

Information technology

COMMUNICATION

LEVEL

Upper-intermediate

NUMBER

EN_BE_3707X

LANGUAGE

English

lingoda





Goals

- Can understand key terminology related to IT and computing
- Can use new vocabulary and the first conditional to discuss the impact of IT and digitalisation on the workplace and future possibilities





The **IT industry** has grown in **influence** and **stature** over the past few decades and has made a sizeable **impact** on **almost every part of the workplace**.

Computing and **digitalisation** have been at the forefront of this growth, accompanied by a range of advantages and disadvantages.

Information technology is here to stay, and its growth is set to **continue into the future**.



Information technology

Answer the questions below.



What do you know about the IT department?

Do you know what they are responsible for in the workplace?

How often do you deal with your own company's IT department?

digitalisation

In the workplace, **digitalisation** refers to the integration of and increasing dependence on computer systems and technology. It can also describe the conversion of information and processes from **analogue** to **digital**.

The term is also used to describe the **increasingly digitised lives** we lead outside of the workplace.

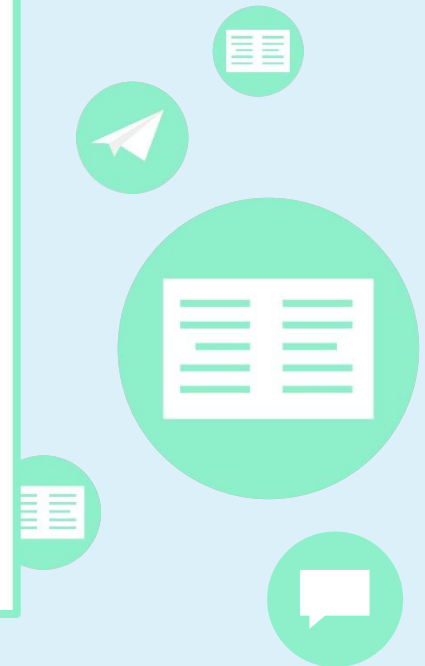


Constant **digitalisation** has blurred the lines between our lives and our work.



Information technology

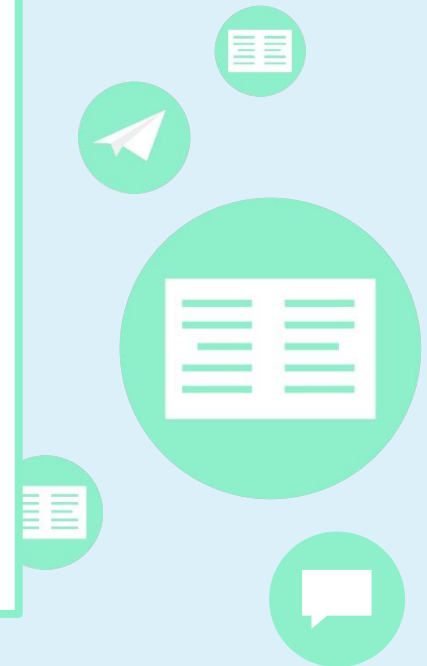
Few industries have had such a significant **impact** on our work and private lives as that of information technology. The IT department, as it is known, has become a **fixture** in almost all companies, handling any technological issues which might **arise** in the workplace. With the increase in **digitalisation** and our increasing **reliance on** computers, this is an enormous responsibility. It is the IT department that installs and oversees the **maintenance** of all **hardware, software** and **computer systems**, and is primarily responsible for ensuring the **network** runs smoothly.





