



# John von Neumann

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*John von Neumann*, born *Neumann János Lajos* (1903 - 1957) Hungarian American mathematician and physicist who made substantial advances in quantum physics, computer science, game theory, economics, etc. Possessing instantaneous eidetic memory and myriad interests, young János learned calculus as a child. As Hitler gained power in the 1930s, the Neumann family fled to the United States.

von Neumann was part of the Manhattan project, and was involved at Los Alamos on the team led by J. Robert Oppenheimer that resulted in the development of the first fission bomb. He later had a key idea relating to the structure of the hydrogen, or fusion, bomb.

Perhaps the invention for which von Neumann is most widely known today is the development of what is now called the *von Neumann architecture* for digital computers, consisting of the familiar stored-program computer in which the data and program are separate from the computational unit.

In 1957, Neumann died of bone cancer. In 2005, the United States Postal Service honored von Neumann with a stamp (along with Richard Feynman, Josiah Willard Gibbs and Barbara McClintock).