



Glossary of Computing Terms

Novice or a computer expert, there will be times when you will come across a new computing word and have no idea what it means. We hope our Glossary of Computing Terms will help.

- **21CN** BT's new broadband setup which should enable faster connections when it is available locally
- **64 bit** computer architecture. Not possible to describe briefly. See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/64-bit>
- **802.11g**. The current popular standard for wireless (Wi-fi) computing. There is also an 802.11b, 802.11a and latterly an 802.11n or Pre-N. However, the N variety, though faster and with greater range (and penetration), is still awaiting approval.
- **ADSL**. Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line. Broadband internet connection (3-200 times faster). You need to be close to a digital telephone exchange, on cable or have a satellite dish. You can remain connected permanently. See also RADSL
- **ADSL2+** is the latest incarnation of ADSL. It doubles the frequency of signals over a phone line. It depends on the ISP installing its own equipment in telephone exchanges making speeds up to 24mbps theoretically attainable, depending on the quality of lines and being close to a digital exchange.
- **AGP**. Accelerated Graphics Port. A more rapid connection (slot on the motherboard) for the (AGP) card which drives a monitor. Usually brown.
- **ANTIVIRUS** program. Something that can spot a virus attached to an email or already on your computer and deal with it.
- **APPLICATION**. A program such as Word or Internet Explorer. Applications almost always end in EXE
- **ASP**. Application Service Provider. Computer companies are hoping to provide you with programs and data storage over the net for a rental, rather than buying them outright.
- **AVATAR**. A cartoon representation of someone in a chat room. Origin : A Hindu spirit in human form.
- **BACKUP**. Keeping copies or programs or work in a separate place in case of corruption of the first version. There are various methods. See Help, Backup in Windows. See Floppy disk, CDR, ZIP drive
- **BANDWIDTH**. A measure of the maximum amount of data that can be transferred over the Internet or phone system at any one time
- **BETA TESTING**. A program which is being tested, which is given out to users to find any problems. or as they say..."Foolproof software doesn't take into account the ingenuity of fools".
- **BIT**. Smallest unit of computer data. There are 8 bits to a byte (which is what usually makes a character, number or space)
- **BITMAP**. A graphic image which is made up of many tiny dots.
- **BLOG, BLOGGER**. A Weblog or person who writes a website about the boring things they do each day.

- **BLU-RAY** One of two new DVD standards using blue lasers. See also HD-DVD
- **BLUE SCREEN** 'of death'. (BSOD) The screen that comes up in Windows 95 and 98 when your computer can't cope with something. It suggests you press a key to continue. Called the 'Blue Screen of Death' because pressing a key doesn't help at all ! And the technical details shown are no help. Reboot.
- **BLUETOOTH** technology. Using radio transmission from your PC for controlling everything from printers to lights to the washing machine anywhere within a building. See also **WI-FI**.
- **BOOT** Start a PC from cold. Reboot : Restart
- **BOTNET** A group of PCs that have been commandeered by a Spammer or other evil doer and used by them without the knowledge of the owners to spread mayhem around the Internet. Yours, too, I suspect.
- **BROADBAND**. High bandwidth Internet connections such as Cable or ADSL for faster connections
- **BROWSER**. Program for browsing the Internet. e.g. Internet Explorer. Netscape Navigator
- **BSOD** Blue Screen Of Death (see above)
- **BYTE** A number of bits which make up a character, number or space on a hard, floppy disk or CD. 8 bits equal one byte, so a download at 56k bits per second is only around 7k characters a second. And dialup modems often achieve only 40k.
- **CAB file**. A compressed file. In Windows they contains all the files necessary to create the Windows Operating System
- **CABLE MODEM**. Cable companies such as NTL and Telewest can pipe fast Internet connections to you providing you have a special modem fitted to your PC.
- **CACHE** This is a general term meaning a section of memory..
- **CENTRINO**. Intel's name for its technology which gives notebook computers longer battery life and have built in Wi-Fi capabilities
- **CHAT**. Text messaging to others on line using messaging software such as MSN, Yahoo, AOL and others
- **CHAT ROOM**. An area on the Internet where people chat (usually written) to each other in 'real time'.
- **COOKIE**. A small text file which is downloaded to your computer without you knowing anything about it. Mainly they are used to trace your activities for marketing purposes. See C:\windows\cookies and C:\windows\temporary internet files. Can be deleted by using Windows Explorer or prevented by Internet Explorer security. The latter may prevent you from accessing certain sites.
- **CD/CDROM/CD-R/CDRW** Compact Disk Read Only Memory. Not really memory like RAM. They are the familiar disk on which programs arrive. They are Read Only because the tracks are 'burnt in and cannot be changed. The RW type can be rewritten to many times but cannot be read on another machine, so less useful for safe backup.
- **CHIP**. Silicon chip. The silicon base used to mount the millions of components that go to make up a computer processor.
- **CLIPART**. Ready made picture on disk
- **CODEC** : A method of COmpressing and DECompressing files such as video. Each compressed file type must have a suitable associated CODEC.
- **CONTROL PANEL**. An important set of icons which allow you to configure the basic functions of your computer.

