. It the highest quality connection between devices and carries both the Video and the Audio in one cable.

- What does S-Video mean?

Super Video. A higher quality video signal than the standard composite video you get using the cable with the yellow connectors for video.

- What does Composite mean?

All aspects of the video signal are combined in one cable.

- What does a Component signal mean?

The video signal is divided into three parts and required three separate cables just for the video. This is a higher quality signal than S-Video and Composite video signals.

- What does AV stand for?

Audio Video. It means you have both sound and picture signals at the same time. An AV connection from your CD player or old VCR uses the Yellow/Red/Black or White cable combination. (Yellow is for Video, Red for the Right Audio Channel and the Black or White is the Left channel).

- What is Software?

A Very Long list of the Numbers 1 and 0 (example: 100110010000111110) that are sent, in groups, to the computer from an Input device to tell the computer what to do.

- What is Hardware?

Any electronic equipment, but usually refers to the actual electronic components used inside the computer, like Integrated Circuits (ICs) etc.

- What is an Integrated Circuit (IC)?

An electronic device that incorporates a combination of electronic components like transistors and resistors in one package. It's part of the evolution from Vacuum Tubes, you used to have in radios and televisions, to Transistors and then to Integrated Circuits. All electronic devices use ICs of thousands of different types to perform various functions

- What is Firmware?

A combo of Software and Hardware. Software that is in an Integrated Circuit called a ROM that is an integral part of the computer.

- What is Shareware?

Software that is "Free" for you to use to see if you like it. If you use it you are expected to pay for it. Some Shareware authors let you use it on the Honor System and Hope you pay for it, that is sometimes called Honorware, but most Shareware gives you a limited Time to use it or a limited Amount of times to use it before it becomes disabled – if you don't pay for it.

- What is Freeware?

Just what the name implies – Software that is provided free for your use. The Author is a good person who enjoys both writing Software and likes to help people. Some Freeware and Shareware is not too good, the authors are usually not professional and that type Software may not work properly on your computer.

- What does Ware mean?

Any product of a similar type – like Dinnerware, Silverware etc. All the "Wares" we discuss are made up of the 1 and 0 code.

- What is Malware?

Malicious Software. Programs that cause damage to your computer. They can be Virus type programs or Spyware or Trojan Horse programs.

- What is a Trojan Horse program?

A message that comes into your computer that Looks like it could be helpful or from a well known source or institution but Really is from a person or company that wants to cause harm to your computer or somehow take your money. This is sometimes called Rogue Software.

- What is Spyware?

Malicious software that is slipped into your computer when you are on the Internet. This software runs in the background, you don't know it is there, and generally sends out the information, as you type, to people who use it to try to sell you something or to steal your identity.

- What is a Computer Virus?

Malicious software that usually causes Harm to your computer. It can come into your computer via a Trojan Horse program or an Attachment in an e-mail.

- How do I get rid of Malicious Software?

There are a variety of programs available for the various different types of Malware - too many to discuss in this class. Bring this up at a Computer Club meeting.

- What does Code mean"

The actual Numbers that make up the Software. It's call ASCII code (American Standard Code for Information Interchange). A letter, number or symbol is changed to a combination of eight 1s and 0s like: 10110110. A Software Programmer types a letter, number or symbol - like We know them, and the computer converts them to a language It understands – Binary 1s and 0s. The eight Bit combination is called a Byte.

- What is "Source Code"?

The list of instructions written in a standard programming language used to construct a computer program. This code is written in a "Human Understood Language" and must be Compiled or Assembled into Code for a computer to be able to run it.

- What does "Compiled or Assembled" mean?

The Source Code is in the form of Numbers, Letters, and Symbols for the Programmer to understand and when this code is "Compiled or Assembled" it is converted to Binary Ones (1) and Zeros (0) that the computer's CPU (Central Processing Unit) understands.

- What does Binary mean?

Two. Like Bi-Weekly, every two weeks, Bi-Plane, two wings and Bicycle, two wheels. The Binary numbers in computers are "1s" and "0s" (Ones and Zeros) used to represent On = 1 and Off = 0. You see more and more the On/Off switches on appliances showing a 1 and 0 to indicate On and Off.

- What is a Byte?

A Byte is eight Bits of data. It's the same as ONE Character such as an "A" or a "B" etc. So, since a Gigabyte (Gb) is a Billion Bytes, it means it is a Billion Characters (Letters, Numbers, or Symbols).

They called it a Byte as a play on words since it's made up of Bits.

- What is a Bit?

A Bit (Stands for **B**inary **D**igit) is an electronic switch that is either On or Off. Being On or Off is shown in "Computer Talk" as On = 1 and Off = 0.

So a Bit is a 1 or a 0.

A combination of Bits are used to make up each code used to send the signal from an Input device (Keyboard for example) to the computer's CPU. The CPU then decodes the Bit combination and tells the Output device (Screen or Printer for example) what to do.

- What does DOS mean?

