



1. Computers and Hardware

ICT	Abbreviation for Information and Communication Technology
Hardware	The physical components of a computer or device that you can touch (e.g. computer, mouse, keyboard).
Peripheral	An additional device that is connected to a computer, e.g. a printer, monitor or mouse.
CPU	The CPU (Central Processing Unit) is the processor and thus the central processing unit of the computer. Multiple processor cores enable several tasks to be processed simultaneously or in parallel.
GHz (gigahertz)	A processor's clock speed is measured in GHz. 1 GHz = 1 billion clock cycles per second The GHz figure alone does not determine the computer's overall speed. The operating speed also depends heavily on the number of processor cores, the random access memory (RAM) and the type of hard drive (SSD vs. HDD).
RAM (random access memory)	RAM stores data and programmes that are currently in use. When the computer is switched off, the data stored in it is lost (volatile memory). More RAM makes it easier to work with several programmes at the same time (e.g. 8 GB or 16 GB).
Data storage	A storage medium for permanently storing data. Today, HDDs and SSDs are the most commonly used types.
HDD / SSD	HDD (Hard Disk Drive): Magnetic storage with rotating platters. Also known as a hard disk . SSD (Solid State Drive): A storage device with no moving parts; it is very fast, more resistant to shocks and operates silently.
External hard drive	A storage medium connected via USB for mobile data backup.
Graphics card	Responsible for processing the image display on the monitor. Usually has its own memory.
Local storage (offline storage)	Storage media connected directly to or within your own device. Examples: internal/external HDDs or SSDs, USB sticks and SD cards. Advantage: no internet connection required.
Monitor	A computer screen for displaying images. Monitors differ primarily in terms of size, resolution and image quality.
Keyboard	Input device for entering text. The keyboard language can be changed in the taskbar (bottom right of the notification area).
Touchpad	Replaces the mouse on laptops and controls the cursor via touch.



Speakers	Output device for sound playback. The volume is controlled via the speaker icon in the taskbar.
Scanner	An input device for digitising documents, images or photos so that they can be saved as files on the computer.
Printers and default printer	Output device for printing on paper (e.g. laser printer, inkjet printer). Default printer: The printer to which print jobs are automatically sent (setting under <i>System Preferences > Printers & Scanners</i>).
Print jobs and print queue	Print jobs are queued one after the other. Jobs can be paused or deleted in the print queue.
Docking station	Connects a mobile device (laptop) to several peripheral devices (e.g. monitor, keyboard, power supply) via a single interface.
Interfaces (connections)	Connect computers to devices or networks (e.g. USB, HDMI, DisplayPort, network port)
HDMI / DisplayPort	Digital interfaces for the simultaneous transmission of video and audio between a computer and a monitor.
Tablet PC	A lightweight, portable computer with a touchscreen. An external keyboard can be connected if required.

2. Operating system and software

Software	Software refers to programmes and applications. It can be installed locally, hosted on a server or made available online.
Operating system	The operating system is the central system software of a device. It manages hardware and resources and controls the execution of programmes and apps. Examples: Windows, macOS, Linux, Android and iOS/iPadOS.
Application programmes (application software)	Programmes designed for specific tasks. Examples: Office programmes such as Word and Excel, games, email programmes, web browsers and communication programmes such as WhatsApp.
Office programmes	Word processing (e.g. Word) – creating, editing and formatting text. Spreadsheet (e.g. Excel) – entering, calculating and analysing data in tables. Presentation software (e.g. PowerPoint) – creating and delivering presentations using slides. Database (e.g. Access) – storing, managing and searching through large amounts of data. Email programme (e.g. Outlook) – sending, receiving and managing emails.
Desktop background	The desktop background is used to customise the appearance of the desktop. Options include images, solid colours or a slideshow. Setting: Right-click on the desktop > Personalise