- **CONTROL KEY** Marked Ctrl on the keyboard. Like Alt and Function keys its use can vary from program to program.
- **CSV**. Comma Separated Variable. A format used to export and import data (to/from databases, spreadsheets, e-mail address books etc) Each field is separated by a comma e.g. Name, address1, address2, Town, County
- **CUT or COPY & PASTE**. Most Windows programs allow you to cut or copy a **selected** item (text or picture) and paste it into another place or even another program. So you can copy a picture from one program and paste it into another. Use Ctrl with X, C and V for shortcuts
- **CYBERCAFE or INTERNET CAFE**. Cafes where you can get access to the Internet. They are all over the world and is a major method of communication for travelers
- **DAB** Radio. Digital Audio Broadcasting
- **DATABASE**. A list of items of data kept on a computer disk so it can be amended, searched or printed.
- **DDR** Double Data Rate memory. See also **SDRAM**
- **DECT**. Phone. Digitally Enhanced Cordless Telephone. Clearer sounding cordless phones
- **DESKTOP**. The main, first page in Windows
- **DIGITAL**. The method of storing or transmitting things as a series of numbers. Surprisingly these numbers never get past 1. So they are made up of Noughts (zeros) and Ones. The speed and accuracy with which these can be stored has enabled most information to be stored in this way - from Television, photography, all computing and - of course - the Internet.
- **DIMMS**. Dual Inline Memory Modules. Newer memory type. Have chips both sides of the memory module. See also SIMMS
- **DIRECTX** A free downloadable Windows program that ensures that graphics programs work with all the different types of graphics hardware
- **DIVX** is a video format that will compress to 100th the size of the current ones, thus enabling you to put films onto CDs
- **DOS**. Disk Operating System. The original Operating System used on PC's without which the machine would be a just a collection of useless electronic parts. Gradually being superseded by Windows
- **DOS EXPLOIT**. This is a very different DOS, meaning Denial Of Service. The term is used when your anti spyware software finds something on your PC that indicates your PC is infected by a virus which will make your PC, along with millions of others, contact a major computer, causing that computer to seize up.
- **DOWNLOAD**. The process of transferring files from the Web to your machine's hard drive. You can download pictures, text and programs.
- **DPI** Dots per inch. Used in connection with printers, scanners and monitors.
- **DRAG AND DROP**. The facility in most programs to select text or a file and drag it to another position
- **DRIVER**. Software which enables certain peripherals to work e.g. printer, sound card, camera
- **DRIVER PROTECTION** . This is the term used by Microsoft to explain why many peripherals will not work with Windows XP and SP2. They have made sure that any driver that might make XP unstable doesn't work at all !
- **DROP DOWN MENU**. When you click a menu item at the top a series of sub menus is revealed
- **DTP** Desktop Publishing. Creating print ready documents on a computer.
- **DUAL CORE** Processor. Like two computers on one silicon chip, thus able to take on more jobs at the same time

