

HACKER:

[originally, someone who makes furniture with an axe]



1. A person who enjoys exploring the details of programmable systems and how to stretch their capabilities, as opposed to most users, who prefer to learn only the minimum necessary.
2. One who programs enthusiastically (even obsessively) or who enjoys programming rather than just theorizing about programming.
3. A person capable of appreciating hack value.
4. A person who is good at programming quickly.
5. An expert at a particular program, or one who frequently does work using it or on it; as in 'a UNIX hacker'. (Definitions 1 through 5 are correlated, and people who fit them congregate.)
6. An expert or enthusiast of any kind. One might be an astronomy hacker, for example.
7. **One who enjoys the intellectual challenge of creatively overcoming or circumventing limitations.**
8. [deprecated] A malicious meddler who tries to discover sensitive information by poking around. Hence "password hacker", "network hacker". The correct term is cracker.

The term 'hacker' also tends to connote membership in the global community defined by the net. It also implies that the person described is seen to subscribe to some version of the hacker ethic.

It is better to be described as a hacker by others than to describe oneself that way. Hackers consider themselves something of an elite (a meritocracy based on ability), though one to which new members are gladly welcome. There is thus a certain ego satisfaction to be had in identifying yourself as a hacker (but if you claim to be one and are not, you'll quickly be labeled bogus).

Things hackers detest and avoid:

IBM mainframes. Smurfs, Ewoks, and other forms of offensive cuteness. Bureaucracies. Stupid people. Easy listening music. Television (except for cartoons, movies, the old "Star Trek", and the new "Simpsons"). Business suits. Dishonesty. Incompetence. Boredom. COBOL. BASIC. Character-based menu interfaces. Anything Microsoft.

- From the Jargon file (more or less).

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