

Basic Tech Terms

Hardware – The physical parts of a computer and related devices. Internal hardware devices include:

- Motherboards
- Hard drives
- Solid State Drives
- Ram

External hardware devices include:

- Monitors
- Keyboards
- Mice
- Printers
- Scanners

Hard drive – The hardware that contains a disk and motor and stores the data on a device (a typical hard drive has anywhere from 8 GB to 500 GB)

Solid State Drive – The hardware that contains no disk or motor but uses integrated circuit assemblies as memory to store data (a typical SSD has less storage capacity and contains 128 GB to 256 GB). Runs much faster than a hard drive because it does not have any moving parts.

Megabyte (MB) – A unit of information that equals a million bytes

Example 1 – The average music file is 4 MB

Gigabyte (GB) – A unit of information that contains 1024 MB (1 GB = 1024 MB)

Example 1 – The average high definition movie is 1 GB

Example 2 – A gigabyte can equate to about 250 songs

Operating System (OS) – Software that communicates with the hardware and allows other programs to run. Every computer, smartphone, and tablet includes an operating system that provides basic functionality for the device

Example 1 – All Microsoft PC's and laptops run the operating system called Windows

Example 2 – All Mac computers and laptops run the operating system called OSX

Example 3 – All iPhones run the operating system called iOS

Example 4 – All other smartphones run the operating system called Android

Software – A general term that describes computer programs (also known as an application)

Example 1 – iTunes is basic music software

Example 2 – Your computer’s antivirus software

App (“application”) – (*SEE SOFTWARE*) usually referred to programs for smartphones and tablets

Widget – A component of an application with an interface that enables a user to perform a function or access a service with frequent updates. Some common widgets include:

- Weather guides
- Stock lists
- Flight trackers
- Calendars
- Google search box

Internet – A worldwide network that facilitates data transmission and exchange

Wi-Fi – A facility allowing computers, smartphones, tablets, or other devices to the Internet wirelessly

Mobile Hotspot – A portable device or smartphone feature that provides wireless Internet access (Wi-Fi) on many devices (your laptop, smartphone, tablet, mp3 player, portable gaming device, etc.)

Wireless Router – Provides access to the Internet wirelessly

Search engine – A program that allows the retrieval of data from the Internet

Example 1 – Google is the most popular search engine

Example – Yahoo and Bing are other popular search engines

Blog – A website or web page on which personal opinions, daily updates, or links to other sites are posted regularly

Example 1 – Huffington Post is one of the most popular news blogs

Example 2 – Business Insider is a popular business blog

Cloud storage – A virtual network where data is stored. Popular cloud storage sites include:

- iCloud
- Google Drive
- Dropbox

Social Media – Websites or applications used for social networking. Popular social media sites include:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Pinterest

Twitter – An online social networking site that enables users to send and read “tweets” which are text messages that are limited to 140 characters and contain information

Example 1 – San Diego Tech Teacher is on Twitter - @YourTechTeacher

Example 2 – Many celebrities are on twitter, the most followed ones are:

- Katy Perry
- Justin Beiber
- Barack Obama
- Taylor Swift
- Justin Timberlake

Bluetooth – A short-range wireless interconnection of cell phones, computers, and other electronic devices allowing digital information to be sent from one device to another

NFC (Near Field Communication) – Similar to Bluetooth, it allows similar devices to establish radio communication with each other by touching them together (or bringing them into proximity) in order to swap digital information

VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) – A means of phone communication via the Internet