Information technology

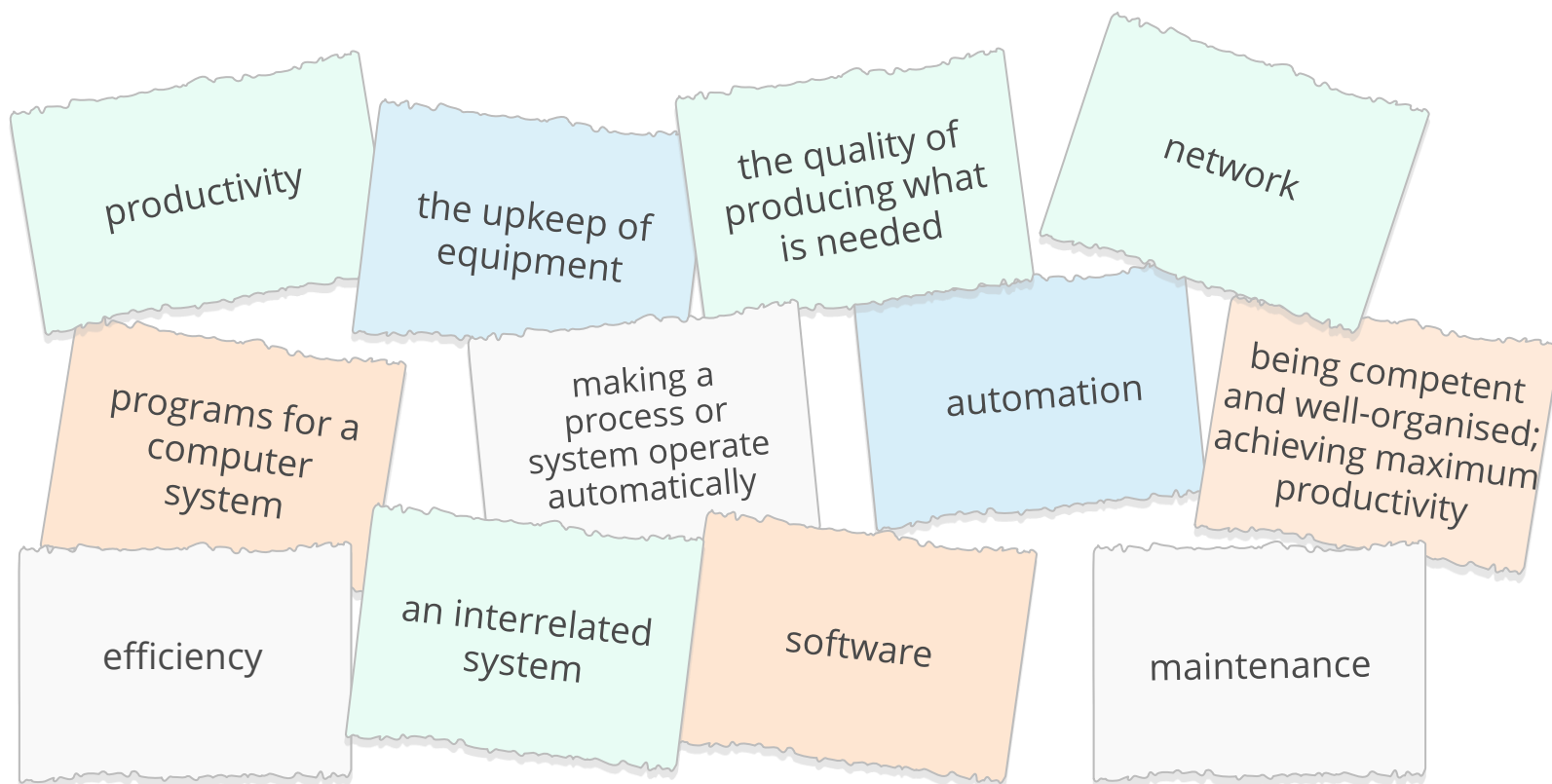
The growth of IT is linked to the general growth of **computing** and the increasing **digitalisation** of the workplace. Anyone who can remember a workplace at the end of the 20th century can attest that there has been a complete **revolution** in terms of how we work. Some are concerned with the extent to which technologies like **automation** and **artificial intelligence** are entering the workplace. Workers and business are becoming more reliant than ever on these technologies. This may provide a **boost** in productivity and **efficiency** in the short-term, but there are troubling aspects to our **overreliance** on technology.





Definitions

Match the vocabulary to the definitions. Ask your teacher if you need help.