- **DVD-ROM.** Digital Versatile Disk Read Only Memory. A disk capable of containing much more than a CD. Used for music, films and BIG programs.
- **DVD-RW.** A rewriteable DVD
- **DVD Player.** Special disk player for DVD disks. Capable of playing CD's as well
- **E-BOOK.** Electronic book
- **E-BAY.** The most popular auction site. See also 'Flipping' below
- **E-COMMERCE.** Business conducted over the Internet.
- **EXPRESS CARD.** The latest, fastest adapter being fitted to laptops in place of the PCMCIA card. It will enable fast data transfer for many peripherals
- **EZINE.** On line magazine
- **EMAIL.** Messages sent to people over the internet. Email addresses always contain the symbol @ somewhere.
- **EMAIL CLIENT.** Program you use to send and receive emails. Outlook Express, Eudora, Netscape Communicator
- **EXABYTE** A thousand million **GIGABYTES.** That's a lot of bites
- **EXIF** The information that is kept with photograph files (date, camera, size etc) Right click a picture and Properties.
- **FAT, FAT32.** File Allocation Table. This is the file system used on a disk and stands for File Allocation Table. It is a form of index which is constantly updated to keep track of everything on the disk. **FAT** is limited to 4Mb per partition. **FAT32** is almost unlimited but cannot cope with files more than 4Gb. See also **NTFS**.
- **FAVORITES.** Or bookmarks. All Web Browsers enable you to add favorite sites to a list for easy retrieval.
- **FIREWALL.** A program that ensures that your PC has no open 'ports' which allow hackers to access it
- **FIREWIRE.** A socket on some PC's that enable 50Mb/second transfer of data than via Serial, Parallel and 30 times faster than a USB 1.1 port. Preferred if you are transferring large amounts of data e.g. from a digital video camera for editing purposes. An add-on card can be purchased. XP recognizes most firewire attachments automatically (like USB) However it is only marginally faster than the more common USB2
- **FIXED PITCH.** Sometimes it is better to use a typewriter style of character which has the same width whatever the letter. Courier is like this
- **FLIPPING.** A term used for buying something popular and immediately selling it on E-bay and a greatly increased price
- **FLOPPY DISK:** Hardly floppy these days. 3.5" disks you can use to save data so you can copy it to and from your hard disk. See also Hard disk
- **FONT.** A collection of characters of a predefined style such as Times or Arial
- **FRIACO.** Flat Rate Internet Access Call Organization.
- **FUNCTION KEYS.** Programmable keys F1 to F12, which may vary in their use.
- **GEEK.** Someone obsessed with computers. I didn't hear that !
- **GIGABYTE** A thousand million bytes
- **GIGAHERTZ** A thousand megahertz
- **GPRS.** General Packet Radio Service. Facilities for transmitting data to phones, pages, handheld computers. Under development by Vodaphone and Cellnet. It's the future.
- **GPS.** Global Positioning System. Use of satellites to tell you where you are. Used by boats; now used by cars, soon to be used with mobile phones. Just in case you forgot where you were going. Can it also remind me what I was going FOR ?

- **GRAPHICS** The general term used for pictures and drawings.
- **GRAPHICS CARD**. The part of the PC that sends signals to the monitor or display
- **GSM**. Global System for Mobile Communication. A standard whereby you can use your telephone abroad.
- **HACKER**. A person who delights in breaking into other people's computers.
- **HARD DISK**. A set of spinning disks coated with recording material. Can retain details of programs and data indefinitely.
- **HARDWARE**. Any piece of equipment such as the computer or a printer.
- **HD-DVD** One of two new DVD standards which use blue lasers. See also Blu-ray
- **HD READY** Televisions (or projectors) must have the appropriate input sockets, have a resolution of at least 720 lines and accept HD signals of 1280 x 720 (called 720p) and 1920 x 1080 (called 1080i)
- **FIREWALL**. A program that can detect intrusion onto your computer and check whether you mind.
- **FLOPS** an acronym for FLoating point Operations Per Second. A calculator works at around 10 FLOPS. The IBM super computer called Blue Gene delivers 280.6 trillion FLOPS (**280 TERAFLIPS**)
- **GRAPHIC**. Any picture.
- **HACKER**. A person who breaks into other computers in an attempt to steal sensitive data
- **HEURISTIC** This refers to a method used by anti virus programs to spot viruses even before they have been found by the AV companies. It is done by spotting their virus - like BEHAVIOUR
- **HOME PAGE**. The first page of a website, usually Index.htm.
- **HOTMAIL**. It is possible to get an e-mail address before you get a computer and pick up mail at a cybercafe. It might take the form of Yourname@hotmail.com
- **HOTSPOT** an area (cafe, airport, hotel etc) enabled for connection to the internet by Wi-Fi enabled laptops, Smartphones or PDA's.
- **HTML or HTM**. Hypertext Markup Language. The agreed language that Websites are built from. Your BROWSER interprets the language to show you intelligible pages. DHTML stands for Dynamic HTML, which is an advanced form which can make web pages more animated. See also XML
- **HYPERTEXT** links. These are the addresses of web sites or pages, which can be anywhere in the world. They always are coloured blue and are underlined. When the cursor arrow hovers over one it will change its shape to show it is a link. Mostly you will see Hypertext when connected to the 'net' but you may also find them in things like encyclopedia CD's. When clicked your computer may go ONLINE then access the site.
- **ICON**. A graphic representation of something such as a shortcut to a program or a religious picture or other form of representation.
- **IDE**. The standard interface (connection) used to attach hard disks and CD players .INKJET PRINTER. The commonest type of printer which shoots spots of ink at the paper to create an image.
- **IM**. Instant Messaging. Text based messages to people on - line, using Microsoft or AOL Instant Messenger
- **INKJET or BUBBLEJET** Printer. The commonest for of printer which squirts ink onto the paper. Normally colour + black.
- **INTERNET**. A conglomeration of linked computers which can be accessed by people who are connected to the 'Web'

