The system unit is the case which houses the main components of a computer. It is also known as the computer chassis or computer tower. The system unit contains many components such as the motherboard, processor, memory, etc.

All types of computers have system units. For example, system unit of a laptop is the case where the keyboard is placed, system unit of a tablet or a handheld device is located behind the screen.

We are going to learn about the system unit of a desktop computer.

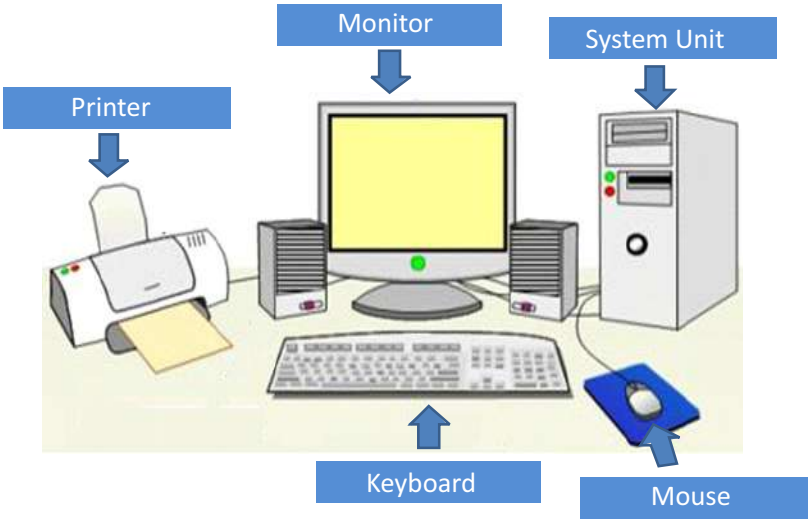


**Figure 1.1 A computer system**

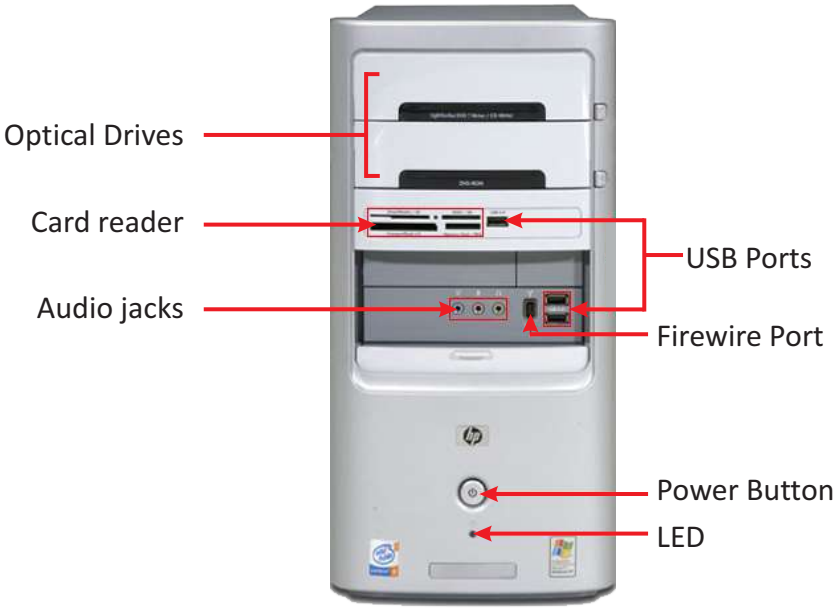


**Figure 1.2 Front view of a system unit**

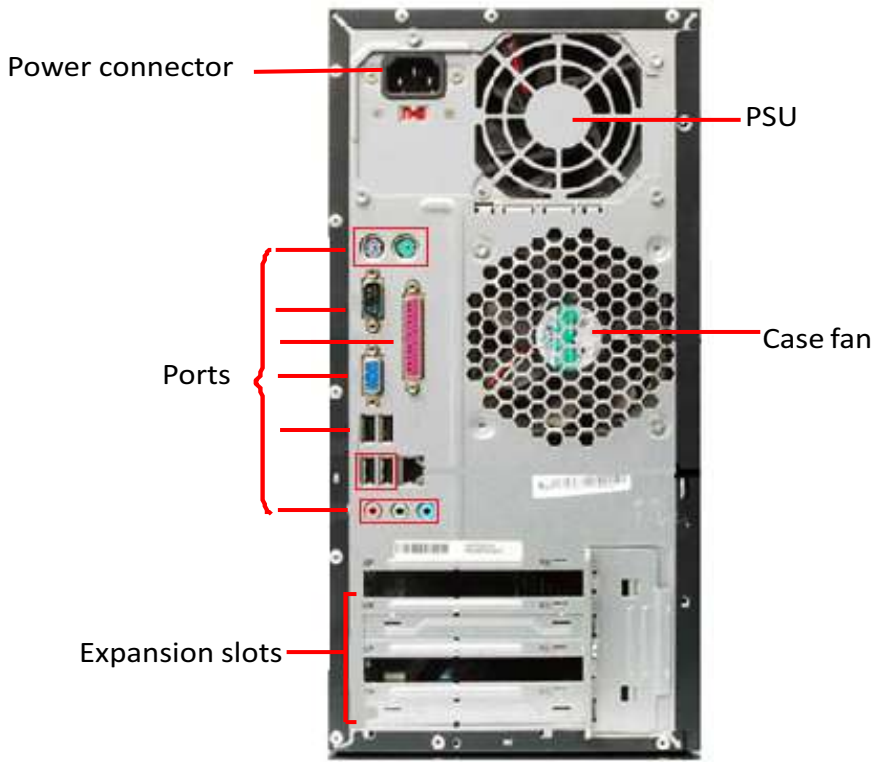


**Figure 1.3 Back view of a system unit**


**Figure 1.4 Internal view of a system unit**

## 1. Motherboard

The motherboard is