Responsibilities of the IT department

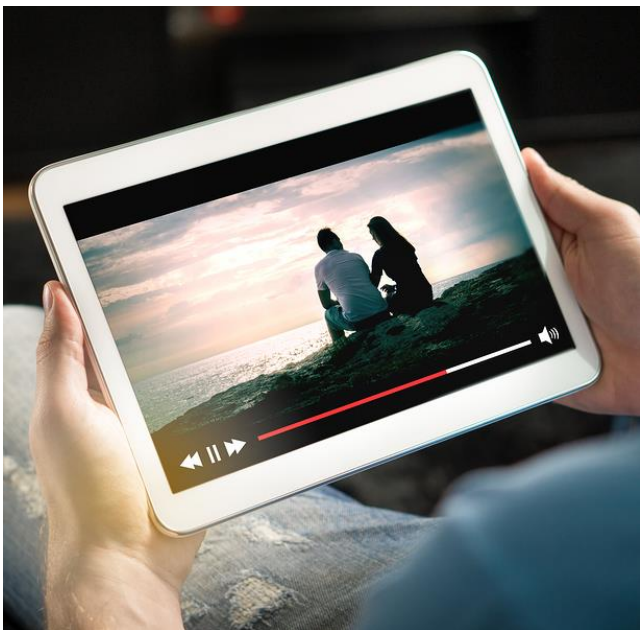
Talk to you teacher about the IT department's responsibilities in a modern workplace.





Answer the questions

Answer these questions with your teacher.



1

What are some of the advantages of digitalisation in the workplace?

2

What are some disadvantages?

3

What is your opinion on the future of computing and digitalisation?



Useful vocabulary

automation

Many believe **automation** has had a range of negative impacts.

workflow

Reorganising my office has made a real impact on my **workflow**.

productivity

The team really could use a **productivity** boost.

efficient

Overall, it is a very **efficient** process.

security

Online **security** is very important in this company.

responsibility

You have a **responsibility** to your investors.

gig economy

The **gig economy** refers to the trend of companies hiring independent contractors and freelancers on a short-term basis instead of long-term, full-time employees.

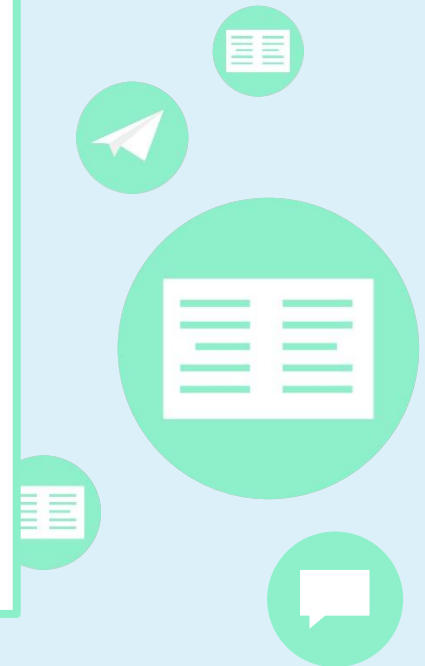


Gig economy workers have freedom in their choice of work, often at the price of security.



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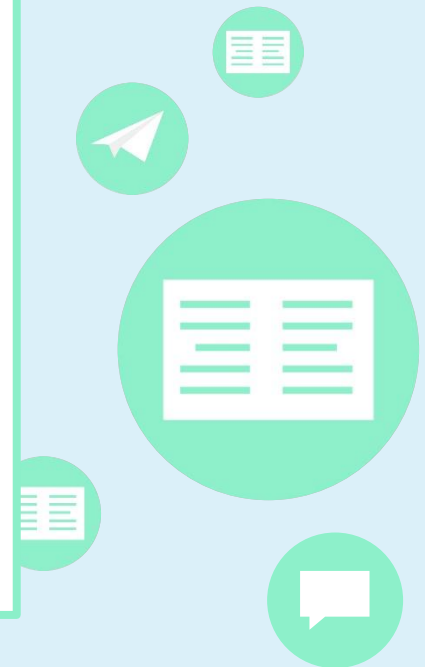
Some see increasing **digitalisation** as a good thing. **Automation** and digitalisation drives **efficiency**, and allows businesses to operate at a greater potential. It can also offer great potential for workers with technology skills and who value a flexible lifestyle where they can create their own schedule. The increasingly decentralised nature of many forms of work has given rise to the **gig economy**, where workers **freelance** and take on multiple, short-term contracted jobs. Digitalisation has given employees a much more flexible approach to work, as they can freelance using a computer, no matter where they are in the world. In addition to this, many increasingly see the idea of one career for life as a thing of the past.