- **INTERNET EXPLORER.** The main web browser, issued free by Microsoft. The other is Netscape Navigator.
- **iPod.** Apple's tiny, popular, music player. Comes in various formats, some with colour screen to play videos or show your photos
- **IrDA** Infrared adapter. A USB device that enables you PC or laptop to infrared devices e.g. a PDA
- **ISA** slot. Industry Standard Architecture. EISA adds Extended ISA. As for PCI but the older type - usually black.
- **ISDN.** Integrated Services Digital Network. A faster (than standard) internet connection, requiring a special cable.
- **ISP.** Internet Service Provider. A company which provides you with access to the Internet.
- **JAVA and JAVASCRIPT.** A programming language used on some web pages.
- **JPG or JPEG.** Joint Photographic Expert Group. The most commonly used compressed graphic format.
- **JUMPER.** Apart from a sweater it is a small connector used to change the working of certain PC equipment.
- **KEYLOGGER** A program on your computer which keeps a record of your keystrokes and send the information to someone else.
- **KILOBIT.** (kb) A thousand bits
- **KILOBYTE.** (KB) A thousand bytes
- **LAN.** Local Area Network. Computers connected 'locally' e.g. within a company or home, so they can communicate and share programs and data.
- **LASER PRINTER.** A printer which uses a laser to create an image on a light sensitive drum, which then loads toner powder onto paper. Often just black printing. Faster and more economical than inkjets.
- **LED.** Light Emitting Diode. Some 'laser printers' use this type instead of a laser
- **LIDE.** Light Indirect Exposure. A new type of light for scanners
- **LINUX.** An operating system, like Windows but FREE and stable. It requires software written especially for it.
- **LLU** Local Loop Unbundling. The process whereby BT allows other ISP's to install their own equipment in their exchanges. In some cases this enables the ISP to circumvent BT's current speed limit of 8MBs
- **MACRO** A small program within another program which, at the touch of a couple of keys performs a series of actions
- **MALWARE.** Software which arrives on your computer which is considered to be damaging or have evil intent e.g. viruses, spyware or keyloggers
- **MATRIX PRINTER.** Similar to the inkjet but uses a 'matrix' of pins pushing against an inked ribbon to make an impression on paper.
- **MEGABIT** (mb) A million bits
- **MEGABYTE** (MB) A million bytes. See also BIT, BYTE, KILOBYTE, GIGABYTE, EXABYTE
- **MEGAHERTZ** A measure of how fast your PC processor works. Basically a million vibrations a second. One instruction takes place each vibration.
- **MIDBAND.** BT's new "Broadband" which runs at 128k (twice the speed of a normal dialup service) Although it is not permanently connected like Broadband it is possible to use the telephone on the same line at the same time.
- **MMS. Mobile Media Service ??** Well, the ability to send and receive pictures using a mobile phone.
- **MONITOR.** The computer screen. Also called a **VDU** - Visual Display Unit

