When power is turned on, POST (Power-On Self-Test) is the diagnostic testing sequence that a computer's [basic input/output system](http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/BIOS-basic-input-output-system) (or "starting program") runs to determine if the computer keyboard, [random access memory](http://searchmobilecomputing.techtarget.com/definition/RAM), disk drives, and other hardware are working correctly.

If the necessary hardware is detected and found to be operating properly, the computer begins to [boot](http://searchwinit.techtarget.com/definition/boot). If the hardware is not detected or is found not to be operating properly, the BIOS issue an error message which may be text on the display screen and/or a series of coded beeps, depending on the nature of the problem.

BIOS is a program that starts when you turn on your computer. It checks all of your hardware, hard drive, CD ROM, cards, etc. to ensure they all have power and are working. It has several different categories; you can see your BIOS by paying attention to the screen when it first starts up. When you see "hit f2 for system" or something to that affect then hit the key and you will go into your BIOS.