**What Is a Computer?**

The invention of the computer is one of the most remarkable innovations. The fact that computers have changed lives of human can hardly be denied.

A computer is any device that can perform numerical calculations — an adding machine or a slide rule. Currently, the term usually uses to an electronic device that can carry out automatically a series of tasks. Tasks may include making arithmetic calculations, storing, retrieving, and processing data, controlling another device, or to play a video game.

The “brains” of today's computers are integrated circuits. These wafers can each contain hundreds of millions of microscopic electronic components and are designed for many specific operations. Some chips make up a computer's central processing unit (CPU), which controls the computer's overall operation and others are memory chips that store billions of characters of information at one time.

Computers come in many sizes and shapes. Special-purpose computers are designed to perform specific tasks. These computers can be found in electronic calculators, digital watches, cameras, and automobiles.

General-purpose computers are much more useful because they can accept new programs. One program instructs the computer to be a word processor, another instructs it to manage inventories, and yet another transforms it into a video game.