

Vocabulary

While we won't have a "vocabulary test" over the following terms, I will operate under the assumption you know these terms and can use them in a basic computer conversation.

Align Left, Align Right, Center, Justify	Terms that describe the paragraph format, or position of text, on a page. Align left means the text lines up along a straight line at the edge, or margin, of the page, with the right-side edge uneven. This page is left aligned. Align right aligns the edge of the text along the right margin, and leaves the left side uneven. Center positions the text evenly on both sides of an imaginary line down the middle of the page. Justify spreads the text from one margin to the other and makes both edges even. Try typing several lines of text and applying the different paragraph formats to the text see what happens. The paragraph format can be changed by highlighting the paragraph you want to change, and clicking on one of the formatting buttons in the toolbar.
Application	Another word for program. See below
Button	An on-screen user interface element that simulates the action of a push button. By clicking the button, a user initiates a command or action.
CD-ROM disk	A high capacity read-only optical disk that can store up to 680 MB of data. An acronym for <u>C</u> ompact <u>D</u> isc- <u>R</u> ead- <u>O</u> nly <u>M</u> emory.
CD-ROM drive	A storage device that uses laser technology to read data from a CD-ROM.
Central processing unit (CPU)	The main processing unit in a computer, consisting of circuitry that executes instructions to process data.
Check box	An on-screen box that allows the user to select options clicking the box.
Click	This action is performed when you place your pointer on an icon, and press the button on the left side of the mouse, then release the button without moving the pointer.
Close	By choosing this option from the File menu, it removes the document from the computer screen. If you have not saved changes to your document before closing it, the program will ask you if you would like to do so.
Computer platform	A hardware and software configuration shared by a group of computers that use the same software and peripheral devices.
Compatible platforms	Computer brands or models that operate in essentially the same way, use the same software, and accept the same peripheral devices.
Computer	A device that accepts input, processes data, stores data, and produces output.
Computer network	A collection of computers and related devices, connected in a way that allows them to share data, hardware, and software.
Computer program	A set of detailed, step-by-step instructions that tells a computer how to solve a problem or carry out a task.
Copy, Cut, Paste	Text can be moved or copied from one document to another, or from one place in a document to another place, by copying or cutting it, and then pasting it. To copy and paste text, put your mouse pointer next to the letter on the leftmost side of the text you want to copy. click and drag the mouse pointer down to the rightmost point in the text you want to copy. The text area you have chosen will then become black, or highlighted. Choosing Copy from the Edit menu means the highlighted text will be copied, and the original text will stay where it was. When you put your cursor at a new position, and choose Paste from the Edit menu, the text which you copied appears on the screen. The same actions are performed when text is cut and pasted, but the original text is removed from the computer screen. To cut and paste text, highlight the text in the same way as when copying and pasting, but choose Cut from the Edit menu instead of Copy.

Cursor	A symbol, usually an underline, that marks the user's place on the screen and shows where typing will appear.
Cursor	The blinking vertical line on the computer screen from which letters appear when you type. The cursor can be moved to different parts of your document by clicking the mouse pointer on text on the screen.
Data	In the context of computing and data management, data refers to the symbols that a computer uses to represent facts and ideas.
Device driver	The software that provides the computer with the means to control a peripheral device.
Dialog box	An on-screen window that provides options associated with a command.
Disk drive	A computer storage device that records and retrieves data on disks. Drive types include floppy, Zip, and hard disk drives.
Document	A file created by a computer program. A document is usually a file that looks like a page of paper when opened, or activated, by a computer program.
Double-click	This action is performed by clicking the mouse button two times in rapid succession. Some mouse actions, such as starting a program by clicking on its icon, may require a double-click.
Downwardly compatible	The ability of an operating system to run application software designed for earlier versions of the operating system, but not those designed for later versions.
Drag	This action is performed when you click on an icon or menu, then move the mouse without releasing the button.
Drop-down list	A list of options that is displayed when the user clicks an arrow button.
DVD	An optical storage medium similar in appearance and technology to a CD-ROM but with higher storage capacity. The acronym stands for "digital video disc" or "digital versatile disc."
DVD drive (Digital Video Disc)	An optical storage device that reads data from CD-ROM and DVD disks.
Extension	When you save a document, the computer automatically gives a file name an extension, which is a period followed by three letters. The program Microsoft Word gives the file name the extension .doc. This extension helps the computer identify the program that created the document.
File	A unit of computer information. A file can be a document (see below) or part of a computer program (see below).
Floppy disk	A removable magnetic storage medium, typically 3.5" in size with a capacity of 1.44 MB.
Floppy disk drive	A storage device that writes data on, and reads data from, floppy disks.
Folder	In order to organize documents and other files, "folders" are used in which to place your documents, in the same way that paper folders are used to hold paper documents. These folders can have names up to eight letters long in Windows 3.1, or several words long in Windows 95. To open a folder when saving or opening a document, double-click on the folder's icon. Several folders may be located within one folder.
Font	The letters that make up a computer document can be given a different appearance by choosing different fonts, or letters. Fonts come in different shapes and sizes, and can be given different styles, such as bold, italics, and underlining.
Function key	The keys numbered F1 through F12, located at the top of the computer keyboard, that activate program-specific commands.
Graphical user interface (GUI)	A type of user interface that features on-screen objects such as menus and icons, manipulated by a mouse. Abbreviated GUI (pronounced "gooey").