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Others express caution as automation and digitalisation take over greater avenues of our lives. Many workers who rely on technology find their **work-life balance** eroded, as an **always-at-work culture** can take root in the home. With access to e-mail and work projects from home, many are finding it harder to **switch off** from work and connect with their families and friends at home. What starts out as the promise of **flexible** work can quickly take over their lives. At the same time, digitalisation has **destabilised** many industries. Automation has **impacted job security** and put many traditionally safe careers at risk. The **transformative** effects of digitalisation have only just begun.



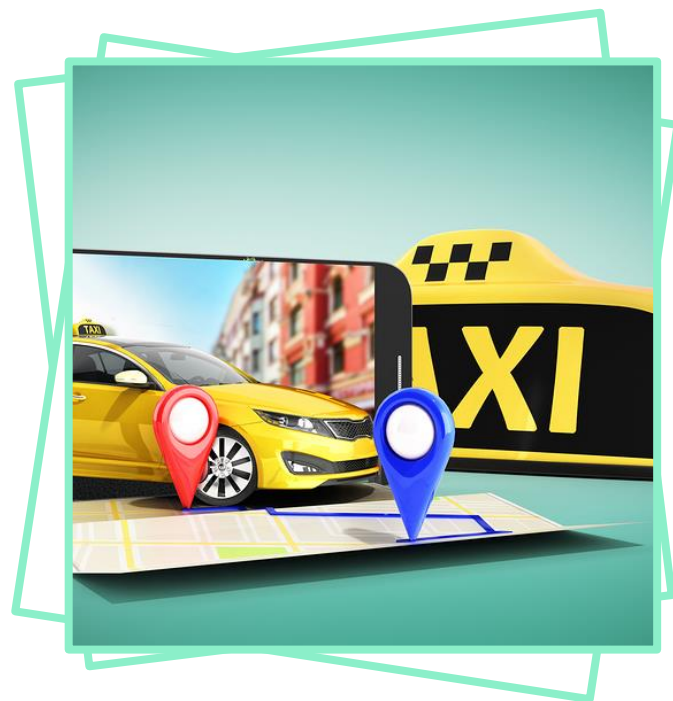


Talk to the teacher

What is the gig economy?

What are some examples of jobs in the gig economy?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of working in this way?





Debate

**Do you agree or disagree with the statement below?
Explain your answer.**

“

Many workers who rely on technology find their work-life balance eroded, as an always-at-work culture can take root in the home.

”



Discuss

Discuss how increasing digitalisation might affect the workplaces, industries and job prospects of the following people.



a tech-savvy millennial



an experienced project manager



a stay-at-home mother



a middle-aged dustbin man



Discuss

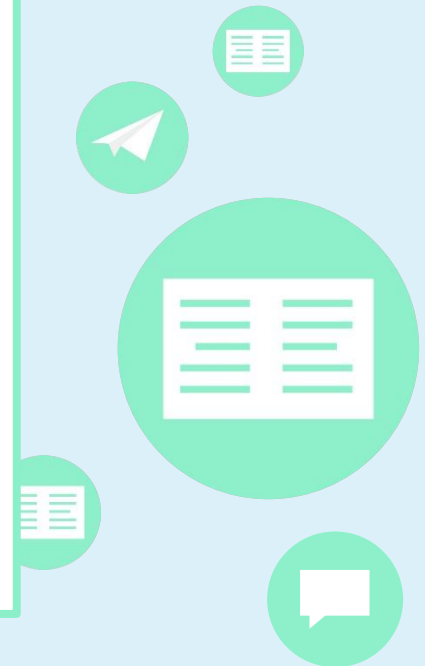


Now think about your own job.
How has it been affected by
digitalisation?



