
Microsoft Office
Class – Inside Your Computer
By Adam J. Richter M.S.

Whether you're buying a new computer, upgrading an old one, or if you just want to understand what's in your computer...

Desktops vs. Laptops

Desktops are the typical home computer tower that sits on the floor and connects to a keyboard, mouse and monitor.

Laptops are a mobile computer with a built in screen, keyboard, mouse, speakers and battery.

What's inside your desktop computer: Case, Motherboard, Processor, Memory (RAM), CD Drive, Hard Drive, Floppy Drive (this is now optional), Expansion (PCI) cards

The Case is the outer shell that has all of the computer parts in it. The big square box in the upper back of the computer is the Power Supply. You might notice that some cases are more attractive than others. HP, Dell, Compaq and Gateway all make different cases. You can even order custom cases that have lights and other fancy things that you really do not need.



Motherboard, the motherboard is the main chip in the computer. Everything connects to it. If the motherboard goes bad, the computer goes bad.

PCI Card slots are also known as expansion slots. You can add modems, sound cards, network cards, and other things to the PCI slots. This is one of the major advantages over laptop computers.

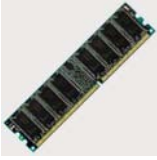
Processor is like the engine of the car, it determines the speed of your computer. The most popular processors are Intel and AMD.



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Memory or RAM works together with the processor to run your programs. The more memory you have the more jobs your processor can do at a time. The most common memory sizes right now are 256MB, 512MB, 1GB and higher...

The CD Drive allows you to play CD's. In newer computers you can have CD players, DVD players, CD Writers and DVD Writers.



Hard Drive, the hard drive is the storage in the computer. Every time you save a file or install a program it is saved on the hard drive. The hard drive is usually in GB (Gigabytes). The average size as of this article is about 80GB. 80GB to 120GB is fine for most picture and general uses.

Floppy Drives are used to read floppy disks. They are no longer included in desktop computer but can be purchased separately.



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