

Key Terms

Key Term	Definition
Alternating current (AC)	Current that reverses direction at regular intervals.
Amps	A unit of voltage.
Antistatic bag	A bag designed to keep static charges from building up on the outside of a computer component during shipping.
Antistatic wrist strap	A specially constructed strap worn as a preventive measure to guard against the damages of ESD. Also called an ESD strap.
Auto-ranging multimeter	A multimeter that automatically sets its upper and lower ranges depending on the input signal.
Berg connector	See floppy drive power connector.
Blackout	A power drop from 110 volts to zero volts in a very short period of time. It is a complete loss of power for anywhere from a few seconds to several minutes or longer.
Brownout	A short period (1 second or more) of low voltage often caused by an unusually heavy demand for power.
Capacitor	An electronic device that stores electrical charge.
Circuit	A specific path or loop that electricity is made to flow along.
Conductor	Any item that permits the flow of electricity between two entities.
Continuity	The presence of a complete, working circuit
Current	The flow of electricity.
Cutover threshold	A condition in which the line voltage drops below a preset threshold, causing sensors to detect the situation and switch the power from the wall to the internal battery. When the power comes back above the threshold, the sensors detect the restoration of power and switch the power source back to the line voltage.
Direct current (DC)	Current that flows without reversing direction
Electromagnetic interference (EMI)	Any electromagnetic radiation released by an electronic device that disrupts the operation or performance of any other device.
Electrostatic discharge (ESD)	The exchange of electrons that occurs when two objects of dissimilar charge come in contact with one another, to standardize the electrostatic charge between the objects.
ESD mat	A grounding mat used for preventing electrostatic discharge.
ESD strap	See antistatic wrist strap.
Floppy drive power connector (Berg connector)	A small, flat connector, also known as a Berg connector, commonly used to power floppy disk drives and other small form factor devices.
Insulator	A device or material that offers resistance to the flow of electricity.
Line conditioner	A device that produces “perfect” power of 110V/60Hz, removing most of the stray EMI and RFI signals from incoming power and reducing any power overages down to 110V.

Line power	Electrical power that comes out of the standard wall socket.
Molex connector	See standard peripheral power connector.
Multimeter	An electronic device used to measure and test ohms, amperes, volts, and farads.
Ohms	A unit of electrical resistance.
Power	The amount of work an electrical current is capable of producing.
Radio frequency interference (RFI)	Electromagnetic radiation produced by many electronic devices, including computers and peripherals, which can interfere with other signals in the radiofrequency range.
Resistance	The quality of impeding the flow of electricity. Some materials are more resistant to the flow of electricity.
Resistor	An electronic device used to resist the flow of current in an electrical circuit.
Sag	A momentary drop in voltage lasting a few milliseconds.
Spike	An electrical power overage condition that exists for an extremely short period of time, a few millisecond
Standard peripheral power connector	A type of connector used to power various internal drives. Also called a Molex connector.
Standby power supply (SPS)	A backup power supply that provides power from its batteries only when the power drops below a preset threshold.
Surge	An electrical power overage condition that exists for up to several seconds
Surge protector	A regulating device placed between the computer and the AC line connection that protects the computer system from power surges.
Uninterruptible power supply (UPS)	A backup power supply that supplies power through continually recharged battery.
Voltage	A unit of electrical potential or pressure. See volts.
Volts	A unit of electrical potential, or pressure.
Watts	A unit of power.