the main circuit board of a computer. It serves as a single platform to connect all the parts of a computer together. The motherboard can be considered the backbone of a computer. All components are connected to the motherboard directly or via cables. For example, the memory and processor are directly mounted on the motherboard, whereas the hard drive, mouse and the keyboard are connected to it via cables.

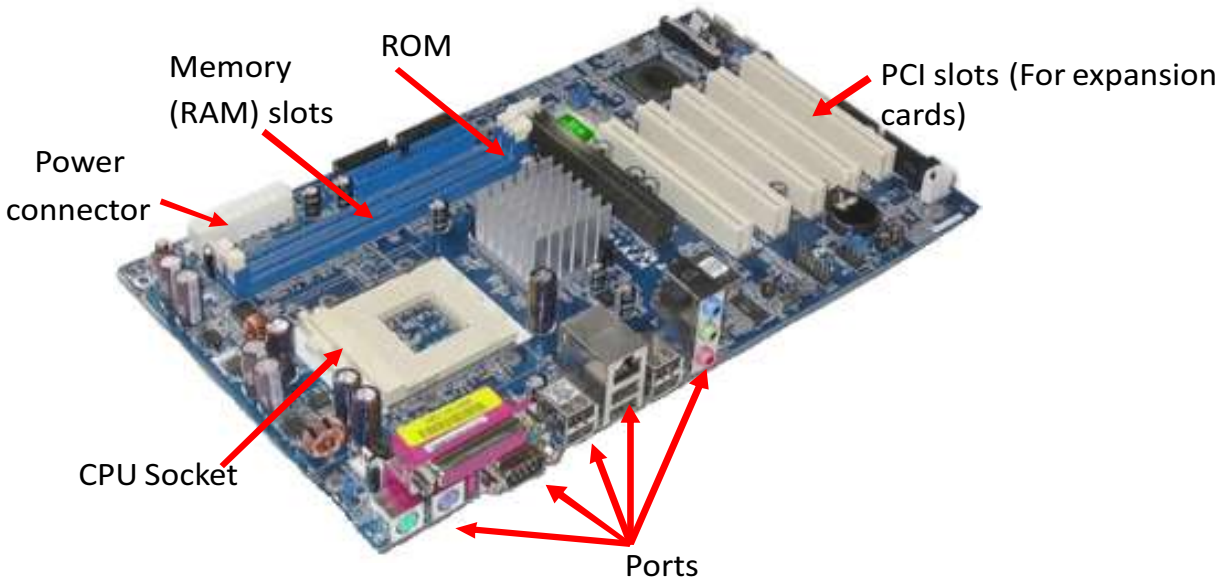


**Figure 1.5**

## 2. Ports

External devices are often connected to the computer through cables. The point where an external device connects to the system unit is called a “port”. There are different types of ports. Serial, parallel, PS/2, audio, fire wire and USB are few of them. USB (Universal serial bus) port can connect many different devices to a personal computer.