- **MOORE'S LAW.** See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moore%27s_Law
- **MOTHERBOARD.** The main circuit board of a computer, to which other components are attached
- **MP3.** A highly compressed form of music, which can be downloaded from the 'net and played on a computer or a portable MP3 player.
- **MPEG Motion Picture Expert Group A** method of compressing digital video
- **MSN.** Microsoft Network
- **NETSCAPE COMMUNICATOR.** Netscape's e-mail client program (an alternative to Outlook Express)
- **NETSCAPE NAVIGATOR.** Netscape's Browser. An alternative to Internet Explorer
- **NETWORK.** General term for connected computers. See also WAN and LAN
- **NTFS** The later Windows NT File system, which can also be used on Windows XP and Windows 2000 machines - **not** Win 95 - 98 or ME
- **NTSC** National TV Standards ? The American TV standard. Sometimes called Never Twice the Same Colour !
- **OCR** Optical Character Recognition. Some software can convert scanned text into word processable documents
- **OFFLINE.** Not connected to the Internet. Some things, like writing emails, can be done before going ONLINE.
- **OLEDs.** Organic, Light Emitting Diodes. TOLED. The transparent version. FOLED. The flexible version. A roll up screen.
- **OMR.** Optical Mark Recognition. The technique used to input your Lottery choices.
- **ONLINE.** Connected to the Internet.
- **OUTLOOK EXPRESS.** The free Microsoft program for handling e-mails. Netscape's is called Messenger.
- **PAL** Phase Alternating Line. The British, Australian and New Zealand TV standard
- **PARALLEL PORT.** Almost always a 25 pin 'female' socket on the back of a computer which is used for printing but also to attach things like scanners and other external equipment. See also USB Port
- **PATCH** A software fix for an existing program
- **PATH.** The location of a file or program on a disk. e.g. Word is at C:\program files\microsoftOffice\office\winword.exe
- **PCI** slot. Peripheral Component Interface (or Interconnect). A type of connector (slot on the motherboard) - usually white - which enables you to add components to your PC.
- **PCMCIA or PC CARD.** Various pieces of miniaturized equipment which fit into a slot on a laptop computer
- **PDA.** Personal Digital Assistant. A small, hand held computer.
- **PHISHING** This is the name give to a scam where you get an e-mail supposedly from your bank, requesting that you confirm your password and account number. If you give your details you can expect your account to be robbed shortly afterwards! Millions of these e-mails are sent out and some gullible people fall for it..
- **PICTBRIDGE** A standard whereby a Pictbridge compatible camera can talk directly to a Pictbridge compatible printer, so enabling you to select and print photos without the aid of a computer
- **PIM** Personal Information Manager. Software which acts as a diary - even an alarm clock.

- **PIMP** Not what you might expect but an adopted word that means 'jazz up' or improve the look of, be it a PC, a mobile phone, an iPod or a Web page on Facebook
- **PIXEL**. Picture element. A small element on a screen or in photograph. Cameras are sometimes referred to in Megapixels. A megapixel is a million pixels. The more pixels the better the quality of the picture and the more memory is used up.
- **PLUG AND PLAY** Modern machines and hardware (printers, sound cards, CC players etc) are able to recognize when they are connected, so enabling easy installation or use.
- **POINT SIZE**. The height of a printed character. Correspondence is usually around 12 point.
- **PODCASTING** : Allowing people to download sounds (news) they can hear on their computer, Ipod or MP3 player
- **PORT**. Either a socket on your computer, such USB, parallel (printer) or Serial (communications) **OR** part of the system which allows communication with your computer (the latter are numbered e.g. Port 110) See also Hacker
- **PS/2** The smaller type of socket used for modern keyboard and mouse connections
- **PROPORTIONAL FONT**. Some fonts use much less space (width) e.g. for a small L (l) than for a capital W.
- **QUARANTINE**. When using anti virus software you may be given the option to do this or delete the offending files. Quarantine allows you to put the item back if your machine starts playing up badly.
- **QUICKTIME**. A program from Apple which enables you to view moving pictures.
- **RADSL**. Rate Adaptive ADSL. A system used by BT to increase the range of Broadband availability. It has a slower upload ability.
- **RAM** Random Access Memory. Chips in your PC which work on programs temporarily
- **RASTER** image. Not a picture of someone in a big, multicolored, wooly hat and dreadlocks. It is a picture made up of tiny dots as opposed to VECTOR image. But similar to BITMAP.
- **RAW** A photo file type which is completely unchanged. Not compressed etc. Some photo image s/w can view them
- **REAL TIME**. Immediate contact (messages, music, video) rather than via e-mail
- **REGISTER**. A most important file used in Windows 95 onwards. Contains details of everything within Windows.
- **ROOTKIT**. Software that hides itself or other objects, such as files, processes, and Registry keys, from view of standard diagnostic, administrative, and security software. This technique has been used by some big companies.
- **ROUTER**. A gadget which connects more than one computer to the Internet and sorts out the priorities.
- **RSS**. Rich Site Summary or Really Simple Syndication. A news feed that is seen at the top of some websites. You need an RSS reader in order to 'syndicate' or aggregate the news which is fed to you in one place. Further details ? Please e-mail me
- **SAFE MODE**. This is when you start Windows in its most basic form with no background programs in operation. As a result the screen changes to its very basic (large) layout. Safe Mode is used to cure various problems including

