

A | Internal components

Computers come in all different shapes and forms, but the main components that make up a computer are generally the same. Each component plays a very important part – and if just one of them fails, the whole PC may no longer work. First, there is the chassis, also known as system unit. This is the outer encasement which houses all the internal components, e.g. the power supply unit (PSU) which transforms incoming power to the voltage needed by the computer and connects to the other components. Then, there is the mainboard, a big printed circuit board (PCB) to which most components are fitted, such as the central processing unit (CPU) which handles all requests and calculates all processes. Also on the mainboard you will find the random access memory (RAM), also called primary or volatile memory, that hosts all processes currently running on the computer. Sometimes you find expansion cards, devices for additional features such as audio, graphics or internet access. Most modern mainboards, however, have these integrated (onboard). Next, there is the hard disk drive (HDD), the main storage device (also called secondary or permanent storage) that holds all stored data including the operating system (OS) or other applications installed on your machine. Finally, there is the optical disk drive. This is used to read from or write onto external storage media such as CDs, DVDs or Blu-ray Discs.

WORD BANK

access – Zugriff
application – Anwendung
capacity – Fassungsvermögen
chassis – Gehäuse
component – Bauteil
CPU – Prozessor
device – Gerät
drive – Laufwerk
expansion – Erweiterung
external – extern, außen
fail (v) – ausfallen
feature – Eigenschaft
graphic digitizer – Grafikdigitalisierer
hard disk – Festplatte
input – Eingabe
install (v) – einbauen, einsetzen
internal – intern, innen
keyboard – Tastatur
light pen – Lichtgriffel
mainboard – Hauptplatine
memory – Speicher
operating system – Betriebssystem
optical bar code reader – Strichcodeleser
output – Ausgabe
PCB – Platine
plotter – Zeichengerät, Plotter
power supply – Stromversorgung
projector – Projektionsgerät, Beamer
shape – (äußere) Form
speaker – Lautsprecher
storage – Speicherung
system unit – Gehäuse
track ball – Rollkugel
volatile – flüchtig
voltage – Spannung

R **1** Read the text above and match these components with their descriptions.

Component	Description
1. chassis/system unit	a. primary storage medium in all desktop computers
2. power supply	b. necessary for optical storage devices
3. CD drive	c. can handle optical storage media with larger capacity
4. DVD drive	d. the 'brain' of your system
5. hard drive	e. the size of this determines which and how many parts fit in
6. RAM	f. needs to be installed unless a device is installed on the motherboard
7. motherboard	g. often associated with types of memory
8. CPU	h. only needed these days to deal with PC gaming
9. heat sink/fan	i. determines the type of components that can be used with the machine
10. VCD	j. used to cool the computer
11. graphics card	k. your computer won't work without it

B | External components

5 Match the devices (1.–10.) with the appropriate descriptions (a. – j.).

1. web cam	a. connects external to internal devices
2. trackball	b. modern forms are of the TFT-version
3. image scanner	c. helps you navigate on the screen
4. head set	d. controller that needs fingers and thumbs to provide input
5. game pad	e. used for inputting commands or data and for navigating on the screen
6. monitor	f. analyses images, text, or objects
7. microphone	g. a combined input/output device
8. mouse	h. converts sound into electric signals
9. interface	i. pointing device consisting of exposed ball housed in a socket
10. keyboard	j. used to provide visual input that can be easily transferred online