3.2.4 Computer hardware terminology

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| **Computing term** | **Explanation** |
| Hardware | The machines, wiring, and other physical components of a computer or other electronic system. |
| Software | The programs and other operating information used by a computer. |
| Processor | The processor is the brain of the computer. It executes programs and supervises the functioning of the other parts of the computer. |
| Microprocessor | An integrated circuit that contains all the functions of a central processing unit of a computer |
| CPU | The CPU is the brains of the computer where most calculations take place. In terms of computing power, the CPU is the most important element of a computer system. |
| Main memory | The main memory is defined as the central storage in a computer. This is where programs and data are kept. |
| Volatile | Volatile memory or volatile storage is computer memory that requires power to maintain the stored information. |
| Peripheral | A peripheral device is generally defined as any auxiliary device such as a computer mouse or keyboard that connects to and works with the computer in some way. |
| Input device | An input device is a peripheral (piece of computer hardware equipment) used to provide data and control signals to an information processing system |
| Output device | An output device is any piece of computer hardware equipment used to communicate the results of data processing carried out by an information processing system. |
| Secondary storage | A secondary storage device refers to any volatile storage device that is internal or external to the computer. It can be any storage device beyond the primary storage that enables permanent data storage. |
| RAM | Random-access memory is a form of computer data storage. A random-access memory device allows data items to be read and written in roughly the same amount of time regardless of the order in which data items are accessed. |
| ROM | Read only memory is a memory system, such as a commercial CD, which can be read but which cannot be altered. |
| System bus | A system bus is a single computer bus that connects the major components of a computer system. |
| Memory sizes | 1 kilobyte is 1000 bytes  1 megabyte is 1000 kilobytes  1 gigabyte is 1000 megabytes  1 terabyte is 1000 gigabytes |
| **Storage medium** | **Typical capacities** |
| Hard disk | 700 GB |
| Magnetic tape | 185 TB |
| CD-ROM | 74 Minutes |
| DVD-ROM | 650 MV (0.64 GB) |
| Blu-Ray (BD) disk | 25 GB |
| USB flash drive | 128 GB |
| Memory card | 16GB, 10,000 on 5 megapixels |