- Virus and Defrag. difficulties. To get into Safe Mode (on most PC's) press F8 as Windows begins to load.
- **SCANNER**. A piece of equipment capable of digitally recording a picture or some text for saving on the computer
 - **SCAREWARE**. There are many 'free' programs that claim to remove threats from your PC. When you scan your PC they pick up every single 'cookie' on the machine and classify it as a threat. They then suggest you buy the full program to clear these 'threats'.
 - **S-VIDEO** A higher quality video connection. It carries brightness and colour information separately.
 - **SCSI** . Small Computer System Interface. A fast interface (connection) for attaching peripherals to your computer. See also **IDE**.
 - **SDRAM** . Synchronous Dynamic Random Access Memory. The most common type of memory chip. See also **DDR**
 - **SEARCH ENGINE**. A program, usually accessed through the 'net, which enables you to search for what you want by entering a few words.
 - **SECAM**. French video standard. Sequential Couleur avec Memoire. See also PAL and NTSC
 - **SERIAL PORT**. A 9 or 25 pin (male) socket on the back of a computer, which can be used to attach a mouse, a modem or a printer. Referred to as a COM (Communication) port. Most PC's have two built in.
 - **SIMMS**. Single Inline Memory Modules. Older type sets of memory chips. See also **DIMMS**
 - **SMS** Short Message system. Text messages between PC and mobile phone or mobile to mobile
 - **SITE or WEBSITE** is an area on the Internet that has its own unique web address (**URL**) It has a HOME PAGE followed by other pages linked to the Home Page
 - **SMARTPHONE** Part of the converging technology scene. A telephone that can transmit pictures and or receive emails and more besides, either by WiFi or satellite
 - **SODIMM** Small Outline Dual Inline Memory Module. Smaller memory used in laptops. See also DIMMS
 - **SOFTWARE**. Programs of all kinds which make the computer act in a particular way.
 - **SUROUND SOUND**. A pair of front and rear speakers plus a centre speaker and a sub woofer
 - **SUB WOOFER**. A loudspeaker dedicated to the reproduction of bass audio frequencies, typically from 150 Hz down to 20 Hz. See also Tweeter
 - **SPAM** : Unsolicited advertising that usually arrives as e-mails
 - **SPIIM** : Spam which occurs when you are Instant Messaging
 - **SPYWARE**. Software which is installed on your computer without your knowledge to monitor and report back what you are doing. Scary.
 - **SPREADSHEET**. A mathematical program which contains formulae to automatically work on the figures that are entered.
 - **STREAMING**. Receiving sound or pictures continuously over the Internet (rather than downloading first)
 - **STYLE** sheet. A previously arranged document with specific type styles, weights and sizes. See also Template.
 - **SURFING** the Web means using **HYPERTEXT** links to jump from one site or page to another
 - **SVGA**. Super VGA. The later type of screen (and video card) capable of displaying more colours and higher definition.