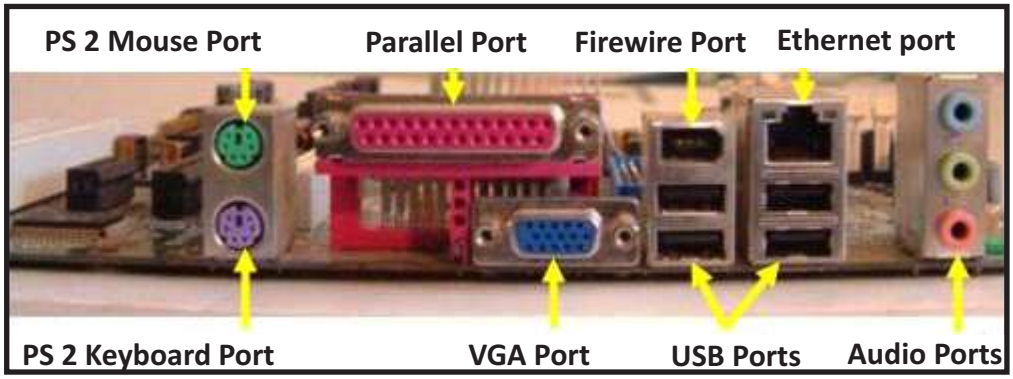


**Figure 1.6**

## 3. Power Supply Unit

The Power supply unit is the device which converts high voltage alternating current (AC) of the standard wall electrical outlet into low-voltage direct current (DC), usable by the parts of the computer. The PSU also regulates the DC output voltage to the tolerance level of the components.

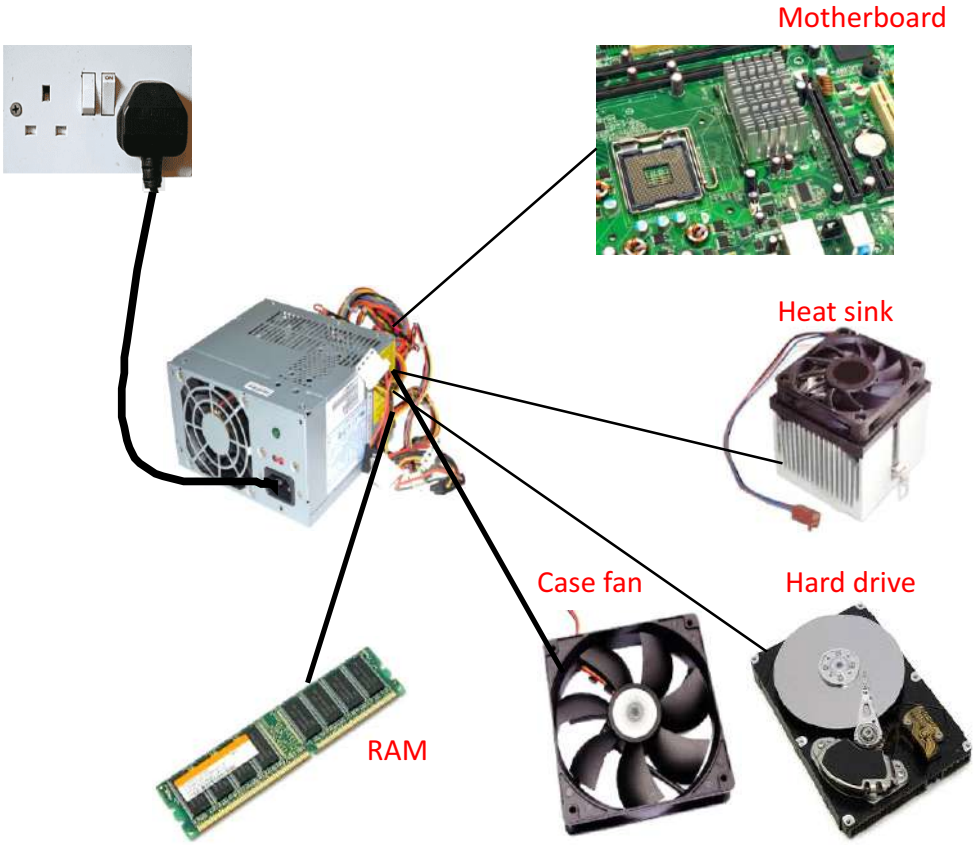


**Figure 1.7**

## 4. Case fan

The case fan is located inside the system unit and is attached to its case. Case fans help circulate cool air in and blow away hot air out of the case, keepingt he temperature at a safe level.


**Figure 1.8**