

4 The magic of computers

A You are going to read a text about some of the other things that computers are used for. Five sentences have been removed from the text. Choose which sentence (1–5) fits which gap in the text (a–e).

- 1 It is a calculating machine that speeds up financial calculations ✓
- 2 we visit shops and offices which have been designed with the help of computers ✓
- 3 you can even use your PC to relax with computer games ✓
- 4 for example calculators, the car's electronic ignition, the timer in the microwave, or the programmer inside the VCR ✓
- 5 as does making a flight reservation or bank transaction

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Computers and microchips have become part of our everyday lives: (a) 2; we pay bills prepared by computers; just picking up a telephone and dialling a number involves the use of a sophisticated computer system, (b) 5.

Every day we encounter computers that spring to life the instant they are switched on, (c) 4, all of which use chip technology.

What makes your computer such a miraculous device? Each time you turn it on, it is a blank slate (*tabula rasa*) that, with appropriate hardware and software, is capable

of doing anything you ask. (d) 1; it is an electronic filing cabinet which manages large collections of data, such as customers' lists, accounts, or inventories; it is a magical typewriter that allows you to type and print any kind of document – letters, memos or legal documents; it is a personal communicator that enables you to interact with other computers and with people around the world; if you like gadgets and electronic entertainment, (e) 3.

Nowadays, it is almost impossible to imagine life without the magic of computers.

B Read the text again and answer these questions.

- 1 Apart from computers, what other devices use microchips?
- 2 Which two components allow computer systems to operate?
- 3 What types of document are prepared on computers?
- 4 Why is a computer called a *personal communicator*?



Computers have changed the way we live, work, play and communicate