Hard disk drive	A computer storage device that contains a large-capacity "hard disk" sealed inside the drive case. A hard disk is not the same as a 3.5" removable disk that has a rigid plastic case.
Hardware	Electronic and mechanical devices used for input, output, processing, and storing data.
Icon	A graphical representation of an object such as a disk, printer, or program.
Input	As a noun, "input" means the information that is conveyed to a computer. As a verb, "input" means to enter data into a computer.
Insertion point	A flashing vertical bar that appears on the screen, indicating where the user can begin entering text.
Keyboard	An arrangement of letter, number, and special function keys that acts as the primary input device to a computer.
Keyboard shortcut	A combination of keys, such as Ctrl+C, that allows the user to activate a program function without clicking a series of menu options.
Macintosh computer (Mac)	A microcomputer platform manufactured primarily by Apple Computer Inc. and based on a proprietary architecture. See PC.
Memory	The computer circuitry that holds data waiting to be processed.
Menu	At the top of a the computer screen when a program is open is a list of words (File, Edit, etc.). A list of choices, or menu, appears when you click on one of these words with your mouse pointer. To choose an action from the menu, drag the pointer down to the choice you want. When you reach the choice that you want, release the mouse button, and that choice is activated.
Monitor	A display device that forms an image by converting electrical signals from the computer into points of colored light on the screen.
Mouse	An input device that allows the user to manipulate objects on the screen by moving the mouse on the surface of a desk.
Operating System	The program on a computer that allows you to manage and organize computer documents and to run programs. Windows is the name of a popular operating system. There are now several well-known versions of Windows; the most common are Windows98, Windows2000, and Windows XP.
Option button	An on-screen control that allows a user to select one of two or more options in a dialog box. Also referred to as radio buttons.
Output	The results produced by a computer (for example, reports, graphs, and music).
Password	A special set of symbols used to restrict access to a user's computer or network.
PC	1) A microcomputer that uses the Windows software and contains an Intel-compatible micro-processor. 2) A personal computer. See Macintosh computer.
Peripheral devices	Components and equipment that expand a computer's input, output, and storage capabilities, e.g., a printer or scanner.
Personal digital assistant (PDA)	A computer that is smaller and more portable than a notebook computer (also called a palm-top computer).
Pointer	A symbol on the computer screen, usually shaped like an arrow, whose movement corresponds to the movement of the mouse.
Program	Allows you do perform tasks on a computer. To use document files, a program opens them. Microsoft Word is the name of a popular program for creating documents.
Prompt	A message displayed on the computer screen that asks for input from the user.

Right-click	In Windows, some mouse functions are performed by clicking with the button on the right side of the mouse.
Save	After a document is created, a copy of it can be placed on a floppy disk or on the hard drive by saving the document. You save a document by choosing Save from the File menu and giving the document a file name. The computer creates an electronic version of the document and places it on the drive that you specify (either the hard drive [c:] or a floppy disk [a:]). You can open the document later to view, print or make changes to it.
Save As	When you have made some changes to a document and want to save the original document without the new changes and the new document with the changes, choose Save As... from the File menu when saving your document. Then give the new document a name different from that of the original document.
Software	The instructions that set up a computer to do a task, indicate how to interact with a user, and specify how to process data.
Storage media Storage medium	The physical material used to computer data, such as a floppy disk, a hard disk, or a CD-ROM.
Submenu	An additional menu of choices that appears when a menu option is selected.
Toggle key	A key such as the Caps Lock key that switches a device back and forth between two modes.
Toolbar	At the top of a program are groups of pictures which look like buttons. The group of buttons collectively is called the toolbar. These buttons perform different actions when you click on them.
User ID	A combination of letters and numbers that serves as a user's "call sign" or identification. Also referred to as a user name.
Web browser software	Computer software, such as Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer, that allows users to view Web pages and follow links to jump from one document to the next.
Window	A rectangular representation of a work area in a graphical user interface.
Wizard	A sequence of dialog boxes that direct the user through multi-step software tasks, such as creating a graph.