Disk Operation System. When PCs are first turned on they have to have a way to get started. Floppy drives were connected to the PC and a ROM was built into the PC that told the Floppy Drive to run and load the Operating System from a Floppy Disk into the RAM. That ROM was the DOS. As time went on the Operating System itself was called DOS. There is still a ROM to start up the computer (BIOS ROM), but now the Operating System is loaded into the RAM from the Hard Drive.

- What does "Bluetooth" mean?

You've eaten too many Blueberries. :-) There is also an electronic definition: A short range communication system, useful within about 30 feet. It is used to communicate between cell phones and earpieces, between keyboards and the mouse to computers – that sort of usage. There is no relationship between the Name "Bluetooth" and the Usage.

- What is Skype?

A free program that allows two people to both see and hear each other using a Webcam on the Internet. Both parties must have Skype running on their computer to be able to call each other. Skype can also be used to call anyone's telephone from your computer, for a fee, using the Internet. The other person cannot call your Skype program from their telephone.

- What is a "Webcam"?

A little camera and microphone combination that connects to a USB port. It allows you and someone else to use Skype or other communications programs to see and hear each other.

- What does "Sleep" mean?

Instead of turning off the computer and losing the data in the RAM, selecting Sleep will hold the data in the RAM but stop all operation and turn off the Monitor to conserve power. The computer will "Awaken" fast from Sleep with the touch of a key or Mouse movement.

- What does "Hibernate" mean?

Instead of turning off the computer, selecting Hibernate will move the data from the RAM into a special place on the Hard Drive, stop all operations and turn off the Monitor. When you "Awaken" the computer from Hibernation, it will take a little longer to obtain the data from the Hard Drive and put it back into the RAM than it would if the computer was only "Sleeping". You have a better chance of not losing the data with Hibernate versus Sleep (if there was a power glitch while the computer was asleep).

- What is the Button for on the right end of the Taskbar on Windows 7?

If you Hover over it, it removes the windows from the Desktop and lets you see under them. If you Click on it it will clear the widows away and let you use the Desktop. Click it again and your windows will all be returned.

- What does Scroll mean?

If a Window is not large enough to show all the data included in it, a Bar, called a Scroll Bar, will appear on the Right and/or Bottom of the Window. There are Arrows at the Top and Bottom and Left and Right of those Scroll Bars. Between these Arrows is a Solid Colored Rectangle. To Scroll means to Drag this Rectangle Up and Down or Left and Right to see all the data in the window, or you can Click on the Up and Down arrows to move the data just a little at a time.

- What does ".jpg" stand for?

It stands for: Joint Photographic Experts Group. Sometimes shown as .jpeg. It's just one of the many Picture types. It's the most common. Some others are .gif, .bmp, .png.

- What is the "Clipboard"?

A section in the computer's RAM that acts like an old fashioned clipboard. It holds one "piece of paper" at a time. If you put another "piece of paper", you 'release the clip' and the first one drops out. You can "Put text or a picture on the Clipboard" and then "Paste" it in another program on another document or another place in the same document.

- How do you put something in the "Clipboard"?

Select the data you want to put on the Clipboard, Press and Hold the Ctrl key and press the "C" key.

- What does it mean to "Clean my PC"?

To remove all unnecessary files.

Click Start, Click All Programs, Click Accessories, Click System Tools, Click Disk Cleanup.

Your "C" Drive should be shown. Click OK.

Wait until a list is shown – this may take a while.

Click on Every Little Box on the left side. Click OK. Click Delete Files.

- What does "Disk Defrag" mean?

When a file is stored on your Hard Drive, it puts the information wherever it can find unused space. It rarely finds enough space in one continuous path to write (record) the entire file. So it puts bits and pieces of the file hither and yon through the Hard Drive. It keeps track of where it started by putting that first location in the Directory. Then when it runs out of room in one place it says where it going to put the next bit of information etc. As time goes on finding all these bits and pieces takes time so it takes longer and longer to put your information On the Hard Drive and get it From the Hard Drive.

When you run the Defragmentation operation, the Hard Drive sorts all those bits out and puts ALL the files in Order on the Hard Drive. This takes a Long time, so you should run the Defrag operation at night. Here's how to start it:

Click Start, Click All Programs, Click Accessories. Click System Tools, Click Disk Defragmenter.

Click your "C" Drive. Click Defragment disk.

Note: You can Schedule the Defragmentation to be done automatically. Instead of Clicking on Defragment disk, Click on the Configure schedule button and set up a Schedule that is to your liking.

- What is a Disk Directory?

Your Hard Disk is divided into 10 "Pie Shaped" sections. It also has many disks with hundreds of concentric magnetic rings on both sides of each of the disks. Each little segment of each magnetic ring that is within each "Piece of Pie" has an address. The Directory keeps this list of addresses. When you Save data to the Hard Disk, the Directory looks down its list to see where there is an empty segment and makes a note in the Directory of the name of the File you are trying to Save and what segment it is going to save the First part of your file. If there is not enough room in that first segment, the Directory writes a note at the end of the segment saying what segment it is going to put the next part of the file etc