Update	An update is a software update (for the operating system, application programmes or drivers) that fixes bugs, adds new features or closes security gaps. Automatic updates should always be enabled in the operating system (and also in your antivirus programme) to ensure continuous protection.
Booting	After being switched on, the computer starts the operating system. This process is known as booting or the boot process.
Logging out	If you are no longer working on the computer, you should log out. Another user can then log in using their own login details.
Taskbar	Taskbar – a bar at the edge of the screen, usually at the bottom. It displays open and pinned programmes as well as important information, and allows you to switch quickly between open programmes. In the notification area (on the right-hand side of the taskbar): Displays the time, date, volume and Wi-Fi status.
Start in File Explorer	In File Explorer, 'Start' provides quick access to frequently used and pinned folders, as well as recently used files.
Control Panel	In the Control Panel, you can adjust your computer's settings. For example, you can uninstall programmes.
System Information	Basic system information includes, amongst other things, the operating system, processor (CPU), installed RAM and the device or computer name. Quick access to system information: keyboard shortcut Windows key + Pause (or via Windows + I > System > Info).
Windows Task Manager	The Windows Task Manager allows you to close running programmes that are no longer responding. The Task Manager can be opened by pressing Ctrl + Shift + Esc, or by right-clicking on the taskbar and selecting > Task Manager.
Demo version	A limited version of a programme designed to let you try it out.
Freeware	Software that may be used free of charge. The source code does not necessarily have to be freely accessible.
Shareware	Software that can be tested free of charge, often with time or functional restrictions. A purchase may be required for full use.
Open-source software	Software whose source code is publicly available and, depending on the licence, may be viewed, modified and redistributed. Examples: Linux, LibreOffice, GIMP, Firefox.
Proprietary software	Software whose source code is not freely accessible. Use, distribution and modification are restricted by the licence terms. Examples: Microsoft Windows, Microsoft 365, macOS, Photoshop.
EULA	EULA (End User Licence Agreement) is an end-user licence agreement that sets out the conditions under which software may be used.



3. Files and storage

Hierarchical file structure / folder structure	Drives, folders and files are organised by the operating system into a hierarchical structure. This structure comprises parent and child folders. Meaningful names make it easier to find and manage files.
File extensions	File extensions often indicate the type of file. Examples: Documents: .docx, .pdf, .txt Images: .jpg, .png Audio/video: .mp3, .mp4 Executable programmes: .exe
Storage sizes	Bit, byte, kilobyte (KB), megabyte (MB), gigabyte (GB) and terabyte (TB). 1 byte = 8 bits.
Backup / Data backup	A backup is a copy of data stored on an additional storage medium, e.g. an external hard drive, a USB stick or online storage. Backups enable data to be restored in the event of damage. Important backups should also be stored at a different, physically separate location.
Restore	The process of restoring data from a backup.
Cloud storage	Storage space on external servers that can be accessed via the internet. Files can be accessed from various devices and are often shared for collaborative work. Many cloud services also allow files to be used offline, with the files being synchronised again later (when an internet connection is available). Examples: Microsoft OneDrive, Google Drive, Apple iCloud.
Network drive	A folder on a server that has been shared with users. It can be displayed as a drive in File Explorer and is particularly suitable for collaboration in schools or businesses.

4. Networks and the Internet

Computer network	A computer network is a group of two or more computers or electronic devices that are connected to one another in order to exchange data and share resources.
Username and password	These are usually required to log in to the network or server (authentication). They ensure that only authorised persons have access to sensitive data and network resources.
Internet	The Internet is a global network of interconnected computer networks.
Intranet	An intranet is a private network that uses the same basic technologies as the internet, but is accessible only to authorised users, e.g. within a company.