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Digitalisation in the workplace seems poised to continue. It promises a reduction in **operating costs**, an increase in **productivity**, a better understanding of customers and new products and services, as well as the flexibility granted to workers. Yet this flexibility has its **drawbacks** too. Expecting workers to be **constantly available** through online channels has consequences for the health and wellbeing of workers, and even social impacts on wider society.





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Digitalisation will undoubtedly continue to expand in the workplace, despite caution from many industry experts. Many are concerned about the effect that a constant **bombardment** of emails, online distractions and staring at a screen all day will have on the health of future generations. For others, the threats to data privacy and **erosion** of human dignity as a result of being made obsolete by automation are greater **concerns**. However, no matter how you view it, the role of the IT department will continue to be seen as a **crucial** segment of a company in the future.





The 1st conditional

- The **1st conditional** is used when imagining, or making a guess about, a situation in the future.
- **if + present simple + future simple**
 - This construction indicates that a situation or condition is possible.
 - It shows that the speaker believes the result is probable.

<i>if</i> -clause	probable result
If digitalisation continues at this pace,	many industries will change completely.
If I go into the IT industry,	I will have a lot of career opportunities.



Using the conditional

Use the conditional to talk about digitalisation and how it relates to the following areas.

technological growth

job security

human health



Agree or disagree

Respond to the people in the images.

Do you agree with their opinions?

Discuss each of their opinions with your teacher.



Soon we will be overwhelmed by the technology we are creating.



I think the increase in online systems actually reduces productivity!



Workplaces are so much more efficient thanks to the spread of computer systems and digitalisation.



I am worried about how much time my partner and I spend staring at a screen.



Predict the future

Answer the questions below with your teacher.



What progress in IT do you think you will see in your lifetime?

Do you think this level of growth is good for humanity? Explain your answer.



Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





Answer key

Exercise p. 8

Productivity – the quality of producing what is needed

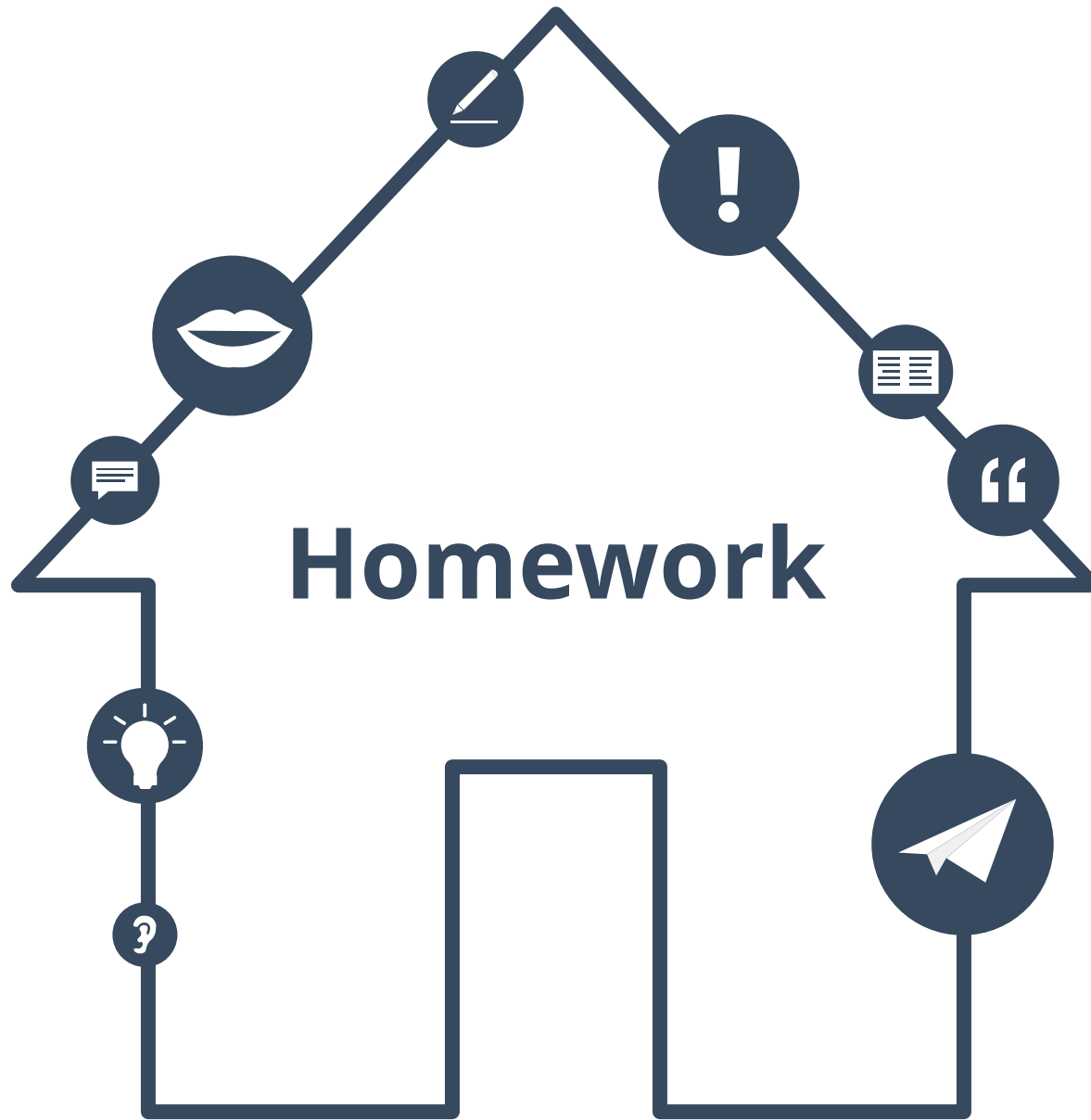
Network – an interrelated system

Automation – making a process or system operate automatically

Efficiency – being efficient i.e. competent, well-organised and achieving maximum productivity

Software – programs for a computer system

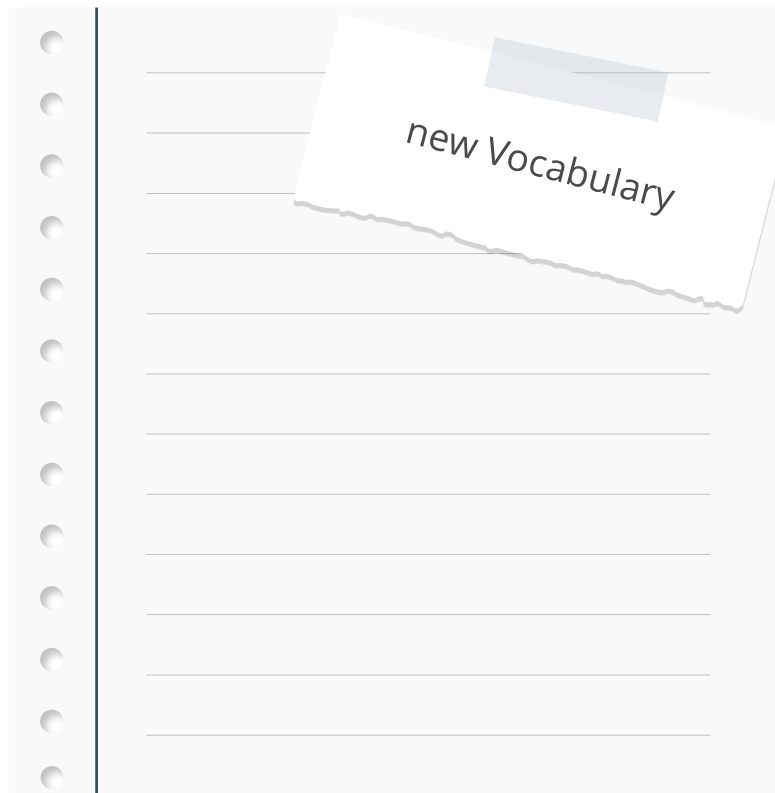
Maintenance – the upkeep of equipment





New vocabulary

Use this page to record any new vocabulary you came across in this lesson.





responsibility

reliance

automatisation

security

hardware

productivity

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