- **SYSTEM TRAY** See Taskbar below
- **TAB** key. The key on the left of the keyboard which allows you to jump certain fixed distances across the page when using a word processor (or even a steam age typewriter).
- **TABLET PC**. A powerful Windows PC which has a touch sensitive flat screen but no attached keyboard. Can be written on with a stylus.
- **TASKBAR/SYSTEM TRAY**. The bar at the bottom of the screen which shows the items which are preloaded
- **TEMPORARY FILES**. The internet, some installation programs and even your own programs may use a part of your hard disk to enable them to work. They often end in TMP. They can be deleted later.
- **TEMPLATE**. A standard letter or spreadsheet which can be amended to suit your needs
- **TEXT MESSAGING** language is becoming popular on PC's and phones. e.g. Happy :-) Sad :-(Winks ;-) Grins :- } Hello LO Planned PI& Great Gr8, ILBL8, CUL8R, LOL (lots of laughs, lots of love, depending...)
- **TFT** Thin film transistor. The technology used to create those popular flat screens
- **TOOLBAR**. A list of icons often found at the top of a program such as a word processor
- **TROJAN**. A virus program that is disguised as something else. It invades your PC and can be accessed by a hacker
- **TWAIN**. A generally agreed standard by which PC's can communicate with Twain compatible equipment, mainly scanners. TWAIN is not a mnemonic
- **TWEETER** a loudspeaker designed to produce high frequencies, typically from around 2,000 hertz to 20,000 hertz
- **UMPC. Ultra Mobile PC**. They are about 7" across and use Windows XP tablet edition, touch screen and interprets your scribbling.
- **URL** Universal Resource Locator or Web address. It always starts with http:// and is usually followed by www. And then other parts of the address.
- **USB PORT**. Universal Serial Bus. A more recent versatile communication port, which can transfer data faster and also enables equipment to be 'hot swapped', whilst the machine is on. The sockets are about half an inch long. It also contains a power supply so equipment such as webcams do not need a transformer. An add-on card is available for older machines but early Windows 95 did not support this connection.
- **USB2**. At 480 Mb/s is even faster than **USB**. Looks the same as USB and the slower devices can also be attached to it.
- **VDU**. Visual Display Unit. The screen.
- **VECTOR** image. A graphic which is made up of instructions to the computer e.g. To draw a curve or a straight line.
- **VGA**. Video Graphics Array. The older type of colour screen
- **VIDEOCONFERENCING**. Using the PC as a video phone
- **VIDEO-PHONE**. Using a microphone, speakers and a Webcam to see and hear others over the Internet.
- **VIRTUAL MEMORY (VM)**. When Windows does not find enough RAM it uses the hard disk rather than failing altogether. This makes the machine seem slower, so more RAM is preferable.
- **VoIP** Voice Over Internet Protocol. The future of cheaper telephone communication ? Even BT are into it.
- **VIRUS**. A malicious program which can harm your computer. It is spread through programs - either from disks or from the Internet. It is the graffiti of the Internet. They may also be called Trojans or Worms.

- **WAN.** Wider Area Network. Computers connected to others over a wide area, so they can communicate and share programs and data.
- **WAP.** Wireless Application Protocol. A system of sending (restricted) internet pages to the screen of a mobile phone.
- **WAP enabled phone.** A mobile phone which can receive internet pages.
- **WARCALKING.** The art of marking office walls with a) (sign, to show that they are using a wireless network so you can steal time from their connection. Often they are using a **WIFI** system.
- **WEB BROWSER.** A program to help you navigate the Internet e.g. Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator
- **WEBCAM.** A small camera which is attached to a computer
- **WI-FI** A wireless interface, using radio to link computers and other devices. A snappier name than the 802.11b standard. See also **Bluetooth**
- **WINDOWS 95** The 1995 version of the Windows system, which replaced version 3.11. It did not support the USB sockets
- **WINDOWS 98** The 1998 version of the Windows system, which replaced Windows 95. Only the Second Edition (SE) had USB support.
- **WINDOWS ME.** Windows Millennium Edition. A half way house between Windows 98 and Windows XP
- **WINDOWS XP.** Microsoft's latest operating system, intended to replace all previous Windows formats. There are Home and Professional versions.
- **WIZARD.** A program which helps you through a process such as installing new Software or Hardware.
- **WMA.** Windows Media Audio. A compressed Audio format
- **WMV.** Windows Media Video. A compressed Video format
- **WORD PROCESSING.** Creating documents on a computer that can easily be amended (processed)
- **WORM.** A virus program that spreads by sending itself to people in your Email address book
- **WWW** World Wide Web. The Internet
- **XML.** Extensible Markup Language. A development of **HTML**
- **ZIP DRIVE/ZIP DISK.** A proprietary disk drive (Iomega) which can hold 100mb or 250mb on a disk. Used for backup.
- **ZIP file.** Compressed file that ends in ZIP or CAB. To see their contents they must be viewed using a special program such as Winzip or Enzip.
- **ZOMBIE** A computer that has been infiltrated by a virus, leaving it open to attacks which 'waken it from the dead'. These can then be used to send thousands of searches to a particular site, thus bringing it to a standstill. This has happened to Microsoft, Google and Yahoo. Zombies are also used to circulate phishing emails and viruses. Make sure your computer is not a zombie !
- **ZUNE** The Microsoft alternative to the iPod, above