HTTPS	HTTPS – An encrypted and therefore more secure connection between a web browser and a web server. The 'S' stands for 'Secure'.
LAN	LAN (Local Area Network) is a local network, for example in a school or a company.
WAN	WAN (Wide Area Network) is a network that spans large geographical distances, for example across countries or continents.
Wi-Fi (wireless network)	A wireless, local radio network for connecting devices wirelessly, via radio waves. • Secure Wi-Fi: Requires a password (network key), usually with WPA2 or WPA3 encryption. This protects the wireless connection against unauthorised access. • Open Wi-Fi: The Wi-Fi connection is not protected by a Wi-Fi password. However, for HTTPS connections, data is still transmitted in encrypted form between the browser and the web server.
ISP	An ISP (Internet Service Provider) is a provider that offers customers access to the internet. Criteria for choosing an ISP: • Connection speed: How quickly data is downloaded or uploaded (in Mbit/s). • Monthly costs: The ongoing charges for the contract. • Availability at your home address: Which connections (e.g. fibre-optic, DSL, cable) are technically possible at your address.
Upload	Data is uploaded from your own device to the internet or to a server, e.g. a photo to an online service.
Download vs. Upload	Download means receiving data onto your own device. Upload means sending data from your device to the internet or a server.
Data transfer rate	The data transfer rate is measured in bits per second (bit/s). Typical units are Kbit/s, Mbit/s and Gbit/s.
Mobile network technology	Mobile network technology allows you to access the internet on the go using a laptop, tablet or mobile phone – without needing Wi-Fi. This works via the mobile network, e.g. LTE (4G) or 5G . A SIM card is required. This means you can browse websites, stream videos or send messages from anywhere.
LTE (4G)	LTE is a fourth-generation (4G) mobile network technology.
VPN	A VPN (Virtual Private Network) establishes a secure, encrypted connection over a public network such as the internet. In the workplace, it is often used to provide secure access to company resources whilst working from home or on the move.
VoIP	VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) refers to internet telephony. Calls are transmitted via the internet.



IM	IM (Instant Messaging) refers to the immediate sending of messages via the internet, e.g. using WhatsApp.
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5. Security

Malware	An umbrella term for malicious software such as viruses, worms, Trojans or ransomware. Malware often finds its way onto a computer by downloading or opening unknown file attachments from suspicious emails or unsecure sources.
Virus	A virus is a type of malware that attaches itself to files or programmes and can spread when they are used or shared.
Computer worm	A computer worm can spread autonomously, often via networks, without the user having to actively share an infected file.
Trojan	A Trojan is malware that disguises itself as a useful or harmless programme.
Spyware	Spyware secretly collects information about users, devices or their activities and can transmit this to third parties.
Ransomware	Ransomware can encrypt data or block access to systems and then demand a ransom.
Antivirus programmes	Antivirus programmes detect malware and can block, remove or quarantine it. The virus protection is constantly updated so that new threats can be detected.
Firewall	A firewall monitors network connections and can block unwanted or unauthorised access.
Passwords	Passwords should be as long and unique as possible. Do not use personal details or easily guessable words. Where possible, use multi-factor authentication.

6. Accessibility and health

Accessibility tools / Accessibility	Tools and settings within the operating system that make it easier or enable people with disabilities – such as visual impairments or motor disabilities – to use the computer.
Screen magnifier	An accessibility tool that magnifies a section of the screen, thereby improving readability.
On-screen keyboard	A keyboard that is displayed on the screen and can be operated using a mouse, touchscreen or other input methods.
Screen reader	Accessibility tool. A screen reader reads out content on the screen or outputs it via a Braille display. This enables people with visual impairments to use a computer largely without relying on a visual display.



Speech recognition software	Speech recognition software enables text and commands to be entered using the voice. Examples: Siri, Alexa and other voice assistants use speech recognition to understand spoken commands.
High-contrast display	High-contrast display – alongside assistive technologies such as screen magnifiers – improves readability, particularly for people with visual impairments.
Ergonomics	Ergonomics means designing the workplace and working methods in such a way that physical strain is kept to a minimum. Important factors include, for example, regular breaks, suitable lighting and a comfortable posture.

7. Environment

Green IT	Environmentally friendly manufacture, use and disposal of IT equipment. The aims are low energy and resource consumption, a long service life and proper recycling.
Energy saving (in the IT sector)	Activating energy-saving and sleep modes during prolonged periods of inactivity, and switching off PCs, monitors and peripheral devices completely when not in use.