

Dictionary of Computer Terms and Acronyms

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Here you will find definitions of the computer terms and acronyms contained within my articles. This document is updated periodically as necessary.

A is for Acronym

Adware Malicious software which places advertisements, usually as pop-ups, on your computer desktop and internet browser windows, often pertaining to the content found on your computer or the keywords typed in documents and internet browser.

B is for Boot

Backup The act of duplicating data to an alternative medium for safe-keeping storage. Typically recorded to magnetic tape, external hard drive, or optical media.

Boot The initiation of a computer either by power-on or reset. Turning on a computer (when powered off) is referred to as a Cold Boot, while resetting the system during an already state is called a Warm Boot.

C is for Cathode

Cold Boot The process of powering on a computer from an off state.

CRT Acronym for Cathode Ray Tube. Much like a television, the CRT is a monitor that uses a vacuum tube containing electron guns that when transmitting a beam to the phosphors at the front of the tube cause them to illuminate. Creating the image or text that is seen by the computer's user.

D is for Diskette

Dialer Malicious software that uses the computer's modem to redirect internet traffic or connect to pay services without the computer operator's consent – typically distributed by Trojans.

Downloader Malicious software that is often part of internet site scripts or startup routines, these are used to download virus and other malicious content without detection.

E is for Error

F is for Floppy

G is for Graphics

H is for Hardware

Hard Drive Computer component containing one or more rigid disks coated with a high resolution magnetic material that is used to store data. Modern disks spin at very high rates of speed and contain more than 100,000 times the data as a floppy diskette.

Hibernation Mode Energy conservation feature of many modern computers, where the system memory is saved to the hard disk and the system is powered down, similar to a normal shut down. Upon power

resumption, the memory contents are reloaded from the hard drive and the system resumes as the previous state.

I is for Ink

Impact Printer

A printing device where the print head has direct contact with the paper and ink-transfer medium (ribbon). These are usually dot-matrix, but may also be daisy wheel or ball-style print heads.

Inkjet Printer

Printing device that sprays ink directly onto paper to form the text and graphics.

J is for Jumper

K is for Keyboard

Keylogger

Malicious software that intercepts input from the keyboard and records it to a local file or alternate location with the intention of providing to its author or other party.

L is for Laptop

Laser Printer

Printing device that uses a laser to create an electrostatic charge on a photosensitive drum, attracting the toner powder. Paper is rolled against the drum, transferring the toner image to the paper. As the paper passes through a thermal unit, heat bonds the toner to the paper. This process is similar to the technology used by photocopiers.

M is for Memory

Malicious Software

Software that is designed to create an undesirable operation within a computer, including pop-ups, data damage, and information theft.

MALWARE

Abbreviation for Malicious Software.

N is for Network

O is for Oblique

P is for Printer

Q is for Query

R is for RAID

Rootkit

Malicious software that infects the disk boot sector or core operating system files. These are the most difficult to remove and often critically damage the computer's operating system.

S is for Storage

- Spyware** Malicious software that tracks your internet and computer use with the intention of reporting information back to its author or other party, possibly including programs, keywords, account numbers and passwords.
- Standby Mode** Energy conserving feature of many modern computers, where the hard drives and monitor are automatically powered off and system voltage is reduced to a minimum level during periods of not being used.
- Surge Suppressor** An electronic device, usually containing multiple outlets, that filters incoming electricity to prevent power spikes from reaching components plugged into the device outlets.

T is for Toolbar

- Trojan** Malicious software that poses as a harmless or useful program, but installs other malicious software; commonly creating a backdoor into a system.

U is for Universal

- Uninterruptible Power Supply** Automatic battery backup which supplies electricity in the event of a power failure. Some UPS units feature voltage regulation, providing consistent power during electrical drops and surges.
- UPS** Acronym for Uninterruptible Power Supply.

V is for Video

- Virus** Malicious software which is typically destructive, intending to disable your computer or programs. Virus are sometimes tied to other malware, including spyware. Many virus automatically spread via e-mail or a network.

W is for Wireless

- Worm** Malicious software that is self propagating, spreading from computer to computer across networks, particularly in unsecured peer-to-peer environments.

X is for Xmodem

Y is for Yellow

Z is for Zip

The definitions provided within this document are based on my experience and understanding of the term or acronym. There are instances where an alternate meaning may exist, however not necessarily relate to my use of the term or acronym within my technology articles. In the case that you have found an error, please write to me for correction.