

Jargon Buster



Address Book

Part of your email software where you store details of your 'friends and contacts' email addresses so you don't have to remember them!

Anti-virus

Anti-virus software/application helps protect your computer from viruses. Application is another word for a computer program. For example, Word, which is used for creating documents is a word processing application.

Archive

The place on a website where you find old articles, stories etc. Attachment A file which is 'attached' and sent with a standard text email message. Often photographs or Word documents are attached to emails.

Backup

A technical term for copying files onto disk or CD-ROM for safe keeping so that they are kept in more than one place.

Bcc

Means Blind carbon copy. The Bcc box allows you to send an email to more than one person, but their email addresses are hidden from other recipients.

Broadband

A permanent high-speed Internet connection.

Browser

A program you use to view web pages and 'browse' websites. Google Chrome, Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox are some of the most popular browsers.

Bugs

Errors in a piece of software or web page that can make it break or work strangely.

cc

Typing an email address or string of email addresses in the 'Cc' box will send your mail to those additional addresses as well as the main recipient.

Crash

When your computer temporarily stops working. It may pause or 'freeze' up, or tell you to restart or quit.

Cursor

The flashing vertical line on the screen that shows you where you are and where the next character you type will appear.

Cut and paste

Selecting text, images or files and deleting them from one place while putting them in another.

Download

Getting a file onto your computer from another computer on the internet.

Drag and drop

Clicking on an icon or selection, holding the mouse button down and moving the mouse to 'drag' the selection to a new location. When the mouse button is released, the item is 'dropped'.

Driver Software

Software which runs hardware attached to your computer like a modem, printer or scanner.

Email

Electronic mail. Messages (sometimes with attachments) sent over the Internet from one email address to another.

Error message

A 'complaint' by the computer that something has gone wrong, maybe including an 'error code'.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions. A list of standard answers to questions which newcomers to a topic or website may have.

File Data stored on a disk.

There are two types: 'program files' (with instructions that make up software applications, e.g. Word) and 'data files' (files created by you and me, e.g. a letter or photo).

Firewall

A program which sits between your computer and the Internet and watches for hacking, viruses or unapproved data transfer.

Flash

A plug-in application you download which allows your browser to show animations.

Hacking

Unauthorised access to a computer, its files and programs by a 'hacker', a computer expert who can break through its security.

Hard drive/Hard disk

The place inside your computer where you save documents, pictures, applications, etc.

Homepage

The 'front page' of a website, where you're told what's on the site, how to get around it and how to search for things that'll interest you.

Inbox

The folder in your email program/webmail where you get your incoming emails.

ISP

Internet Service Provider. An ISP is the company that provides Internet connections.

Junk email

Direct marketing or unwanted/unsolicited advertising or promotional material received through the post or sent as email.

Laptop

A small, portable computer which can be battery operated as well as run from the mains.

Mailbox

The folder which contains a person's individual items such as an inbox, outbox, sent items, notes and calendar.

Malware

Types of malicious software that can infect computers and devices. The word malware is a combination of two words "malicious" and "The software".

Memory

Storage and thinking parts of your computer. More storage memory on your hard disk means you can save more files and more thinking memory (RAM) means your computer can perform more complex tasks quicker.

Offline

Describes when your computer is not connected to the Internet. Online describes when your computer is connected to the Internet.

Password

A series of letters, numbers and characters that you enter to get into your computer, Internet connection, email or websites that you are registered with.

Refresh/Reload

The button that you use to download a web page again. In Internet Explorer it's called "Refresh" and in Mozilla Firefox "Reload". You should press this button if for some reason a web page appears not to have loaded correctly.

Register

Some websites ask you to give your name, email address and other personal information in order to view pages. This is called registering.

Software

Any programs such as word processors, email applications or Internet browsers.

SPAM

Junk email sent to many people at once, usually involving advertising or offering services. SPAM is very deeply frowned upon by most Internet users, and where it involves advertising or a false return address it is particularly disliked.

URL

Stands for Uniform Resource Locator, the technical term for the address of a website or document on the web (e.g. www.gra.gi).

Username

A series of letters and numbers you type into your computer, email account or other computer network service to tell it who you are.

Virus

Pieces of code that are designed to reproduce and damage data or system performance. There are thousands of viruses and the numbers keep growing.